

## Metalepsis of the Site of Exception

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Relations among subjects, potentially political, reach a critical point at the question of mastery. Where mastery in general and masters specifically are defined in a hierarchical way, Jacques Rancière carefully distinguishes the political from the ideological. In “vertical” ideology, each is ruled from above; each in turn rules those below. No one is able to locate the ultimate source that tops this pyramid of power, a feature that seems to lie *outside the system* because it itself is not mastered by anything more powerful as are the elements “inside” the structure. At the opposite end of things, those who lack mastery completely are without rights and fundamentally “home-less.”<sup>1</sup> They, like the Ultimate Master, are outside the structure; they have no one to master except mute substance.<sup>2</sup> But, inside the pyramid, slavery combines with mastery as a pure logic, permeating every step with verticality.

In contrast to ideology, politics is, according to Rancière, “a local, precarious, contingent activity — an activity which is always on the point of disappearing, and thus perhaps also on the point of reappearing.”<sup>3</sup> Steve Corcoran, Rancière’s translator and editor (*Dissensus: On Politics and Aesthetics*), writes that politics is born of disagreement, *dissensus*, “an activity that *cuts across* forms of cultural and identity belonging and hierarchies between discourses and genres, working to introduce *new* subjects and *heterogeneous* objects into the *field of perception*” [emphasis mine], a process correlated to the physical materialization of “sites of exception,” as fragile as politics but made of real materials, dimensioned in space and time.<sup>4</sup> In this “cutting across,” *dissensus* and its field of perception are orthogonal to mastery’s hierarchical–vertical space. Not only are the sites of *dissensus* architectural; they are the essence of architecture, in architecture’s resistance to reduction to appropriation by ideology and the commanded utility of functional sheltering.

Just how does *dissensus* operate “horizontally” in contrast to ideology’s “verticality”? Is Steve Corcoran’s description, “cut across,” more than a characterization? Is horizontality more than a metaphor of contrast to the verticality of ideology? Do horizontality and verticality have real material implications? Do they specify any special deployment of space or time? *Are they really architectural in any fundamental sense?*

I aim to develop the ideas of verticality and horizontality through spaces and times that must be completed by the imagination, “virtually.” But, this is not the kind of virtuality that simply fills out spaces and times by adding the unseen sides, the implied pasts and futures. It is not the virtuality of computer-generated “virtual space.” This virtuality *detaches itself* from those continuities and engages the meaning of the frames that dynamically establish *particular spaces*, and *particular times*, relative to *particular points of view*, and then play with their own expanding imaginative potentialities. In contrast to the idea of architecture that simply works within the laws of nature to supply human demands and desires, I propose that architecture constitutes an *exception* to these

laws, demands, and desires; an architecture that creates a specific kind of autonomy of exception, and then endows that autonomy with powers of self-generation: “autopoiesis.” Here, architecture grows out of an unconscious of the object-world and merges with the political, especially in its aim to construct the exception, the escape from the ideologies of supply and demand as well as its own material biology. This merger, more than any other factor, justifies the connection of architecture to the aesthetic.

### **Part 1: architecture as the autopoiesis of the site of exception**

Again, Rancière has opened the way for this discussion. Rancière has noted that aesthetics was not originally about the beauty of objects made to be consumed as art.<sup>5</sup> It began as a description of sensible experience in general, and Rancière has sought to recover this meaning in relation to a “distribution of the sensible,” of perceptible experience, “of spaces, times, and forms of activity that determines the very manner in which something in common lends itself to participation and in what way various individuals have a part in this distribution.”<sup>6</sup> The idea and realities of sites of exception, as real and imaginary places epitomizing as well as materializing both the political and architecture, grow out of the performative, where everything that is essentially human and humanly essential — language, discourse, thought, the unconscious, etc. — is self-generative and self-regulating, hence the term “autopoiesis.”

This is not the autopoiesis of biological systems, promoted by enthusiasts of “blob architecture.”<sup>7</sup> I intend to take the term, autopoiesis, back from contemporary theoretical writing about natural growth metaphors, and from the frequently-cited sources, Humberto Maturana, Francisco Varela, and Niklas Luhman. These theorists have not thought through the problem of self-generation in human terms; like the Positivists of old, they have forced human scenarios to abandon their own autopoiesis in order to fit a biological model that itself has been reduced and streamlined.

My take-back begins with the first comprehensive modern philosophy to establish the importance of self-generation. Slavoj Žižek has identified Hegel as the original autopoietician: “Hegel is — to use today's terms — the ultimate thinker of autopoiesis, of the process of the emergence of necessary features out of chaotic contingency, the thinker of contingency's gradual self-organization, of the gradual rise of order out of chaos.”<sup>8</sup> I would like to qualify this claim. Autopoiesis reveals Giambattista Vico to be Hegel's unrecognized predecessor, the thinker who, in comparatively obscure conditions, carried out the Hegelian project with an even greater autopoietic effectiveness.<sup>9</sup> The Vichian motto *verum ipsum factum (est)*, the made is itself convertible with the true, sums up self-generation in the term *ipsum*, “itself.”<sup>10</sup> Vico condensed *ipsum* into a logic of the first human master signifier, the *imaginative universal*, the basis of mythic thought, where irony's invisibility affords a non-ironic (i.e. authentic) visibility.<sup>11</sup> The world appears with the greatest force as an impossible—but-Real signifying presence. Vico's paradigm was the thunder, demonic and traumatic. Retreat from this traumatic Real, *askesis*, constructs the historical civil world where political relations replace religious ones through a gradual secularization. But, we must not forget that the

original trauma was *self-constructed*, and in this autopoiesis a logical kernel–remainder was formed that was able to survive all successive transformations: a “permanent uncanny” that, as self-fear, remains radically alien but essentially our own — our only true — possession, our *ipsum*, our autopoiesis, not the autopoiesis of plants and animals.

*Autopoiesis components: extimacy, reversed predication, metalepsis*

Because of the ironic component of autopoiesis, *making* is tied to language.<sup>12</sup> This requirement, like the Hegel connection, is an anathema to contemporary appropriations of autopoiesis, which promote precedents from biology. Autopoiesis not only includes human symbolic systems, its quality of self-generation characterizes the “lock” that binds the Symbolic to the a-symbolic Imaginary and Real. In Jacques Lacan’s description of the interlocking domains of the Imaginary, the Symbolic, and the Real as Borromeo knot of three interlocking rings, the third ring slips under the first it to make a lock. This lock not only binds the system together; it creates a new dimensionality by “inscribing” and distributing the boundary conditions (the first ring slipping beneath the third) into all of the parts, creating a Möbius band effect that permeates the whole the system as an “invisible glue.” This is the autopoiesis of what is uniquely human; the irony that Hegel constructed as dialectic; the *ipsum* Vico compressed into the imaginative universal of mythic thought. Later Freud and still later Lacan extended this autonomy to the curious ability of the unconscious to be inside and outside at the same time — darkly active in externalities, everyday experiences: “subjective objectivities.”<sup>13</sup> Lacan was later to refine the topology of this presence in his idea of extimacy (*extimité*).

Metalepsis, since Gérard Genette, has been identified with the incorporation of elements associated with the “diegetic” framing of some performative content (a story, a play, etc.) into the mimetic level of those contents.<sup>14</sup> First, a word about mimesis. When a novel, play, or film begins, the work begins at a time where the audience must imagine that events have gone on before it “arrived” at the opening point of the story. Diegesis, the construction of a *distance from which* the reception of the work of art takes place, so to speak, requires framing, manipulation of dimensions of space and time, and agreements with the audience. These measures include the technical construction of the material work of art, the structure of the stage, the mechanics of film production, the writing, editing, and publishing of a book — delivery mechanisms that are concealed, as the invisible necessary artifacts of mimetic production. Additionally and equally, the diegetic point of view is a critical, cultural, and even metaphysical construct. It is the *idea* that we as an audience might be able to witness a spectacle contained within a frame; that the meaning of this spectacle is *for us* — *for* our point of view, *for* the distance we take in the act of diegesis and in this sense a repayment of the “debts incurred” — the negative of withdrawal.

Metalepsis is a magic trick based on the division between diegesis, the frame, and mimesis, the framed. It allows the audience to encounter some form of itself, installed within the mimetic particulars of the work. It allows characters and elements to escape from their mimetic prisons, to jump off the stage or hop off the screen, as does the actor Tom Baxter in Woody Allen’s 1985 film,

*The Purple Rose of Cairo*. Absurd exception proves the rule by forcing the audience to recognize what it itself had done originally in agreeing to the conditions of diegesis and mimesis.

Metalepsis is not simply an abstract condition; it is a staged collapse of spatial and temporal dimensions that normally hold the audience on one side of a line and the show on the other. It requires the special engineering supplied by the literary forms of the fantastic — the genre peculiar to violations of normal causality — as a means of developing its specific architecture of detached virtuality. The Argentine master of the fantasy, Jorge Luis Borges, has summarized these forms as follows: the double, the story in the story, travel in time, and contamination of the horizontal reality of mimesis by the dream or fiction — a contamination that travels along the vertical line established by diegesis.<sup>15</sup>

The audience first held at a distance from the mimesis of the artwork by diegesis, encounters a mirror of its own detachment when a story is introduced inside a story. Now, characters of the mimetic drama are under the same spell, or resisting it. There could be stories inside stories inside stories — a *mise en abyme* — but one is enough. The audience sees their own framing action “from the side,” and in rotation the exchanges between the frame and the framed, the stage and the backstage, are now visible. In David Lynch’s neo-noir film, *Mulholland Drive* (2001), we attend an audition where the ingénue, Betty Elms, reads a part for a new film. We expect her to do poorly, having heard her rehearse before. Once in place with the lead actor, however, she converts the dull lines (a young woman resists the advances of an older family friend) into a magical concession (desire stoked by the flames of danger). Her tone, timing, and aggression take everyone by storm; the original audience must additionally consider that they have watched a good actress play a bad actress playing a good actress. In this process Naomi Watts has held all of these modes in clear tension, never losing a “level” of the complexity. This moment of unexpected mastery jolts the audience into the larger consideration of whether or not the main story is a death narrative — in which case this magical performance makes sense because it is from the point of view of a dead woman who aspired to be a successful actress. Watts, in stepping out of mimesis has invited us to step in. Her demonstration of diegetic mechanics makes us look at ours. We see how the simple device of the story in the story has engaged the themes of the *double*, the *time travel* required to recast the story as a death dream in relation to events in living reality, and of course the generic theme of *contamination* that flows along the vertical dimensional detachments of diegesis. Contamination can be of reality by a dream, a story, or a competing version of reality. It can be about the audience discovering its own forgotten procedures and presuppositions. It is the mirror in the middle.

The verticality of contamination is evident in way it is traditionally represented — the attack of demons from below or space invaders from above. The dimensionalities of detachment (and re-attachment) can be found outside the metalepsis of art, in secular sites of exception, places where *dissensus* re-organizes space and time to bring about political potentialities: Tiananmen Square (China), Tahrir Square (Egypt), Zuccotti Park (New York), Taksim Square (Turkey). In both art and life, a new kind of appearance is made possible through the *extimité* of outside to inside, inside to

outside. The world no longer encloses these spaces, as a part to be distributed in one way or another, the part surrounds and encloses the world. *Dissensus* brings about self-reflection, literally and dimensionally.

### *A minimalistic graphic calculus*

I see extimity as the generative principle of the site of exception, *via* the function of metalepsis, to be expanded in terms of (1) double inscription, the mutual contamination of two opposite terms and (2) reversed predication, the sudden flip of a relation of dominance, containment, or possession. Double inscription might be summed up as the process whereby a contrast, opposition, or negation involving two “terms” reaches a second stage where neither term vanquishes the other, but each undergoes a transformation. The opposite term has been “inscribed” within it and thus preserved. This is the process Ernst Jentsch used to describe how the basic division between “alive” (A) and “dead” (D) generate the key terms of the uncanny, i.e. the condition of the living person drawn to a fated death,  $A_D$ , and the dead subject who has “forgotten how to die” and continues the momentum of life through the period Jacques Lacan has called “between the two deaths,”  $D_A$ .<sup>16</sup> The uncanny is what it is, so to speak, because double inscription has created two mirror conditions, and these conditions are well known through their cultural manifestations in religion, ritual, folklore, literature, and so on.

Reversed predication is a condition that, *to an observer who frames it*, seems to flip in an inexplicable way: a reversal of a visual figure and its ground; an unexpected dominance of a part over a whole; a sudden change of perspective that brings to light hidden elements.<sup>17</sup> The effects of surprise, sudden reversal, and magical impossibility would not be evident from a topological point of view, which would not distinguish the Sioux Indians surrounding Custer at the Battle of Little Bighorn from Custer surrounding the Sioux. When topology is presented in a projective-diegetic format, suspense and surprise are the usual results.

To explain double inscription and reversed predication, topology is brought in to account for mechanics, but the affective results — surprise, suspense, and the uncanny — should be seen as the intended products, not the illusionistic byproducts. A “calculus” is required to notate topological transformations and their subjective effects.<sup>18</sup> The point is not to explain away the effects but, rather, show how they, as an aesthetics, come to serve as the fuel of the *dissensus* that makes places and times what they are in human terms.

Extimity can be described in minimalistic graphic terms, as  $\diamond \rightarrow \succ$ . (Translation: an interiority,  $\diamond$ , whose boundary conditions involve a reversed predication,  $\leftarrow \rightarrow \succ$ , is converted to an exteriority planted inside some interiority,  $\succ$ , acting as an internal frame.) But, the site of exception requires material circumstances, not just abstract assembly instructions.

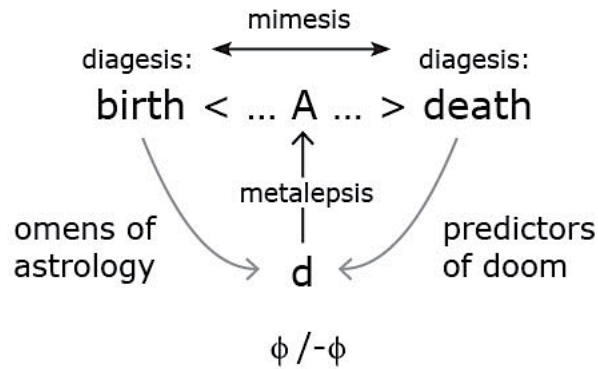


Figure 1.1. Ernst Jentsch specified two key themes of the uncanny, the living person drawn to a fatalistic end and the momentum of the dead soul past literal death to a second, symbolic death. In the first condition, the alive subject (A) is inscribed with death ( $A_D$ ), which operates from within an “inside frame.” The mimetic field, framed by diageitic elements of “birth/death,” is invaded by the metalepsis of death, present in the form of past prophecies and future omens.  $B > D$  and  $D > B$  become  $B < > D$ , penetrated by the  $\phi / -\phi$  “signalizing” of the frame elements.

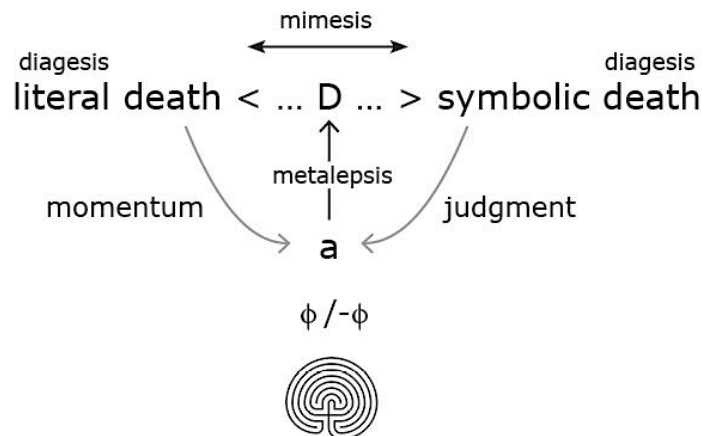


Figure 1.2. In the reversed condition of the uncanny, “between the two deaths,”  $D_A$ , the obverse of  $A_D$  is framed by the literal and symbolic deaths whose mimetic field is haunted by the futurity of judgment propelled by the momentum of the soul after the moment of literal death. The classic symbol of this interval, the Thesean labyrinth, conveys this directly, by representing  $\phi / -\phi$  as unintuitive directional turns.

Metalepsis, the breakdown of the rules that insulate the diegetic point of view from the mimetic content, folds time and space using detached virtuality’s four main forms to manage the surpluses and shortfalls of appearance. The diegetic frame begins as an insulation device. What happens on the stage stays on the stage, and the mimetic life of the stage suggests that the same rules are enforced. The dream or story is kept from influencing reality. No one can be in two places at once. And, the present is neither haunted by the past nor pregnant with omens of the future.

Metalepsis establishes these rules of insulation and then breaks them, connecting *what not ought to be connected*. The site of exception consolidates its uncanny architecture through compacting these

violations into sudden appearance, disappearance, and reappearance. I use the notation  $\varphi/-\varphi$  to link the “phi-phenomenon” of visual continuity to the phallic function in specific relation to the boundary. Boundaries and phalluses have been linked since ancient times, when Janus-faced stone “herms” with erect phalluses were used to mark the boundaries of fields and burial grounds. Where the point of view has maintained a “vertical” detachment, an “aerial viewpoint” so to speak, its collapse into mimesis involves an entry into the horizontal of spatio-temporality of relations “on the ground.” Here, “horizontal” is not simply a formal alternative to the verticality of ideology and hierarchy. It is a means of construction, of engaging an architecture essential to the politics of *dissensus*. Politics, like aesthetics, is a place, and a time.

*Three ways of describing diegesis/mimesis: being, symbol, technē*

Thus, we should discuss the political in terms of the topology of extimity and the formation of “sites of exception,” which we *experience* as detached virtuality and may *understand* as metalepsis. But, first, back to the “ideology of the everyday” and the “distribution of the sensible” as a hierarchy connecting the power of “masters” who “have a part” as citizens to servants, who have no part even if only for lack of time.<sup>19</sup> There are three recognized ways of styling this hierarchy. The first is as the “Great Chain of Being,” where pure spirit—as—will radiates downward through successively less spiritual creations, finally ending in whatever lacks use of its own will entirely and is powerless, abject. I described this chain in terms of a “pyramid of power” in the opening of this essay.

A second aspect of the relations of mastery is as a system of symbolic relationships where, like a language, a self-defined, self-generating axiomatic system desires “maximal coverage” within its own grammatical and rhetorical rules; language or any other symbolic system as a “causal chain.”<sup>20</sup> The chain is not taught; its signifiers “slide past” each other; meaning is “postponed” by defining one term by another, which is in turn defined by another, etc. This circularity guarantees that the Symbolic will aspire to be a “world” of signification capable of relating to anything and everything. This means that speaking a language constitutes a full range of subjectivity, of possible relations to the world, but that different languages construct different “worlds,” where each language experiences the contrast between not being able to say exactly what one means and saying too much (a key example of  $<$  and  $>$ ), i.e. evidence of an unconscious.

Finally, we might imagine a series of mechanized conversions between the Hegelian master and servant, where natural substances and forces are converted into desirable and often essential consumables. Nature’s dominance is reversed into natural resource:  $< \rightarrow >$ . Here, as in the case of symbolic systems, the aim is to attain “maximal coverage,” i.e. dominion over the earth and its resources, an adaptation of the pyramid of power as a set of mechanistic practices, technologies, automations.<sup>21</sup>

*Model of the frame as  $<>$*

Each of these three descriptive modes — of being, of the symbol, and of *technē*, so to speak — can be described as a *model of the frame*, a diegetic point-of-view structure in relation to a framed reality or representation of a reality, mimesis. I use the brackets of predication, e.g. “cause > effect” (where the > symbol shows that a cause is never completely exhausted by any effect or set of effects), to frame the field where predictions are elaborated, extended, and diversified: < ... >. The field can be styled in the mode of being, symbol, or *technē*. The space outside the brackets can be variously named, as in the case of “master < ... > slave.” These bounding elements are also a predication of a power relationship that can be stated separately: “master > slave.” And (in Hegel’s case), the ironic reversal of power, master  $\diamond$  slave, anticipates the opening of a field, which Hegel himself characterizes in terms of being, symbol, and *technē*:  $\diamond \rightarrow$  < ... >. The causal reversal,  $\diamond$ , can also appear inside the set of predications as an “inside frame”: master  $\gg$  slave. Because this inside frame manages, through detached virtuality, the sudden appearances and disappearances that create the spectacle of the site of exception, we may substitute  $\gg$  insertions of diegesis into mimesis with the more representative matheme,  $\phi/\neg\phi$  (a shorthand for anamorphosis): master < ...  $\phi/\neg\phi$  ... > slave.

The action of this model is simple: after the initial framing, the externalized point of view is incorporated back into the mimetic interior of the frame. This inscription of the “extra-diegetic” point of view into the interior of mimesis constitutes the inserted element’s ability to “signalize.”<sup>22</sup> Each approach to the relations of mastery, of being, symbol, or power, requires the creation of externalities that, reincorporated into the interior, work as subjective objects, as *signalizers*, as demonic “ghosts in the machine.”<sup>23</sup> Each re-inscription of the external positions excluded by the frame into the mimetic world within the frame resists the smooth, hierarchical structuring of frame as ideology. This, each holds the potentiality of *dissensus*, and the emergence of the political, through the architecture of the site of exception.

While this model of *dissensus*, like the human project in general, is always subject to the threat of self-extermination — *dissensus* cannot be converted into a sustainable utopia — neither does even the worst gulag lack the potential to become a site of exception.<sup>24</sup> Like language, where any expression always falls short of what is intended but paradoxically says more, the human project *in general* is a case of too little and too much, a permanent *scale dysfunctional* condition,  $\diamond$ , which Lacan condensed into the *pointon* symbol for fantasy,  $\diamond$ .<sup>25</sup> Like the  $\diamond$ , things can become  $\gg$  through the site of exception, through the actions of metalepsis and “detached virtuality” that materialize the “political potentiality,” as an unconscious present through architecture.

The calculus of metalepsis sets up a means of economizing the discussion of how re-inscription within the frame constitutes the *venustas* of the architecture of the site of exception, and how this *venustas*, as demon Eros, uses detached virtuality to dimensionalize its distinctive spaces and times. Part 2, “Mastery,” returns to Hegel to renew fundamental relationships linking mastery to signification, autopoiesis, and the formation of sites of exception using detached virtuality.



## Part 2: Mastery

Both Hegel and Lacan considered the issue of mastery as central to their respective projects. Hegel's mastery is the closest to our ideas of power, ideology, and politics. Lacan's mastery idea is about the individual subject's desire yet failure to meet demands, to express or know the truth. Even the subject's own body is at first a *corps morcelé*, a "body in pieces," in comparison to the young subject's surprisingly superior image encountered in the Mirror Stage. Again we have a case of reversed predication, where the optically inferior image gains superiority over its source:  $> \rightarrow <$ . Hegel's treatment, the conversion of the slave to master in the passage on "Lordship and Bondage," perhaps the best-known part of his *Phenomenology of Spirit*, accomplishes the same reversed predication by inverting the role of the slave as master.<sup>26</sup> Lacan's Mirror Stage, his signature idea, grounds the entirety of his psychoanalytical account of subjectivity. The connection is well established. Lacan "learned his Hegel" at the feet of Alexandre Kojève; it is clear that the idea of dialectic influenced his idea of a self-constructing subject that was, like Hegel's servant, both "lesser than" and "greater than" itself.

The principal operating idea of the *Phenomenology* is dialectic and built on the idea of negation. The problem of self-knowledge is that subjectivity must develop itself through an Other. The self overcomes the antagonism to the Other (*aufheben*) but this victory is ironic. *Aufhebung* moves beyond simple opposition by subsuming ("sublating") Otherness through a new construction. The victor is *not entirely successful* in vanquishing its opponent — an important point since this incompleteness creates a foothold for "inscription." The victor up takes the opposition by incorporating it, and the irony is not simply a general quality of the situation of including what has been vanquished; it is a *structure*.

Irony, in the case of "Lordship and Bondage," demonstrates how the subject-seeking-mastery *as a self* against other *selves* and over nature in general, requires, above all, recognition. The Other as an equal cannot give this confirmation, because the Other by definition wishes the same thing. Competing subjects must all be willing to give their lives to this conflict, and the idea of the subject willing to die for self-honor is vivid in the historical example of the nobility, the dominant social structure of Hegel's day. Unable to live forever, the noble but mortal subject substitutes the Name of the ancestral Father, a medium that, through family relations, will be able to sustain the original and accumulated honor of the dead ancestors, the Roman idea of *manes*.<sup>27</sup>

The master, as Name or empirical subject, can be sustained only through the idea of the servant, the slave, whose will is appropriated by the master. Without the work of the slave, the master is, first, unable to enjoy nature, which the servant converts through ingenuity of learning how to make things to serve up to the master (*technē*). The master knows little or nothing of the slave's ingenuity and is not concerned with the labor required. The slave enjoys the conversion of nature, and the master finds this enjoyment enigmatic, enviable, and mysterious. The master is a "dummy" in the sense of being ignorant of how the slave is able to convert nature to useful goods. But, the French word for dummy — *le mort* (the dead man) — reveals another side: the strange complexities linking

ventriloquism and death, which I would like to link to the idea of the house and the “un-homely,” the uncanny.

### *Ventriloquism and death*

The master is confounded by the fact that the only durable respect of his mastery comes from a slave, who is unable to respect the master as an equal Other. The master’s immortality is thus “in Name only,” on two counts. The slave respects the Name (metonymized as “the *House* of \_\_\_”) in addition to, or independent of, the empirical person of the master, and it is through the Name/House that the master is able to transcend mortal death. The master is reduced to a “voice and nothing more,” to borrow from Mladen Dolar’s reference to Plutarch’s quotation in *Moralia: Sayings of the Spartans, Apophthegmata Laconica* (223a).

The servants, who preserve the master’s honor, do so through the idea of the house, and it is clear that we must interrogate the house in relation to this “voice of the master.” It is the honor of the house and its name that the servant preserves. The other side of immortality is the perpetual death that results from consuming nature without knowing anything of it, a foreclosure of any possible mastery on those terms, the master as a literal dummy. Even though above, the master is outside the *technē* of reversing predications that convert nature to culture.<sup>28</sup> The slave is also outside of it, in the sense of being a “nobody,” an effect. But, as an *effective*, an “efficient cause,” the slave is an automaton/puppet–master who pulls strings so that the master may enjoy the show.

The master, like any audience, plays dead while the show is active. This death is an interval defined by the temporal duration of the work of art. As an interval, the master enjoys the momentum after the literal moment of death known as “between the two deaths.” The master — and the master *signifiers* that embody the principle of master — travels from a literal end to a symbolic one. This is the meaning of *Aufhebung*, preservation *via* the negative. With the calculus of metalepsis, we can immediately see what is happening. The house is a theater, whose bounds, < >, identify it as a site of exception. Its mimetic contents < ... > are, in the master’s literal house, the conversion of natural resources within the master’s domain, for consumption and enjoyment — a truly fundamental model of *aesthetics*. But, within this field of conversions (reversed predications), the insertion of the alien establishes a “story within a story,” a metaleptic site of exception within the original framed ex-ception.

Here is how the voice works in the house.<sup>29</sup> The “house” is also a temporal interval, the time between opening curtain and final bows. Between the slave and master is the stage of mimesis, the field of transformations, a “purely performative” zone of unlimited enjoyment, where each “predication” of nature by culture reproduces the irony of the situation.<sup>30</sup> We must also think of this as a literal stage. In the literal theater, the stage and auditorium alternate. While one is active, the other must remain silent. The result is a “square-wave condition,” an oscillation between two

positions without any middle state: i.e. pure anamorphosis,  $\varphi/-\varphi$ , with all its phallic and phenomenological implications.

Reconceptualize, if you will, the diegesis/mimesis calculus as an architecture of the theater, whose auditorium constitutes a place of the masters, the stage a field for predications and their reversals, and the back-stage a place of mechanisms, preparatory spaces, and stage-hands. The model “A<...stage...> B” has two “positions” that correspond to the  $\varphi$  and  $-\varphi$  of appearance:  $\varphi<...-\varphi...> \varphi$  and  $-\varphi<... \varphi...>-\varphi$ . That is, when the stage is active, the auditorium and back-stage must stay quiet. This axiom of theater performance allows a further insight into the master–slave relationship. Both are silent in relation to the field of production, <...>. The slave is silenced on a number of counts: lack of access to participation in the *polis* (Rancière), subservience to the will of the master (Hegel), and exclusion from *territory* as a range for free movement. The master is silenced by the irony of the master–slave relationship; in effect the master’s honor is transferred to the dead, the ancestors whose name provides honor and whose code of conduct (cf. the silent language of coats-of-arms as *emblemata*) constrains the living representative master. The former, in the language of magic substances, is fire (i.e. the hearth, the flame of the *polis*); the latter relates to earth. The interior of the field of predication is a matter of the exchange of fluids, wind for water, breath-soul into earth — the origins of the cosmos from Poseidon, and the subsequent theft of fire by Prometheus and release of mixed goods by his consort (pre-Hesiodic version) Pandora.

Such stories could go on and on with their sorites of reversed predications.<sup>31</sup> MORE?

### *A shout in the street*

At the point where mimesis is interrupted by the “extra-diegetic” (outside–the–frame) element, the show (= the house) takes on a different aspect. When Hegel says that only the slave is capable of subjective development, it is because only the slave (“automaton”) is able to conceive of freedom abstractly. *Dissensus* exists only in the abstract. Does this not contradict Rancière’s division of citizens and slaves according to those who “have a part” and those who “have no part”? I would argue that some answer lies by considering that those who, beside slaves, have no part, includes wives and daughters who, as representatives of the goddess of the hearth, Hestia, serve as intermediaries for the voice of the ancestral *manes*. This voice, brought forth by those who themselves are silenced by “having no part” in governance of the *polis*, establish a formidable and durable dialectic within Greek society. If those who have no part, i.e. the family’s wives and daughters, do not have access to *dissensus*, then what are *Lysistrata* and *Alcestis* all about? If these, as “slaves,” have access both the abstraction that promises subjective development, as well as the “acousmatical” silence within the Name/honor of the master, as well as the means to the divination practices of the hearth, then *exclusion* from the field of predication serves an essential purpose.<sup>32</sup>

As a “voice and nothing more,” this abstraction nonetheless requires a material architecture to resonate. It is a weak signal that can be amplified, stochastically, by surrounding noise. The

automaton of the slave joins with the voice of the master, as an anamorphic sound:  $\varphi/-\varphi$ . This is the oxymoron of “silent speech,” the noise in the system that resonates as *venustas*. The following account of how the forms of the fantastic facilitate *venustas* summarizes the account afforded by the calculus of metalepsis.

*The story in the story and its variations*

Metalepsis is essentially a “story in a story.” What appears inside the mimesis of representation, the “predicating frame,” is a framed content of what the story, as figure on the ground of non-story, must now serve as ground. The story in the story flips a switch. Mimesis now takes over the job of diegesis, constructing an apparatus of detachment and point of view around a new figure. Figure becomes ground; mimesis effects diegesis. Predication is reversed and metalepsis is viewed from the front row by an old audience who must now side with a new one.

In the new story, we realize that there have been all along, smoothed over by mimesis perhaps, a tension between antagonistic doubles, materializations of the reversed predication required in every link of the Great Chain of Being. In the conversion of master to slave and slave to master, we realize the full potentiality of the master–slave distinction. It is dynamic. Poets from ancient times have seen in this dynamic the shape of a wheel whose occupants have their fortunes reversed: the king is deposed, the pauper rises to majesty, the victor is vanquished. This is the stuff of stories, and as Northrop Frye famously argued, the types of stories, drawn from various arcs of this famous wheel, never fail to pay homage to Fortuna who sits at its center.

Like the hearth at the symbolic center and void of the house, guarded by silence and invisibility, Fortuna is still and her speech silent. When, in her role as an oracle, she is asked to give prophecy, her predictions are enigmatic, empty, paradoxical: “A great nation will fall,” she tells the general who believes that it will be his opponents taking the hit. When the story appears in the midst of a story, or a dream appears to be coming true inside the waking day, or the impossible-Real of *déjà vu* projects a past and a future simultaneously, or when we confront ourselves representing this past and future (as Scrooges of our own “Christmas Carol”), we employ the extimacy of metalepsis *without thinking* because the detached virtualities of the double, travel through time, contamination of reality by the dream, and the story in the story have smoothed the way. They are the stuff not just of fairy tales and science fiction, but of the everyday experienced by anyone who has noticed an uncanny resemblance or persistent rivalry, a coincidental event from a previous night’s dream, a “been here before” of *déjà vu*, or looked into the *mise en abyme* of barbershop mirrors.<sup>33</sup>

This is the recognizable architecture *dissensus*, the architecture of “what if” — potentialities imagined and materialized virtually in terms of actualities. Detached virtuality is not unreal. It is Real, more than continuous virtuality or digital realities. It communicates the uncanny of spatio-temporal violation *directly*. More the representations of reality, detached virtuality directly addresses the issue of the non-symbolizable nature of the Real and its uncanny effects of resistance.

Even in works of art where this is represented as a fiction, it is the experience of feeling, not the abstract idea, that is conveyed.

We should push further: is not the “what if” most visible in the aesthetic dynamics of works of art, particularly in performance arts that duplicate the time-space architecture of the act of reception in the *set itself*? The literal structure of the theater, with its entrained spaces of auditorium, stage, and backstage, already corresponds to the A<...>B model of the causal chain, and where the  $\phi/\neg \phi$  of appearance and disappearance are managed temporally and spatially on stage as well as in the plot’s control of the element of surprise. If the artwork on stage further replicates this A<...>B model in its set and plot, then we will be able to say that metalepsis has created a “true exception,” a site that finds “in itself more than itself.”

### *Rear Window*

I would prefer to use a film example so that the reader may have full access to the performance as it was intended to be experienced by the audience. I would also prefer an example where the A<...>B structure of the space of reception is also the design of the set and the temporal configuration of the plot. In this regard, Alfred Hitchcock’s 1954 film, *Rear Window*, shot entirely within a single set constructed inside the studio at Paramount, materializes A<...>B through the spatial reality of the urban interior courtyard. A “masters” B, A>B, when the point-of-view character, Jeff Jefferies (James Stewart), begins to spy on his neighbor, Lars Thorwald (Raymond Burr), a jewelry salesman who has come to resent his bed-ridden wife. From the vantage point of Jeff’s studio apartment, reversed predication organizes Jeff’s relation to Lars. Lars wife is an invalid who complains about their marriage.<sup>34</sup> Jeff is an invalid who complains to his visiting glamorous girlfriend, Lisa Fremont (Grace Kelly), that marriage is “just not a possibility.” Jeff>Lisa mirrors Anna>Lars. The story develops “stereognostically” between the two reversed predications.

Reversed predication is used for the film’s most dramatic plot point. When Lisa breaks into Thorwald’s apartment but is discovered (the police arrive just in time), she “signalizes” to Jeff while the police question her. She has found Anna Thorwald’s wedding ring and now points to it behind her back, facing Jeff who is watching through his camera from across the courtyard. Thorwald notices and realizes Jeff’s surveillance. This small object is itself a case of reverse predication (its detachment from Anna Thorwald means that Anna is dead), and it effects the reversed predication of Lars to Jeff, A<B, to trigger a high-suspense ending, a sequence that also employs a series of miniaturized reversed predications.

But, first, a word about silent speech and *dissensus* in works of art. Rancière’s argument that politics is aesthetic opens the way for a reversed predication, that works of art, special cases of the aesthetic, are also specifically political, in that *dissensus* is key to their successful reception by the audience who has been silenced during the performance. *Dissensus*, in the production of the work of art, involves the use of detached virtuality to effect a “site of exception,” a *venustas* within the

“normal space-time” of the everyday. In terms of the audience’s reception of the artwork, however, *dissensus* is really the only means of success. The audience cannot use a model of consensus. The audience cannot be required to have precisely the *same response* to a work of art, except at the level of emotion and affect — the pain or pleasure that come suddenly, without mediation — where individual knowledge would distort and delay this response. The audience is made up of all kinds of people, with all kinds of desires, expectations, and levels of comprehension. It would be impossible for the pleasure of the audience to be gauged to any one mode of understanding or desire. *Dissensus* allows the audience to “know without knowing” — to arrive simultaneously at the same points of emotional response despite differences in conception. People are happy for many different and sometimes unaccountable reasons, but all *feel* happiness in remarkably similar terms.

In their need to know without knowing, the audience is the master who by definition is “dead” for the duration of the work and must “not know” what is going on or how it was produced.<sup>35</sup> The slave is both the mechanization of images that make the illusion of continuous motion and sound possible as well as the constructions of acting and script that engineer the enjoyment of the audience through conversions of situations into aesthetic elements.

The ring is one of many anamorphs in the film. As  $\phi/-\phi$ , seen but then lost, it organizes the action around the penultimate project of recovery. A symbol of marriage, the ring also engages the theme of the wife, who seems to “have no part.” Jeff Jefferies is a “dead man” in several key senses. An accident during a film assignment has left him immobilized with a broken leg. It would be easy to advance the thesis that the film we watch is really the death dream Jeff has at the moment of the accident, that his convalescence is really an interval “between the two deaths” and that the ending, where his other leg is broken, is the symbolic terminus. At this point, however, his girlfriend Lisa, who throughout the film has been Jeff’s servant, Jeff>Lisa, wins her case for marriage, Jeff<Lisa, and the <...> sequence of predications by which Lisa converted Jeff’s surveillance to evidence that would “stand up” in court ( $\phi$ ), converge on the central clue of the wedding ring, whose detachment from Anna Thorwald,  $-\phi$ , indicates that Anna has been killed. When Lisa finds the ring in Thorwald’s apartment, she “signalizes” to Jeff as he watches through his telephoto lens from across the courtyard. Thorwald intercepts this signaling exchange and is able to reverse the predication that had allowed Jeff to master him, Jeff>Lars  $\rightarrow$  Lars>Jeff. In the final scene of the film, Lars discovers the location of Jeff’s apartment and confronts him with the intention to kill. Jeff stalls Lars’ attack using a supply of flash bulbs that blind Lars to the dark apartment. The series of flashes miniaturize the  $\phi/-\phi$  matheme literally, as Lars’ dark-adjusted eyes are surprised by a light surplus.

Within the horizontally organized courtyard, a few key verticalities establish how ideology seems to be imposed from above and countered from below. Horizontally, the courtyard constitutes a spatial basis for the anthology that structures the stories of each of the residents whose lives are now on view, thanks to the heat wave that has forced them to open their windows and blinds. Jeff is not so much a voyeur as a solitary audience of one for a show of the many. Yet, Hitchcock exploited the theme of voyeurism to attract audiences to an idea of ethical and legal violation. Jeff watches his

neighbors casually; his visiting nurse/masseuse warns him that he may be stepping over the line, especially when women remove clothing under the expectation of privacy they enjoy during cooler weather. The temperature of the heat wave is compared to the potential excitement of “seeing too much.”

Jeff converts the horizontality of his neighbors around the courtyard to a verticality through an optics that gives him professional visual advantage — first binoculars, then a long lens. We know that Jefferies’ spying is vertical because, in the opening scenes, a helicopter hovers over sun-bathers on a rooftop terrace. The pilot enjoys what Jeff cannot quite achieve from his studio apartment, a total interior view, a completely subjective objectivity.

Verticality is ideology if Jeff is simply enjoying this enhanced access, but it becomes *dissensus* when he undertakes the case of Anna Thorwald. The steps to this advocacy emphasize the vertical. Thorwald goes (down and) out in the early morning hours to dispose of whatever he’s carrying in his jewelry samples case. A small dog, lowered in a basket by a couple from their third floor balcony, attempts to dig up what may be Anna’s buried head. When the dog is killed, Hitchcock shifts dramatically to vertical camera angles taken from inside the courtyard, *upward*, to take up the case of the murdered dog.

When Lisa goes with the nurse to investigate the buried head (Lars has removed it), she takes the initiative to climb into Lars’ apartment — another vertical accession in response to the vertical dimensions of the crime. She discovers the wedding ring that, without the wife wearing it, proves that the woman Lars has installed to impersonate his wife is a fake. She cannot directly signal to Jeff; Lars has surprised her; his assault was interrupted just in time by the police but neither can she let them know she has found the wedding ring. She must “signalize.” While explaining herself to the police, she holds her hand behind her back. The ring is on her finger, and she must indicate this to Jeff. She points to it with her other hand, but Lars sees this gesture and quickly deduces how he was discovered. Jeff>Lars → Lars>Jeff. Lars’ vertical access (Jeff’s vertical access is limited to optics) is discovered “acousmatically.” Jeff had called Lars to get him out of his apartment with a fake blackmail threat. Lars then knew what Jeff’s voice sounded like, but the audience does not pay attention to this until Lars phones the most likely occupants of apartments opposite his and authenticates the location by the sound of Jeff’s voice when he answers. Jeff additionally “confesses.” He thinks the nurse Stella has called and lets slip his role in the break-in.

Lars, reduced to a slave by Jeff’s optics, now becomes an “equal other.” If we pay attention to the role of verticality, it is the ability of the equal other to “stand up to” any rival. The phallic aspect of the  $\phi$  comes into play. The slave, as  $-\phi$ , is the Hegelian master’s ironic substitute. When Jeff surveils Lars with his advanced optical equipment, the  $\phi$  reverts to its function as a glue of appearances. It stitches together the separate scenes of observation. It is “vertical” in its magical ability to overcome the distance of normal vision (cf. the helicopter proof). Optics and identity, the very elements of the Freudian uncanny, are combined in the idea of the vertical. The vertical, in

sum, is the gap that effects the reversed predication. It is the vertical climb to find the wedding ring. It is the basis of the “gotcha” moment when Lars discovers Jeff to be the witness to his crime. It is, in the end, Jeff’s fall that effects his “symbolic death” in his successful relationship with Lisa.

As is the case with comedies in general, one “wedding” is not enough. The correction of the vertical dimension, the murder of Anna Thorwald, has somehow led to predications that had been “delayed” by the melancholy of Jeff’s neighbors. Miss Lonelihearts, the spinster on the ground floor whose suicide was interrupted by music coming from The Composer’s third-floor studio, now visits him to listen to a recording of his successfully published song. Miss Torso, plagued by tall suitors, is overjoyed when her short Odysseus returns from the Army. The couple with “the dog who knew too much” have found a new pet, whom they initiate to the basket-drop to the courtyard. These “delayed predications” reverse the old, melancholy ones. The verticality of surprising coincidence has corrected the verticality of ideology. The symmetry that was latent, as potentiality, a case of  $-\phi$ , is now made visible,  $\phi$ . As horizontal glue, this  $\phi$  re-symmetrizes the courtyard as a site of exception, as the marriage idea overtakes the normal model of the city as a collection of strangers.

#### *The detached virtuality of Rear Window*

Without the devices of detached virtuality, the unity of the set, the plot, and the idea of *Rear Window*’s story would not have been established. The antagonism that made Jeff and Lars doubles in the sense of rivals and symmetrical opposites could not have been activated through Jeff’s surveillance or Lisa’s break-in. The double inscription of Thorwald’s apartment by the story of murder, which made it stand out in stark contrast to the other residents’ stories of simple insufficiency, would not have gained the status of a story in a story, the sub-plot of investigation set within the failing romance of Jeff and Lisa. The plot of *Rear Window*, like the “police procedural,” reverts to temporal reconstruction once the story of the crime is inserted within the story of failing romance. The wedding ring in particular establishes *in retrospect* the moment when Thorwald must have removed it from Anna’s dead hand. Clues point backward to the crime and forward to the necessary echo of punishment. Once details become clues, they are reversely predicated, and the gap between the two states of “just a detail” and “sign of a crime” is vertical, composite, and reciprocal.



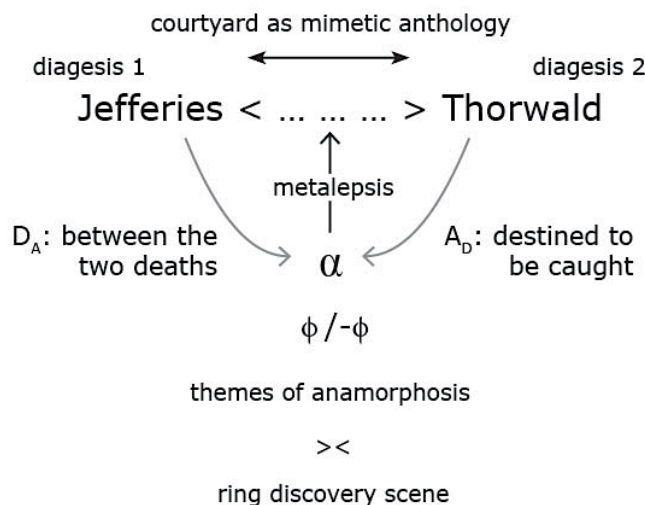


Figure 1.3. *Rear Window*'s mimetic field is the interior urban courtyard, which is a physical model of the anthology that narrates separate half-stories that will be joined in the end. This final collective marriage first requires a trial of economies managed by metalepsis. The framing elements, Jefferies' studio apartment and the Thorwalds' enfilade of three rooms, are thematized separately by the uncanny's two primary conditions. Jefferies is "between the two deaths," thanks to his broken leg; Thorwald is the living person who conceals the corpse of his wife, which will "signalize" his guilt as the details are converted into clues leading to his arrest and conviction.

When Jeff's policeman friend, Detective Lieutenant Thomas Doyle, argues that not all suspicious things are evidence of crimes, he is claiming essentially, "detail>sign-of-crime." When a detail becomes a clue, this predication is reversed: "detail<sign-of-crime." The gap between > and < is vertical, double, and bi-directional:  $\updownarrow$ . The downward verticality of crime calls for an upward correction. Even the historical punishment for murder, hanging, suggests that verticality is implicit in the logic of crime and punishment and crime's traditional close collaboration with ideology, as a publically accepted legal arrangement.<sup>36</sup>

The double vertical is the highway along which metalepsis travels to insert the spatio-temporality of detached virtuality within the mimesis of the initial story:  $A<... \updownarrow ...>B$ . We have, after all, a film whose story is about what the audience does in order to enjoy any film — watch from the protection of darkness, under imposition of silence. The opening credits make this clear as the "curtain" of the film is symbolized by slowly raising the three screens covering Jeff's apartment window. (The lowering of these same screens at the end of the film, conclusive evidence of Hitchcock's intention to signalize the relation of Jeff's voyeurism to the audience's, had been cut but added back with the restoration of the film in 1999.) The  $\updownarrow$  is equivalent to the  $\phi / -\phi$  of appearance and disappearance, which occurs in the gap between reversed predications as well. This is the gap that theory must "interrogate" in order to develop a comprehensive theory of *dissensus* in its relation to the architecture of sites of exception. One cannot collect sites of exception to put in a portfolio; one cannot even photograph a site of exception. What is "there" is the experience of the site. But, in works of art, the events that manage visibility and invisibility offer a guide to what happens outside

of art, in the world of politics simple. Here, the reversible dictum of “life copies art” proves true. Mimesis it seems is a two-way street. The intention to employ metalepsis, the recognition of the usefulness of each of the four forms of detached virtuality, and the explicit deployment of horizontality and visuality in both literal and figurative ways in works of art provide an extensive collection of laboratories to study the site of exception.

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## Endnotes

- 1 In addition to using the more extreme term, "slave," instead of "servant, I choose the characterization of homelessness so that we might connect the bottom of the power hierarchy with the condition of the uncanny, which in German retains the relationship to home: *Das Unheimlich*, the "unhomely." I hope to show that the relationship is neither casual nor accidental. Economically, housing for the "slaves" is controlled by some kind of master, even when free market forces supply it (e.g. the notorious sub-prime mortgage scheme of 2000–2007). The uncanny is about the margins that can occur as an internality — an "inside frame" — as well as an externality; and about the strangeness of things that should be familiar. Persons, places and things found at the bottom of the power pile seem to be formed with this relation in mind. Such is the case of the *homo sacer*, made famous by Giorgio Agamben's well-known *Homo Sacer: Sovereign Power and Bare Life* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press). A corresponding idea is that of the "Musselman," the figure born of concentration camps who, having lost all hope, moves about, barely alive, from abuse to abuse.
- 2 The bottom of the Pyramid of Power is mute and invisible in negative ways relative to the layers above but positively in the ways in which "slavery" converts to a mastery of nature, through skills and knowledge that will be unknown and invisible to the master in Hegel's parable of Lordship and Bondage. Villas of wealthy Romans provided special passageways so that slaves would be invisible until the moment they would appear to serve their masters. Their speech was limited by custom and law. In the positive sense, however, their skills and knowledge of the materials they converted for the enjoyment of their masters accumulated and was passed on, a kind of "mute speech" embedded in the material cause of production.
- 3 Jacques Rancière, "Introducing Disagreement," *Angelaki: Journal of the Theoretical Humanities* 9, 3 (2004): 6. Lacanians will immediately recognize the potential of Rancière's specific use of the term "appearing" as related to the phallic function of sudden appearance and disappearance as well as perceptual psychology's "phi function." The  $\phi$  is also the magician's bread and butter, no less the psychoanalyst's. The  $\phi$  and  $-\phi$ , in oscillation with each other, contain not just a simple "now you see it now you don't" functionality but an entire logic of visibility and blindness, a means of concealing within (ideological) content of experience an alternative sensorial program, i.e. anamorphosis in the most general sense. The appearance of the  $\phi$  and  $-\phi$  is that of the composite "partial object," exiled originally to the periphery but suddenly revealed within the central interior, a *monstrum* of the margin and marginality.
- 4 Steve Corcoran, "Editor's Introduction, in Jacques Rancière, *Dissensus: On Politics and Aesthetics*, ed. and trans. Steve Corcoran (London and New York: Continuum), 2.
- 5 Rancière and others have noted that aesthetics as a "science of art" is not historically valid. This specialized application occurred well after the classic texts on aesthetics, Baumgarten's ... and Kant's *Critique of*

*Judgment*, inspired by Edmund Burke, *A Philosophical Enquiry into the Origin of Our Ideas of the Sublime and Beautiful* (1757) appeared.

- 6 Jacques Rancière, *The Politics of Aesthetics: The Distribution of the Sensible*, trans. Gabriel Rockhill (London and New York: Continuum, 2004), 12. The “parts” Rancière means are those that define parts of society, some of whom are empowered to speak and others, the slaves, remain silent. The idea of “silent speech” becomes a component of Hegel’s theory of how the slave develops consciousness of freedom as an idea; but prior to this it is a literal silent speech that is implicit in the irony of the master-slave relationship. My suggestion is to read Rancière somewhat literally and consider a “place of the voice” where “spaces, times, and forms of activity” come together architecturally, e.g. as a site of the political, thanks to a use of the special forms of virtuality that commend the exterior to the interior and *vice versa*. This is a claim to find in Rancière, “more than Rancière himself,” a kind of *agalma*; but what is knowledge other than the collective discovery of just such unconscious remainders?
  
- 7 It is necessary to distinguish autopoiesis based on human thought and behavior from that developed by Maturana and ..., and later appropriated by Niklas Luhman and then adopted to architecture by Patrik Schumacher. The difference goes back to the calculus that gave rise to Maturana and ...’s biological concept and, more to the point, Niklas Luhman’s sociology. The point of George Spencer-Brown’s non-numerical calculus where the “form re-enters itself,” inscription or recursion, is critical. As one of Spencer-Brown’s most lucid commentators has put it, all of number theory is involved. There is no longer the question of a neat division of spaces and times, but rather a constantly vibrating instability (“square wave”) that calls for resolution based on an inscription of the temporal within the spatial, and *vice versa*. This appears to happen in nature, as in the case of natural grown patterns employing the Fibonacci series, but the principle of recursion in human thought and culture is not geometrical. It is not a pattern that can be imposed or an algorithm that generates endless “formless forms.” It is the logic of the uncanny, irony, and miracle. It cannot be domesticated, reduced to logic, or made to generate the everyday, as has been the aim of those who see recursion as nature rather than culture. It is permanently and durably “exceptional” and, thus, the stuff of the unconscious and the political.
  
- 8 Slavoj Žižek, *Less than Nothing* (New York: Verso, 2012), 467. Maturana and Varela’s writings are provocative and engaging, however, but the tendency is to return to the Hegelian dialectic and, in particular, the ability of thought to work within a metonymy of parts to refer to wholes — hence the need to focus on metalepsis, the “metonymy of a metonymy” that describes how the diegetically formed point of view re-enters the mimetic form it had originally framed and detached.
  
- 9 Vico is barely recognized for his effective distribution of clues extending the autopoiesis expounded in *The New Science* throughout works where its effects are actualized in biography and reader response. For example, in *The New Science*, Vico discusses objects shown in the frontispiece in great detail — all except one, the helmet of Hermes. This gap is itself a gap, located in a corner of the image and anchoring it in the fashion of Roman herms, boundary markers used to warn strangers against trespass of fields and tombs. These markers were known for their phallic decorations and overlap with the two-faced Janus. Hermes, who among his other divine duties was the responsible for conducting dead souls to Hades, guarded the secret of the boundary, the gap. Vico connected this gap to *ingenium*, which he described as a wedge (*caelum*), whose name in Latin also meant aether, the blue sky which, in ancient times, was required for making oaths. Hermes was also the god of tricky oaths, where wording and ambiguity might be employed to relieve the swearer of an onerous debt.
  
- 10 Kunze, Donald. “Skiagraphy and the *Ipsum* of Architecture,” *Architecture and Shadow*, *Via XI* (1990): 62–75. Niklas Luhman seems unaware of or unimpressed by the demonstration that comes at the end of George Spencer-Brown’s *Laws of Form*, where the mathematician shows how his calculus is able to go one step further than Boolean logic in the analysis of Lewis Carroll’s famous puzzle form, the *sorites*. This logical paradox lists a series of predications that seem at first to be random. Spencer-Brown’s calculus formalizes this predication series and goes about re-ordering the “delayed predications” concealed within it to uncover a root predication that, as a remainder, had ordered the original whole. This exercise reveals the full power of a “boundary language” with respect to any mimetic field able to conceal/reveal an extimate position allowing the “demonic” event of exception, the exception that, as the cliché advises, proves the rule. The rule (mimesis as an ordered field of affordance, Aristotle’s *tuchē*) does indeed need just such a proof or guarantee, and Vico

recognized this in his concept of a “proof of the body” (*New Science*, §345), which Lacan duplicated in his idea of a *corps morcelé* that was generated retroactively in the subject’s confrontation with its spectral (Imaginary) ideal ego, preparatory to the entry of the ego subject into the Symbolic, the network of symbolic social relations. The *corps morcelé* is a “distribution of parts” but not just a “mess,” as many would read. It is the basis of hysteria, and the discourse of hysteria, where the body is able to identify with a field of causes and effects, allowing any one part to construct a metalepsis, a “psychoanalytical true.” Lacan’s discourse of the hysteric places the concealed predicate ( $S_1$ ) in the position of the Other, and it is the subjectified object-Other that, as master signifier, reveals the new order. This is precisely what Vico would have done had he reduced his *New Science* to an explicit calculus. As it stands, Vico revealed his  $S_1$  in the form of an autobiographical admission, part fiction, that as both “god and demon” he put himself in the specific position of humanistic discovery. This metalepsis has never been given full credit, despite Vico’s over-determining clues throughout his books and lectures.

- 11 For Vico’s account of the imaginative universal see *The New Science*, §381, §460, §809, §1033. Vico’s imaginative universal is the first case of reversed predication, and Vico is the first thinker to realize the importance of this phenomenon. The first humans, experiencing the thunder as a manifestation of fear, turn the particularity of the experience into a universal, with constructing any logical relations between the attributes of thunder and fear. In making the thunder into a universal, the made (the perception of thunder as fear) becomes, *immediately*, “the true.” Few Vichian scholars have recognized the significance of *verum ipsum factum* in relation to the imaginative universal; none have identified the role of reversed predication in this regard. Incapable of irony, the first humans heard the thunder as a literal word of the sky. The irony, as Vico notes, is that the first humans themselves were authors of this word. *New Science*, §379.
- 12 The background of this argument goes back to Giambattista Vico’s discovery of the meaning of *factum*, as both something made and something true in the human sense. This is not simply true as in a logical “truth claim,” but as self-knowledge, i.e. self-consciousness. Humans embed self-consciousness into their creations, but the relationship is ironic. Hence, the epithet most often used to summarize Vico’s theories, *verum ipsum factum* (loosely, “we may know that which we have made ourselves”) is both ironic and based on irony, the fact that the *factum* conceals what is true about its fabrication and fabricator. Truth is thus a reserve not revealed except through the exertions of critical theory required to overcome self-reference as a logical paradox. Giambattista Vico, *On the Most Ancient Wisdom of the Italians Unearthed From the Origins of the Latin Language Including the Disputation with the Giornale de’ letterati d’Italia*, trans. L. M. Palmer (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1988). Those who would say that language has already been taken into their account of autopoiesis have reduced language beforehand to what cognition would prefer to believe: this is a phonetic model that excludes what Mladen Dolar (*A Voice and Nothing More*, 2006) has identified as the “acousmatic remainder” and Lacan constructed within the concept of the *mi-dire*, the “half speech” form truth is required to take.
- 13 The repertoire of the subjective objective is too great to expound here, but the menu includes the “partial objects” that Freud identified and Lacan expanded (breast, feces, phallus, gaze, voice) as well as the cross-inscribed conditions of the uncanny, the living person drawn to a fated end and the dead person who has “forgotten how to die” and must continue to wander until the point of symbolic as opposed to actual death (Lacan’s “between the two deaths”). The cross-inscription that produces the subjective object,  $O_s$ , symmetrically creates the objective subjectivity of interpellation,  $S_o$ , the void at the kernel of the subject formed by the inscription of the enigmatic commands of the Other of ideology (Louis Althusser). Interpellation is effective because the inside frame established by this objective subjectivity uses its location to dissociate the subject’s unity and treat the subject and subjectivity as a field. Thus, there is no external location for ideology but, rather, a lack in the subject that is filled by the involuntary and inexpressible idea of duty, allegiance, fidelity to an unnamed cause that promises to make the subject whole but, usually, only at the expense of death.
- 14 Gérard Genette, *Narrative Discourse, an Essay in Method*, trans. Jane E. Lewin (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University, 1980).
- 15 These four themes (the story in the story, the double, travel through time, and the contamination of reality by the dream or fiction) are cited by James E. Irby in his introduction to Jorge Luis Borges, *Labyrinths, Selected*

*Stories and Other Writings*, ed. Donald A. Yates and James E. Irby (New York: New Directions, 1962), xviii. Borges' original summation is not cited.

- 16 Ernst Jentsch, "Zur Psychologie des Unheimlichen," *Psychiatrisch-Neurologische Wochenschrift*, 8, 22 (August 26, 1906): 195–98; and 8, 23 (September 1, 1906): 203–05. For Lacan's idea of "between the two deaths," see "Slavoj Žižek, Key Ideas: Influences," <http://www.lacan.com/zizekchro1.htm>, accessed July 1, 2013. Although Lacan centralizes the story of Antigone, the general relevance of this theme to culture, religion, and folklore are evident by connecting to the most proximal term in ethnography, *katabasis*, the theme of descent. See this entry in August Friedrich von Pauly, Georg Wissowa, *et alia*, *Realencyclopädie der classischen Altertumswissenschaft* (Stuttgart, München: Alfred Druckenmüller, 1894-1980).
- 17 Reversed predication is not a term commonly found outside formal linguistics. I propose a more general use, to cover the varied kinds of reversals involving containment: possession, control, membership, figure-ground, etc. The Russian expression, "without songs there are no birds" captures the idea of reversed predication perfectly. Reversed predication is a case of synecdoche, the substitution of a part for a whole, and as such takes up the logic of metalepsis, where the diegetic point of view "contaminates" the mimetic interior of framed spaces and events. Such contamination is the stuff of nursery stories and fairy tales, as when an object, such as a ring, takes possession of the wearer. The mechanics of charms and imitative images and figures such as Voodoo dolls are cases of reversed predication, where the device has an inexplicable efficacy, transcending both the scale of hierarchy (part dominates whole) and physical dimensions (a double exercises control even over great distances and times).
- 18 A calculus in non-mathematical terms is any means of describing and understanding change. In this case, the change is the transformation involving topology and effects brought about through attempts to frame topology — attempts destined to fail, where failure itself is a desired effect. Thus, a calculus of autopoiesis should begin with Hegel's idea of negation and, in particular, with the parable of Lordship and Bondage, where the master fails to get the recognition he seeks.
- 19 Rancière, *The Politics of Aesthetics*, 12.
- 20 This corresponds to Jacques Lacan's idea of language as a series of "sliding signifiers," abbreviated by his matheme of  $S_2$ . The  $S_2$  includes any network of symbolic relations defining the subject in relation to Others. Its boundary features are, on the dominant side, the Master Signifier, which Žižek has described as an effect turned into a cause,  $S_1$ . On the side of the element without will, so to speak, is the condition of the Aristotelian *automaton*, natural chance. When these elements combine to re-enter the horizontal ground of mimesis, the form, among other things, the famous Freudian Thing and the Lacanian "partial object," where *automaton* becomes absolute and tyrannizing autonomy.
- 21 It is possible to think of the Great Chain of Being as the Imaginary, the field of predications as Symbolic, and the series of conversions of nature to culture as Real. [MORE ...]
- 22 Genette, *Narrative Discourse*, 234ff. Genette defines metalepsis as a violation of the rules that normally prohibit the "diegetic" point of view, the implied or actualized narrator, from entering the mimetic interior of the story. Inscription of this "external" element to the interior of the mimetic imposes special conditions on how it may refer to its status. The diegetic element cannot signal this directly, rather it must "signalize." Its presence, muted by its mimetic environs, must somehow resonate in a general way.
- 23 See, for example, how the concept of the *holon*, coined by Arthur Koestler in his book *The Ghost in the Machine*, attempts to cover the same ground as the detail of metalepsis: autonomy (e.g. automism), inscription (function as both a part and whole), and information (revelations about the order of the system). Koestler did not see just how human machines could be, and held the metaphor in check, as an emergent property. Had Koestler allowed his system of holons to draw from Hegelian dialectic, his "holarchy" would have approximated Hegel's mimetic field of affordance, saturated with the logic of conversion needed to allow for the exception filled by the idea of the ghost. Koestler's missed opportunity led to needless oppositions, for example the contrast of chaos and order in the idea of the "heap."

- 24 [Žižek's example of the prisoners who locked arms in the face of gunfire ...]
- 25 The *poinçon* carries an alluring set of associations. It is at once the punch made by the conductor to cancel the tram/train ticket, the mark of authenticity made by silversmiths on the bottom of their works, and an enclosure made by the conditions of scale dysfunction, the “too little and too much” of language and other networks of Symbolic relations. My application of the *poinçon* as one variation on the use of < and > as boundary markers and set brackets argues in effect that authenticity is both extimate and expandable. The scale dysfunctionality of extimacy arises out of the negative, the idea of cancellation embodied by the conductor's punch.
- 26 G. W. F. Hegel, “Lordship and Bondage,” *The Phenomenology of Spirit*, trans. A. V. Miller (Oxford, UK: Clarendon Press, 1977).
- 27 Elsewhere I have described how the *manes*, also elaborated as household gods, the *lares* and *penates*, were consulted under the guidance of the wives and daughters who served as “priestesses of Hestia,” at the household hearth, the site of domestic exception required to maintain the Name of the Father. Lacan never fully connected to this trove of ancient lore, but Vico anticipated Lacan by situating his paradigm, the performative clearings in the primordial forests, as a place of the voice. This voice, clearly, was what Harold Bloom (*Anxiety of Influence*, 1973) might cite as *apophrades*, the return of the dead as a voice of advice or warning — the prophetic voice of augury. Domestication of the collective public practice by wives and daughters retained the key elements of fear and knowledge of the future. The *manes* might easily be alarmed by what they heard or saw in the household, hence the hearth was shielded from the view of strangers, and, like a bugging device everyone knows about but whose presence must be kept secret, family conversations has to guard against speaking ill of the dead.
- 28 It is no accident that advertising rhetoric emphasizes mastery in the use of complex gadgetry that the user controls without knowing anything about — “No user-servicable parts inside!” Thus, services as well as goods operate in a zone of dumbness, literal and ideological silence, while the automata of marketing harvest the surplus goods (keystrokes, consumer choices, social networks, etc.) of their “clients,” whom they praise as masters. See Todd McGowan, *The End of Dissatisfaction? Jacques Lacan and the Emerging Society of Enjoyment* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2004).
- 29 The terms “voice” and “house” are meant in the most general and universal sense. I connect this to my earlier work with the hearth, where the voice is that the ancestral dead and the house is defined by the family of the husband, the *manes* — again, a conclusive proof of the essential connection of these terms. But, a “house” can be anything from an astrological sign to a theater to the *polis* where the voice is a “shout in the street.” Without conflating all meanings into a beige mush, it is necessary to see the fractal economics that orders all of these examples and scales.
- 30 In this light, the computer or other “smart object” interface is a stage of predications (false or forced choices) manned at either end by a master-as-dummy and automation algorithms that process, configure, and redirect the by-products of use: searches, internet shopping, social media and correspondence, etc. The “square-wave” function that links these together will be taken up later, but initially it is the ideological structure of silence within the ironic master-slave relationship that pits the political with ideology.
- 31 See, for example, Roberto Calasso, *Literature and the Gods* (New York: Knopf, 2001). We might observe, amidst the conflicting accounts of the gods and demons of antiquity, the general necessity *for* conflict, which if modeled along the lines of contradiction combined in any one figure,  $A/\sim A$ , requires negation to be opened internally as a field of potentialities:  $A<\dots>\sim A$ . This is the curious self-incurred limitations of the ancient gods and heroes, which modern readers find so difficult to grasp.
- 32 Nicole Loraux, *The Children of Athena: Athenian Ideas about Citizenship and the Division between the Sexes* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1993).
- 33 Dorrit Cohn and Lewis S. Gleich. “Metalepsis and Mise en Abyme,” *Narrative* 20, 1 (2012): 105–114. The authors' project of expanding metalepsis does not go far enough, i.e. it falls short of escaping the world of fictional narrative. They have even missed the case that disproves their rule, that “One searches in vain for

- cases of a fundamental destruction of the narrative situation in the first person.” That case is, for close readers, Iris Murdoch’s *The Philosopher’s Pupil* (1983). I would argue that Nabokov’s *The Real Life of Sebastian Knight* (1941) or *Pale Fire* (1962) also does this, but that Nabokov is too clever to be easily discovered on this matter. For an extensive investigation of the significance of the double as rival in culture and thought, see René Girard, *Violence and the Sacred* (Baltimore and London: John Hopkins University Press, 1977).
- 34 The master-slave thematic is already present in Jeff Jefferies’ single name, the Name of the Father. In the opening scene we read his name inscribed on his cast, where a friend has jokingly inscribed, “Here like the broken bones of L. B. Jefferies.” The reference to the standard tombstone inscription complements this instruction on Jeff’s name. As a death narrative, Jeff is “between the two deaths,” the literal and the symbolic. Viewed as a tale of the supernatural (i.e. the audience imagines it is following Jeff in the zone past the point of death, as in the film, *The Sixth Sense*), this allows Jeff as POV narrator to make substitutions that fill out his illusion that he is not dead — familiar settings, old friends, likely situations. His task, begun with the discovery of the “death of an innocent,” inverts his own conflict with Lisa and switches her death for his, but the geometry is preserved. If the audience doesn’t buy the death narrative possibility, the metrics remain. Jeff must convalesce for a specified period of time before returning to life as normal. His curiosity as a photographer is optimized by the heat wave, as residents must live close to open windows and doors. His natural investigative imagination intensifies with his perception of symmetries between his situation and Thorwald’s — i.e. the failure to find a happy marriage. Either way, the interval “between the two deaths” defines the time of the film.
- 35 The famous requirement, the “willing suspension of disbelief,” is informative. It is a double negative. Belief is based on knowledge of correspondence and proved with tests of authenticity and sense reliability. Disbelief, the negative state of this, can itself be negated, by suspending the demand for such tests. During this suspension, new tests can be substituted: sympathy for characters, the reliability of the point-of-view, the continuity and logic of narration. To manage this, authors frequently plant characters who represent audience skepticism. In the case of *Rear Window*, there are two: the unsympathetic figure of Detective Doyle and the highly sympathetic character, Jeff’s girlfriend Lisa Freemont. When Lisa suspends her disbelief, she invites the audience to “start from the beginning.” This beginning is about the transfer of credibility from the exterior of the work of art to the interior.
- 36 [This requires an explanation and expansion ...]