

The Hysteric's House

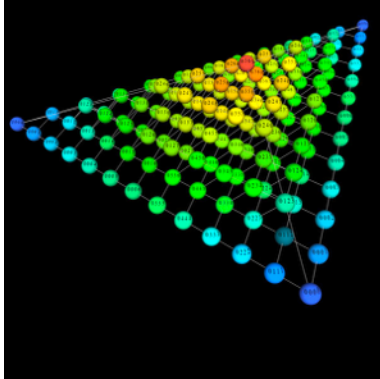


Figure 1. Clifton Callender, Ian Quinn, and Dmitri Tymoczko, *Science* 320: 346-348 (2008): “Western musicians traditionally classify pitch sequences by disregarding the effects of five musical transformations: octave shift, permutation, transposition, inversion, and cardinality change. We model this process mathematically, showing that it produces 32 equivalence relations on chords, 243 equivalence relations on chord sequences, and 32 families of geometrical quotient spaces, in which both chords and chord sequences are represented.”

“... The only place on earth where all places are — seen from every angle, each standing clear, without any confusion or blending.” [“The Aleph,” Jorge Luis Borges,]

Ideology in science, philosophy, and thinking in general typically begins with the suppression of knowledge. We can think of this as a secret or scandal concealed from the general public to preserve a marketed personality or reputation, or the concealment of data, such as Volkswagen’s modification of car computer designs so that emissions levels would be reported below the limit. But, more generally, consciously suppressed knowledge to further a cause, once suppressed, enters into a general category of suppressed knowledge — *the* most general category — that is to say, the unconscious. This is particularly evident when what is suppressed is still known by everybody, and suppression stands alone as an act whose validity is defended “against all odds,” as in Donald Trump’s insistence on Obama’s wiretapping or, before that, Obama’s illegitimate citizenship status. At the point where “the secret is out,” a blender effect takes place, where the lie becomes more significant than the corrected facts, and the claim that depended on the lie becomes raw, blatant, and ever more insistent. At this point, ideology shifts from the modality of intentional manipulation of information for the sake of power to a region of self-sufficiency, self-replication, and self-maintaining dynamics. It is the Thing-in-itself, the object that has freed itself of the “subjectivity” that would be required to justify interest in it, the organ that has ceased to need the body. Established outside the symbolic

chain in order to cover up for the fact of a gap in that chain, its metonymy is “reverse engineered.” No longer a stopgap, a place-holder, it becomes a generating center, radiating its own system of relations, a new economy of libidinal fascination with the excess of information it has released.

Like the unconscious in its “side-kick” role as a Boswell taking notes on everything that Dr. Ben Johnson thought and said, this unconscious works through the offices of *jouissance* in the position of Truth, as we find it in Jacques Lacan’s of the Hysteric.¹ This could be written as $/a$, the *objet petit a* beneath the bar that indicates that, for hysteria to “get on with it,” a truth has to be suppressed, and this truth is the enjoyment that will, on behalf of the hysteric’s demands on the Other, S_1 , the “master” or “master signifier,” pretend to be pain, anguish, distress. “You’re not telling me everything you know!” screams the hysteric who is at the same time getting off on this shriek. When this truth is forced out of the equation what happens? A *poché* is created beneath the Other in the form of suppressed knowledge, $/S_2$, the historical form of which is the unconscious. This *poché* is a $/space^2$ whose position echoes that of *jouissance*, and here we should

¹ Jacques Lacan, *The Other Side of Psychoanalysis* (New York: Norton, 2007).

² The $/space$ designation works for situations that are analogous to “Under the Boardwalk” and “Up on the Roof,” both hit songs of the 1960s *a cappella* quartet The Persuasions. Such spaces inevitably couple the excuse of getting away from summer heat with romantic privacy, thermal Eros.

think of the blues song form of call and response. Think in musical terms that the call and response is an economy of *delay*, that the question-and-answer paradigm is itself language-like in its dynamism of *postponement*. Like the classic Shannon-Weaver communications model with its Sender on the left and Receiver on the right, Lacan's *mathemes* are essentially instructions about how time is incorporated into meaning or, rather, how temporality's delay creates, through an absence, the idea of meaning as something "outside of time."³ This is an outside we can never experience directly. The dynamic of every "now" is palintropic: every "that" requires a "this" so that "this-and-that" will be presented in an alternating sequence. Synthesis will happen in memory, but this is always a virtual construction. The meaning we arrive at at the end of the sentence requires a retroactive revision of what we encountered at the beginning of the sentence. Every idea in language is therefore an *anacoluthon*, a final revision of what we first thought in light of what we finally encounter.

Meaning is thus a matter of arrival, and for the hysteric that arrival is the "second coming" of *jouissance*, following a delay when coming was ruled out in the beginning. This delayed coming afforded the accumulation of secrets collected and hidden in specific ways, so specific in fact that we can define with considerable precision this logic of collecting, which goes on automatically, "running in the background," and the structure of the accumulation, which we could compare to a museum that perversely re-arranges its exhibits so that the directory leads the visitor on a wild goose chase. This kind of museum has been famously used before by thinkers who knew what they were doing (though playing hysterics rather than authoritarian masters), namely the Platonic dialogues where the thinker invites ridicule. The wild goose chase is nothing less than dialectic, a big joke if we are to take Žižek's connection of dialectic to the *Witz*

$$\frac{\$}{a} \longrightarrow \frac{S_1}{S_2}$$

Figure 2. Lacan's *matheme* for hysteria essentially repeats the thesis of Callender, Quinn, and Tymoczko, namely that harmony, on behalf of its *temporary* loss and return of enjoyment, will find interpretation, S1, lacking precisely in a way that produces an unconscious harmony that, because unconscious, can achieve the *palintonos harmoniē* that would be unrealizable in the "tropic" temporality of S2 as a numerator, as it is in the "ideology" *matheme* of the University.

joke form seriously, a postponement of meaning as a shuffle between thesis and antithesis, where synthesis exists as a recognition that a meaning was there "all the time" in the thesis.⁴ The ground plan of the /S2 museum is that of the Thesean labyrinth, a fractal that repeats its ABA form at two or sometimes three levels, insuring that all of the "musical transformations" that Callender, Quinn, and Tymoczko claim are

³ Lacan expressly detaches the discourse *mathemes* from any attempt to sequence historical stages at any scale; yet, the "suppression-and-return" of the element in the position of Truth, plus the articulation of an "Other" who validates the agent positively or negatively become the "signatures" of historical periods as well as narrative structures.

⁴ Slavoj Žižek, *The Most Sublime Hysteric: Hegel with Lacan*, trans. Thomas Scott-Railton (Cambridge, UK, and Malden, MA: Polity Press, 2014), 21–34.

thrown out once we seek to interpret, i. e. once we subject S2 to the rule of an S1 “master plan.”⁵ The collection, the hysteric’s museum, is about harmonics, about *palintonos harmoniē*, whose etymology reveals that it is taken from the idea of the architectural detail, the *first detail*, namely the ABA of the labyrinth invented by Dædalus. ABA is precisely what Žižek says about Hegel, namely that the synthesis is the “same” as the thesis, but different by virtue of its position, its thirdness. A recognizes itself as a twin separated at birth, *jouissance* that has been first lost and later returned to its rightful owner, the same but different, and this difference is an infra-thin (Duchamp) membrane inserted into the middle of being: time.



Figure 3. The wings on Metafisica’s head and Hermes’ helmet are sufficient marginal not-all suggestions to open the reader to the hypnosis necessary to read *The New Science* in the proper mode of the Psyche, the ~~woman~~ who is both at the margin and center of the *enjoyment* of the text.

Time for the hysteric is delay, just as it is with the poet who must hypnotize the listener into a cataleptic trance for the duration of the poem. *Poiesis* should in fact be read as “construction of a time outside of time within which the body of the audience of the work of art is held stationary.” Like standard hypnosis, this time-out-of-time begins with a repeated suggestion at the margin of the listener’s attention, a suggestion that, on account of its occupation of the frame of the conversation (it is the original “not-all” that Lacan used to define the ~~woman~~ in relation to the phallic rule of either/or), allows the listener to “obey without obeying.” The listener responds *in kind*, being only marginally asleep in the same way that the instruction was marginally imposed. Being awake while being asleep is another word for the unconscious. Control is possible, but it is impossible to say who (or what) is controlling whom.

If hypnosis makes anything possible, it is the ability of the subject to escape identity within the Symbolic that in conscious life defines subjectivity in general through (ideological) suppression of certain truths. The subject *as* subject is analogous to the hypnotized person who is able to hear instructions in one register and follow them in another. This is the “Cretan Liar” dynamic, where the *énoncé* or Content of “All Cretans are liars” runs contrary to the speaking *act*, the *énonciation*, which if considered palintonically would produce the “pain” of contradiction. So the pain is the *jouissance* that must leave the equation/*matheme* but will place itself at a distance, palintonically, to radiate its metonymic power. It is the star at which Thales must gaze in order to mistake the well for a

⁵ Clifton Callender, Ian Quinn, and Dmitri Tymoczko, “Generalized Voice-Leading Spaces,” *Science* 320, 346 (2008); DOI: 10.1126/science.1153021. I am grateful to Alireza Moharrar, Engineer, poet, and mathematical philosopher who advocates a geometrical music theory based on a simplicial view of tonality. He describes this theory as the “harmonic nature of electromagnetic induction in a transformer, where you do not see any movement but where there is rotation in phasor space.”

solid footing.⁶ The mind of any (hysteric) interested in *enjoying* the True must hypnotically put itself to sleep in order to connect to the stars that direct it. This simultaneously silences the downward-pointing component of S1 and converts its upward-pointing component to flight — the customary symbolic wings that appear on the temples of Metafisica and Hermes in Giambattista Vico's *dipintura*.

The marginal reader of Vico's *New Science*, the woman/not-all, is the hysteric with the bar down the middle, which in this *matheme* is the sign of sitting on the fence between consciousness and unconsciousness, the Janusian guardian of /S2, the collation of things knowable only under condition that they are rejected. It is not for nothing that Callender, Quinn, and Tymoczko reject interpretation, S1. It is in S1's claim to order "the low" (experiential details) by means of the "high" principles of a logistic paradigm that the hysteric asserts an alternative modal harmony involving (in Callender, Quinn, and Tymoczko's terms) octave shift, permutation, transposition, inversion, and cardinality change. We can see the correspondence between these five terms and three standard "architectural issues," scale, transformation, symmetrical mirroring. Inversion and cardinality change, whatever Callender *et al.* mean by this, are the more rarified commodities — barely present in contemporary architectural theory — of *extimité*, and contronymics. Extimity is the English version of the term Lacan coined to describe the "inside-out" of discourse; the way in which consciousness must construct an "Other" in relation to its desire, an Other who will make its presence felt in the subject at the Other's precise antipode: the subject's interior void. Extimity is the construction of an "inverter gate" relationship, a "cross-inscription" of two opposed terms at positions within each other that itself internally mirrors the oppositional relationship imagined as an exterior condition. This $A_B \rightarrow B_A$ is, in its symmetry-through-inversion, a condensation of negation as a force. It is a gap and, like a gap in an electrical circuit, the point at which voltage, thanks to its "static" or a-temporal (palintonic) structure, activates a flow (Lacan: discourse) that operates palintropically in such a way that time, as an idea, results.

This is hypnosis at its best. The inverter gate of extimity/cross-inscription paralyzes the earth-bound subject so that wings may sprout from its unconscious. In this newly liberated domain, Callender *et alia*'s cardinality not only changes, it carries the interests of inversion into a fully "contronymic" composite binary. East is no longer *versus* west, it is *eastwest*. North and south are *northsouth*. The object no longer stands in opposition or agreement with the subject's wishes or desires, it is a subjective object just as the subject is now "object-tuned" and able to influence things with words. This is another way of saying that the inverter gate of hysteria unties the knots holding the autoerotic unconscious in its place beneath the ideology of the master signifier and, still as /S2, activates it as a "treasure of signifiers." This "crazy-house museum," where the visitors get a guidebook printed in ink that vanishes as soon as they try to read the letters, is a space equipped with a floating Aleph device, a hole in its space through which the air of reality is inhaled by a "divine agency" on Another Side, then breathed back again along a northsouth-type meridian.

⁶ The anecdote about the philosopher-astrologer Thales falling into a well because he was regarding the stars is subtle. Conventionally it is used to ridicule philosophy's obsession with higher truths while ignoring the obvious lower facts. Plato, in the *Theaetetus* demolished this short-sell by repeating the story in light of the *necessity* of truth to absent itself from everyday events that would (palintropically) force it to falsify its project. Thales held that all phenomena were the result of interactions of universal unchanging elements that varied only in the proportions they took when combined. Looking at the celestial analogs of these elements, the stars, incurs the liability of falling into wells at one's feet. Only in our "mortality mode" do we care whether or not Thales falls into the well. As fellow angels, we see the necessary connection between his drowning and his ongoing heaven-ward gaze.

All vector-meridians that shoot simultaneously in two directions pass through this Aleph, another name for which is “once upon a time.” All shots are aimed at Zeno’s bull’s eye, arrows that forget their assignments once they start putting their travelled time into X/Y fractions. X of Y constructs an infinity along the line by which ordinary desire constructs its target and then proceeds toward it as fast as possible. The X/Y delays this errand, not just indefinitely, but *infinitely*. Cantor was to discover this in his formula for the transfinite, where number sequence was divided and shuffled like a deck of cards: 1/4, 2/3, 3/2, 4/1 would be a typical section taken through his array, reading palindromically left to right across the numerator line, left to right along the denominators. In John Conroy’s “look and say” analogy, Cantor’s transfinite would read “one 4, two 3’s, three 2’s, and four 1’s.” Stacking these in sequence gives us a bottom of 1’s (1111) and rows above that each lose a “brick”: 1111, 222, 33, 4. This allows us to start from a corner at the bottom and construct self-similar triangles — the essence of architectural *firmitas* — 1, 11/2, 111/22/3, 1111/222/33/4 — so that we can model the way that a collection in the mad museum can add single elements to the top of a pile that grammatically modify the whole yet retain the *status of a (trans)infinite* series. The stars. When we look down, /S2, we fall into this well and realize that Thales has set up Eratosthenes to experiment with using a well to calibrate his experiment to the precise time of the summer solstice. This “southnorth” converts to a “northsouth” thanks to his spatial “delay” — a trip to Syene some 5000 stadia from the well — where a *shadow* would measure the well’s “arrow” arriving at the “target” of the center of the earth. Two arrows would meet at that target, an actual “solar” one, and the virtual *psyche* arrow, traveling slower but arriving “just in time.”

Ted Cooser (*Sure Signs: New and Selected Poems*, 1980) has described this moment perfectly in his poem, “Five P. M.”:

The pigeon flies to her resting place
on a window ledge above the traffic,
and her shadow, which cannot fly, climbs
swiftly over the bricks to meet her there.

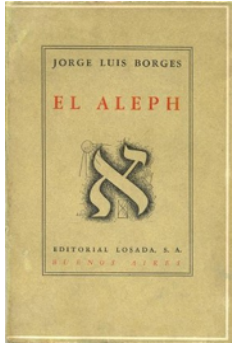
Cooser’s beautiful chiasmus illustrates the musical principle of “voice leading,” where independent movement of two tonal progressions, each conserving its total expended energy to cover the same “space” in the same interval of time, manifest different personalities. Flying and not flying, air travel and ground transportation, differentiate two “tones” that are as intimate as object and shadow, with the real-world observable truth that the movement of shadows is the result of both the movement of the object and the varied surfaces onto which the shadow is projected. This difference sets up an “impossibility of impossibility” situation. It is impossible (in “reality”) that the shadow can be disconnected from its object (the shadow is a “function” of the the object that generates it). Yet, it is made to be look autonomous when the separation of the projected shadow from its object is far enough to forget about the object and put the matter of reunion into question. The object and shadow form two distinct voices thanks to their different modes of travel, and suspending knowledge that they are functionally one and the same produces suspense that is, considered realistically, gratuitous.

Nonetheless, this gratuitous suspense is what gives the poem delight. This delight is, following the hysteric’s rule that *jouissance* ignores the distinction between pleasure and pain, the anxiety of the labyrinth, which (being a meander not a maze) cannot help but return the traveler to his/her starting point but

whose fractal pattern of twists and turns — a counterpoint of left-right movement and, hence, “chiralistic” — creates an “impossibility of the impossible” that is the essence of anxiety: fear without any demonstrable cause. This is the ultimate metonymy: a gap within a mappable system of signifiers whose determinate “object” is like a bird flying overhead, generating a boogie-woogie movement of its projected shadow across the surfaces of this signifying system. Voice leading, the essence of counterpart (fugue, chiasmus), is the /space that accumulates within the *matheme* of the hysteric. This /space — neither a positive space nor a negative space but a space that has *chosen to ignore* the difference between positive and negative, at least in its Boolean either/or presentation — accumulates but places the viewer/audience in a cataleptic trance. This immobilization of the “perfectly receptive subject” (paralyzed but alert) is the counterpart to the imaginary veil that integrates this immobilization principle into its material surface. It is maximally transparent in such a way that time accelerates as it passes through it. To calibrate the shadow that must scurry like crazy to the carefree pigeon in Cooser’s poem, the /space of the veil must simultaneously slow down and speed up temporal passage of the “soul” of the cathected/receptive subject. Each point on the surface of this veil is like the Aleph described by Jorge Luis Borges in his short story of the same name.⁷ Each point logically constructs an “instrumental cause function,” a movement that is simultaneously non-movement or stillness because the time interval it materializes is instantaneous. The shadow meets the pigeon: The-seus meets the Minotaur, the monster itself being a conronym (monsters abolish mediations of binaries).

The Aleph, a non-existent hole in a non-existent wall, is the fulcrum of a chiasmus where one voice leads another across a super-orthogonal membrane that abolishes all mediations of binaries (the pigeon’s shadow is both free and over-determined) in its creation of monsters. Given the radical *centrality* of the Aleph, the hole in the membrane and the membrane itself it presupposes, and the negation of any *mediation* of binaries in the conronymic function, is it not necessary to juxtapose this centrality to the centrality of the chiasmus of the leading voice and see that this is not just the eye but the ear of God, an ear that hears in speech’s babble (Bab’ El, the “gate of God,” architectural etymology of the famous Tower), what we designate in the Lacanian *matheme* as S2, music rather than cacophony? Is it not worth considering how S1’s failure in the eyes of the hysteric \$ is the very factor, the “efficient cause” so to speak, of the conronymic and anamorphic functioning of this Aleph/hole/conronym? And, would we not be justified in thinking that the top of this Tower, which one tradition represents as unfinished or destroyed and another tradition represents as a conditionally accessible Temple from a trial-trail Labyrinth below, is not the same as the (defective) JVHV whose name is (Borges also conjectures) identical with vectors known as meridians? — defective in the sense that north’s opposition to south is elided to northsouth and the diurnal opposition of the eastern sunrise and western sunset is equally conjoined as eastwest? Isn’t it, when All is said and done (the day of Universal Resurrection), the All whose business it is of language to postpone as long as possible to a moment of the *futur antérieur*, the time *by which* “it all will be clear,” retroactively, the *Witz* of all *Witz*’s that Form enters itself in a moment of self-sublimation/revelation? Can we be content with the answer?

⁷ Jorge Luis Borges, *The Aleph and Other Stories, 1933-69: Together with Commentaries and an Autobiographical Essay*, trans. Norman Thomas Di Giovanni (London: Cape, 1971).



On the back part of the step, toward the right, I saw a small iridescent sphere of almost unbearable brilliance. At first I thought it was revolving; then I realised that this movement was an illusion created by the dizzying world it bounded. The Aleph's diameter was probably little more than an inch, but all space was there, actual and undiminished. Each thing (a mirror's face, let us say) was infinite things, since I distinctly saw it from every angle of the universe. I saw the teeming sea; I saw daybreak and nightfall; I saw the multitudes of America; I saw a silvery cobweb in the center of a black pyramid; I saw a splintered labyrinth (it was London); I saw, close up, unending eyes watching themselves in me as in a mirror; I saw all the mirrors on earth and none of them reflected me; I saw in a backyard of Soler Street the same tiles that thirty years before I'd seen in the entrance of a house in Fray Bentos; I saw bunches of grapes, snow, tobacco, lodes of metal, steam; I saw convex

equatorial deserts and each one of their grains of sand; I saw a woman in Inverness whom I shall never forget; I saw her tangled hair, her tall figure, I saw the cancer in her breast; I saw a ring of baked mud in a sidewalk, where before there had been a tree; I saw a summer house in Adrogué and a copy of the first English translation of Pliny — Philemon Holland's — and all at the same time saw each letter on each page (as a boy, I used to marvel that the letters in a closed book did not get scrambled and lost overnight); I saw a sunset in Querétaro that seemed to reflect the colour of a rose in Bengal; I saw my empty bedroom; I saw in a closet in Alkmaar a terrestrial globe between two mirrors that multiplied it endlessly; I saw horses with flowing manes on a shore of the Caspian Sea at dawn; I saw the delicate bone structure of a hand; I saw the survivors of a battle sending out picture postcards; I saw in a showcase in Mirzapur a pack of Spanish playing cards; I saw the slanting shadows of ferns on a greenhouse floor; I saw tigers, pistons, bison, tides, and armies; I saw all the ants on the planet; I saw a Persian astrolabe; I saw in the drawer of a writing table (and the handwriting made me tremble) unbelievable, obscene, detailed letters, which Beatriz had written to Carlos Argentino; I saw a monument I worshipped in the Chacarita cemetery; I saw the rotted dust and bones that had once deliciously been Beatriz Viterbo; I saw the circulation of my own dark blood; I saw the coupling of love and the modification of death; I saw the Aleph from every point and angle, and in the Aleph I saw the earth and in the earth the Aleph and in the Aleph the earth; I saw my own face and my own bowels; I saw your face; and I felt dizzy and wept, for my eyes had seen that secret and conjectured object whose name is common to all men but which no man has looked upon — the unimaginable universe.



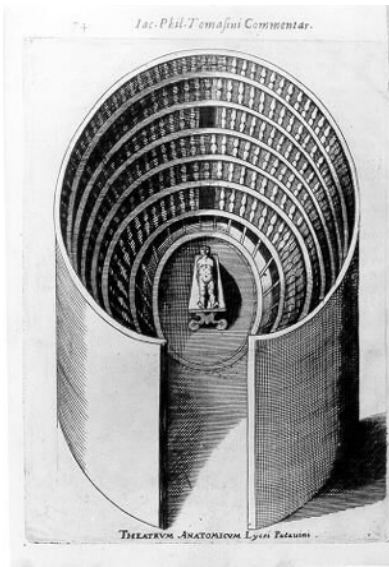
Figure 4. "Gate" (or window), Brion Cemetery, Carlo Scarpa, 1968–1978. The opening's circles are chiralistically coded, red tiles on the left, blue on the right, an order preserved on either side, giving the gate a Janusian function since, the gate passes through the visitor who passes through the gate.

the hysteric's actual house

The construction of the hysteric's "actual" house begins with an extremely trivial observation: that in Borges' elaboration of his experience of the Aleph, the multiple descriptions are separated by semi-colons. This is a Góngoresque move on Borges' part. It is obsessional, repetitive, and transgressive in that no image is allowed to stay "on the screen" for more than a fraction of a second before it is replaced by another, equally potent, that cannot be seen as a successor to the previous image or preface to the next.

The comma sign of the semi-colon says "go on ahead," the period says "stop!" The semi-colon is the punctuation mark that is grammar's own version of the inverter-gate.

Symmetry through inversion is also inversion through symmetry, and the circuit that returns the Aleph witness to a re-set position meets up with this voltage function that energizes the circuit through potential difference. It makes other things move (the circuit) by not moving. Its stillness



is the . , the movement it generates is the , : so “;” combines this stop/go into a portable generator, a machine for facing the Absolute (S1/ as the gateway Other in Lacan’s *matheme*). Movement that is both arrested and dynamic — this defines the position of Borges’ subject lying prone beneath the dark cellar steps but prone bodies and stepped-structures are the singular signature of the anatomical theater. The steps are simultaneously vertical and horizontal, the body is simultaneously dead and alive. These two combinations gives us the key: the Aleph is a contronym, S1 is a *palintonos harmoniē*, etymologically an architectural joint “uniting” two different materials and two different material conditions. This joint is the key to how one “detaches oneself from oneself,” the primary trick of any good shaman who wants to fly like a bird or leap like a frog or see what life is like on Planet Mars.

What in architecture is the equivalent of the semi-colon? This is the gate that is never locked or is always double locked. It is the gate that, in reverse view, presents the same face as from the other side, like Scarpa’s famous *vesica pisces* entry to the Brion Cemetery. The hysteric’s house is not, specifically, a mortuary, although the ultimate “defect of the Other,” S1, could be thought to include the Other who has died. The Other certainly has lost the power of motility, just as the audience is frozen in its seats and orthogonally oriented to the fourth-wall screen of performance for the duration of the play on stage. The semi-colon pictures this catalepsy precisely, as motion afforded by and indeed powered by stasis, stillness.

When mathematicians speak of motion and stillness “synchronized” at a deep logical level, they use the term “eigenform” to indicate that which, by remaining unchanged, allows all else to change. Louis Kauffman, a knot theorists and prominent interpreter of George Spencer-Brown’s *Laws of Form*, notes:

An eigenform is a solution to an equation, a solution that occurs at the level of form, not at the level of number. You live in a world of eigenforms. You thought that those forms you see are actually “out there”? Out where? It has to be asked. The very space, the context that you regard as your external world is an eigenform. It is your organism’s solution to the problem of distinguishing itself in a world of actions.’⁸

Form endures, in order that Content may vary. The contrast between Form and Content is, however, apparent. The “reality” of the relationship is contronymic — a single term combining two opposite meanings. Fractals are examples of a contronym played out so that patterns at one scale are replicated at all others. But, in musical terms, the fugue as a self-intersecting, voice-leading harmonic entity that, instead of presenting a final pattern as a solid whole, teases out separate strands of melody that, in combining to produce resonance/dissonance, speed/delay, convergence/divergence uses contronymics as a Form-solid allowing infinite variation of temporalized Content. Do Callender, Quinn, and Tymoczko’s model of five principles of “voice leading” have any counterpart that would allow us to articulate this idea in architecture? Octave shift, permutation, transposition, inversion, and cardinality change seem initially to translate into the architectural commodities of scale, transformation, symmetrical mirroring. Inversion and cardinality relate to ideas seldom employed in architectural situations: *extimité*, and contronymics. The conven-

⁸ ‘Knot Logic and Topological Quantum Computing with Majorana Fermions,’ *Quantum Physics* (Ithaca: Cornell University Library: January 2013). Online text accessed February 2017, <https://arxiv.org/abs/1301.6214>.

tionality of the first three “translators” is contradicted by the unconventionality of the last two. Yet, inversion and cardinality in the music model play a key role. Is there some mediating schema?

an experiment

As an *ersatz* intervention, I would propose looking at the six terms enumerated by Harold Bloom in his *Anxiety of Influence*, if only for the reason that architecture, seen through the prism of anxiety, reveals a hysterical basis that, I would argue, is both historically and logically primary. This involves seeing Bloom’s six critical terms as a system, something that Bloom did not suggest. Possibly the affinity of these terms with the idea of “voice leading” might reinforce the idea that there is a structure that pulls all six terms into functionally supportive roles. The aim is not to match up terms from Callender *et alia*’s musical prism to Bloom’s set but rather to see how “bundling” of functions works in both cases and in relation to the situation of the hysteric. The idea of voice leading in music forces us to attend to the issue of dynamics. How is “static” harmony set in motion, so that temporality takes the place of spatial symmetries that resist any description. We might employ a special term, “super-symmetry,” to indicate that the musical crystal cannot be represented within another space by adding a dimension of observation that can be used to describe the structure. We cannot find an independent line of sight or point of view. Our viewing of the crystal is a part of the crystal. There is no specialized dimension of projection, no detachment of an observer.

Similarly, the autoerotic circuitry of the hysteric is super-symmetrical, in that every attempt of an Other to “master it” by framing it as a set of symptoms is foiled by the hysteric herself. The Other’s shortcomings are “trimmed off” and attempts to pin down the hysteric are deflected into a repository. Both positive and negative elements are neutralized (the contronym function) and accumulated — which I have notated as /S2. The hysteric’s perception of the “lack of the Other” can take diverse forms. The Other’s “defectiveness” includes the possibilities of being absent or even dead. Yet, the hysteric insists that the Other has something she needs, or at least can use as a demand to shine a light on the Other’s defects. Whatever the motive, the trimmings that fall into the repository of /S2 have the power to produce surprising revelations. The failed search of the impossible-to-define *agalma* of the Other runs parallel to the absence of /a, the loss of what it would take to make the hysteric whole again, although this wholeness is a fantasy constructed by the hysteric herself, in her demands that the Other be the “subject supposed to know.” The irony of demand is that demand created the very lack it strives to satisfy, and until it recognizes its own complicity there can be no satisfaction. Instead, the search for satisfaction has to take place “on the side of the object,” an object that embodies the lack in the Other. This can only come from /S2, which becomes a kind of treasury imagined to be hidden under the earth, a model of Hades as a cave filled with jewels.

mystery of the missing jewel

“The missing jewel” is possibly the most common theme by which hysteria inserts itself into ethnography (folklore, popular culture, literature, etc.). The first official mystery story, in fact, is about a missing jewel “lost” because the thief was unconscious — Wilkie Collins’ *The Moonstone*. A first-order analysis sees this as irony, but irony can be converted to a condition of “super-symmetry” if we compare it to the musical principles of counterpoint. To do this I will use a “translator” device that, on one hand, relates to the kind of anxiety that is specific to the hysteric (structured as autoeroticism) while, on the other hand, it concerns itself with an idea of accomplishment in a two-part “self-extimating” procedure: (1) the structure of limits/frames and (2) violation of those limits/frames. The most obvious candidate for this translation device is

that of Harold Bloom's "six variations" on the theme of anxiety. Bloom borrowed six key terms from various contexts and used them to compare and contrast six aspects of anxiety felt by younger poets in relation to masterful predecessors. The younger poet was thus cast as a hysteric who, by questioning and ultimately falsifying his/her poetic Master, gained access to the Master's *agalma*. *Agalma* is historically identified with a jewel. It is a treasure hidden inside a "rough/crude" exterior, as evident in Alcibiades' desire for Socrates' wisdom — beauty possessed by an ugly old man. Alcibiades is certainly one of history's famous hysterics, the focus of Plato's and later Lacan's interest in the "bad boy" of Athenian intellectuals. Lacan compared Socrates' *agalma* to a Silenus Box, a jewel case decorated with images of the ribald Satyr. The connection of Satyr and satyr plays (such as *Alcestris*) with irony is important. The idea of seeking something by embracing its opposite, of dying in order to achieve immortality, is key both to satire and the ideal of wisdom embodied by Socrates. In Bloom's view of anxiety, the young poet must falsify and demonize the Master in order to escape the threat of the Master as *dæmon*, an all-knowing expert who pre-emptly any possibility of development beyond what he has already proclaimed. The young poet must flee from this mastery, his/her retreat is an *askesis* or protective counter-measure. The pairing of *dæmon* and *askesis*, mysterious magic and exorcism, is a contronym with wide-ranging applications, from voodoo to the founding of monasteries.

The frame-and-frame-violation logic continues with two other paired terms that are themselves contronyms, *clinamen* ("swerve," "de-lamination") and *tesseræ* (fracture/restoration). Both terms involve contronyms of order/disorder. A swerve is in contrast to a smooth flow, and the two matching halves of the *tesseræ*, used by parting friends as a token of their promised reunion, are broken from an original whole. The sequence of order/disorder/order is evident in each term, with "loss" being evident in the form of turbulence and physical absence, respectively.

The theme of *agalma* appears within fourth and fifth contronyms, *apophrades* ("voice of the dead") and *kenosis* (knowing without knowing). When dead speak they speak with the authority of Hades, whose truths are forbidden to the living except in the *apophrades* as an "exceptional speech of revelation," and *kenosis* uses the trope of "knowing without knowing" to transfer the sense of forbidden truth to the knower. *Apophrades* and *kenosis* are thus like the Speaker and the Receiver in the classic model of communications. Supply is linked to reception. The cost of loss is compensated by the revelation of that which is, as enigma, known in some exceptional sense. This in a nutshell defines the relation of the hysteric to the enigmatic Other. The anxiety of the hysteric pulls the contours of anxiety into sharp relief. We can see clearly how anxiety (1) forms boundaries that will be collapsed and reconstructed and (2) redefines knowledge, S2, as "liminal," occult, and revelational.

My grouping of Bloom's terms is based on the complex super-symmetry of anxiety that I use to "insist" on a crystallography rather than the un-correlated sequence of critical reflections that Bloom presents. The "Bloom Set" idea belongs to my imposed requirement of super-symmetry, not Bloom, for whom the un-correlated non-relational sequence is satisfactory. A crystal, however, shows that Bloom's "anxiety" is, more properly viewed, a "hysterical anxiety" in its relation to spatio-temporal boundaries in relation to a kind of *gnosis*. This crystallographic conversion converts Bloom into a more universal ethnographic theory.

Two Bloom terms are fundamental, in terms of the theme of motion and rest: *dæmon*, the idea of an indefinite, usually invisible threat or force, and *askesis*, the active retreat from and defense against that

threat or force. Dæmon's value as an Other is evident in the logic by which askesis defends itself against something it must define *in absentia*.

It seems clear that dæmon and askesis work in tandem, that one is the mysterious energy generator of the inverter gate, while askesis takes flight on account of it. The gate is both inside and outside the circuit of flight, which makes it not just the principle of motion for askesis but a passageway principle for getting inside and outside the circuit as if the circuit were a labyrinth. The labyrinth in fact is the clearest embodiment of the principle that the gate is not a specific point along the circuit but a point implicit within the circuit, possibly like the turning points in the labyrinth's many reversals.

Once the circuit of dæmon/askesis is energized, the analogous "harmonic principles" fill out the schema. The dæmon's inversion and askesis's bi-cardinality (contronyms) set up a theme of doubles throughout. Bloom's clinamen is a flow where turbulence de-laminates the smoothness of binary relations into formal *tesseræ*, fragments whose symmetrical break-points preserve the potential for future identity when the parts are re-united. This is the hysteric's truth-function, at first broken off from the discourse, /a, and later returned as the letter that finally reaches its destination, which is precisely the point of its initial break. The other coupling is between *apophrades* ("voice of the dead") and *kenosis* ("knowing without knowing"). This is the unconscious, in terms so frankly revealing that it would be impossible to avoid connecting the "repository" function of this second memory with the themes of spooky travel that is required to access it. Spooky travel? It always *takes the form of* a labyrinth, whatever the scale. Joyce's *Ulysses* visits the dead to hear what it has to say, if one understands the final chapter as Bloom's death dream rather than Molly's literal reverie.

The pairings, apophrades/kenosis and clinamen/tesseræ, create their own axis or eigenform, which, being a-temporal, allows temporalities of various kinds to spin off around it. This is a bit like saying that the harmonic tonality/a-tonality of music as a single chord exists as a spatial structure that makes possible various temporalized melodic lines to diverge, intersect, disappear, re-appear, and otherwise form a dynamic counterpoint that "plays the crystal out" over time. The first three terms of the musical prism, octave shift, permutation, transposition, embody pairings that require temporalization. With octave shift, transposition, and permutation, an "original" is the basis for a "variation" where Form is preserved despite moves to new frameworks. This is the phenomenon of the "frame in the frame," where an outer frame preserves a "meta-relation" that can be disguised on a different *scale* within.

The disguise feature of the frame-in-the-frame is also a strategy in the Bloom Set. The *tesseræ* disguise their identity with the two broken edges that, when recombined, will create a perfect match. The loss of unity, like the loss of Truth as /a in the *matheme* of the hysteric, defines time in terms of loss and reunion. The break specifies its own re-assembly. Clinamen, or swerve, is the name of that period of loss where turbulence presumes a prior condition of smooth laminar flow that will be restored when the turbulence/loss is fully played out. The period of this play is, like *tesseræ*'s, specified by naming and equating the bounding conditions, the loss and the restoration.

What is done during the period of loss relates to the Other and Production of the hysteric's S1 and S2. A key must be found that opens the treasury of signifiers that have been accumulated in the hysteric's unsatisfactory critique of the Master. The treasury is a "trashery" in the sense that the value of the collection is based on an initial zeroing-out of value. This is, coincidentally, the value of the unconscious in general. What makes the unconscious of incredible value for consciousness was what originally set up the accumu-

lation mechanism in the first place to “collect the garbage” of things rejected by consciousness. Tesseræ and clinamen tell this story and specify the temporality of the collection/occultation process set in motion by the “hysterical” observation that S1 is inherently defective. This observation is akin to saying that language doesn’t simply result in falling short of saying what we think or feel, it is structured to *hold our feelings and thoughts perpetually at a distance*.

The Bloom Set’s antipode to clinamen/tesseræ is the pairing of apophrades/kenosis. Kenosis is, in essence, /S2, the treasury. Apophrades is the condition imposed on accessing that treasury, the necessity of regarding S1/ in light of its being dead. S1 is, effectively, “dead to” the \$/, the hysterical subject, whose cultural identity is that of an actor, the S1 is the paralyzed audience “compressed” into an orthogonal relation to the representational membrane that separates them.⁹ The clock begins ticking at the rising of the curtain on \$’s performance, and counts down to the return of /a just before the curtain’s fall. \$ is the collapse of dimensions at the onset of the anxiety needed to fuel the performance, and just as the artificial perspective of the set takes the place of the space-collapse that structures the thin sandwich of stage space, \$ replaces her free-range subjectivity with symptoms — “clues,” in our adopted terminology of the theater.

When clues come directly to the thin membrane (the surface that is like a Möbius band, with two apparent sides that are actually the same side) we have a “section” orthogonality, which is the same as to say that what comes to this membrane is authenticated. It is evidence of *itself* as a clue — the promise made by something that is radically missing. The conventions of dramatic narratives allow us to accept the fake endings that seem to restore the missing object, but as with murder mysteries, the victim is always going to be dead no matter how the murderer is found out and punished.

the sectional imagination

Like dreams of flying, the imagination of architecture in terms of a slice or section taken through is an imaginative conversion of inside into an outside. The flying dreamer feels the lungs expand and relax with air and turns this inside-out, the air in the body becomes the body in air, the feelings of an interior condition (interoception) are taken to be perception of an exteriority. Extimacy, Lacan’s famous idea that, at the interior heart lies that which is an extreme exterior — and here we cannot avoid imagining Borges’ *Aleph*, the micro-sphere allowing a prone viewer access to infinite other times and spaces — means that all cases of obversion/extimacy contain some degree of uncanny revelation.

In the section, the inner material relations of solids with voids and other solids is “extimated” at the plane that slices through the building. The flatness of the plane and the non-projective status of the section (its 1:1 relation to the plane makes the section drawing directly measurable) mean that the POV relationship is “orthogonal” over its full surface. This means, fundamentally, that the essential content of the drawing is that which coincides with the surface, and that there is no construction of a perspectival point of view correlated to a vanishing point within the drawing’s virtual interior except where, by contrast, voids are shown as spaces the section slice has sliced through, like the holes in a loaf of bread given form by the

⁹ Compression can be written as the orthogonal relationship, \perp , a (non-)resolution of the bimodal status of the audience member, the contronymics of being a collective and an isolated individual, occupant of a set on the end of the row “corrected” to face the *lamella* of the proscenium in a direct face-on position. But, this token of orthogonality is also the simultaneity of distinction (the *lamella*) and indication (*kenosis*). You hear that which you should not have heard, see that which you should not have seen: the theater condenses the formula of the uncanny, the conversion of a privation into a prohibition and the prohibition into a spectacle of the fourth wall.

passing knife. These exist side by side with the orthogonal section's engagement of matter with drawing surface.

The section drawing is "simultaneous" in a way analogous to the idea of a time section; in fact the section is a spatial cut with a temporal presence that defines every point along its surface as a "now." Access to the building's interior is a time-entry, a peek inside the time of use, weathering, decay, and even ruin — which may be the reason why section drawings were popular at the same time artists and architects began, in the 18c., to use ancient ruins to fantasize about the past. The time window of the romantic ruin was already a kind of section drawing (the temporal function), and the section drawing simply made this window more emphatic. The section drawing is made precisely "where picturing is not possible," and thus it engages the imaginary only to borrow and quickly return its use of the picture plane. The section is *like* a picture — a snapshot even — but only where voids, like the hollows in a loaf of bread, create openings into which we gaze into a pictorial beyond. On the surface of the picture plane, matter meets matter, the building meets the physical surface, but at once this physical surface becomes a plane of conversion. Its orthogonality (from the side of the drawer/viewer) becomes a temporalized opening that is quickly shut in order to establish its orthogonal "now." The time line that gives each instant its context of moments containing preceding moments in succession comes to a stop that is not a cessation of time but an intensification of it. The now becomes eternal. The claim of the section is to freeze and, at the same time, vivify.¹⁰

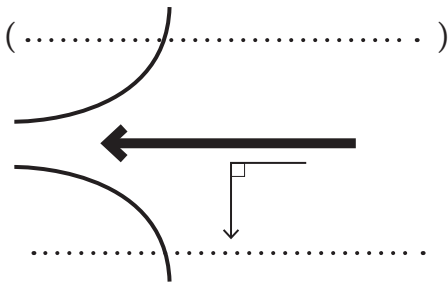
This situation can be put in terms of two senses that work together in the body's simultaneous association with and dissociation from space. The usual idea of "relating to" must be conjoined to a "breaking from," a *Spaltung*, or splitting. The idea which has not found a term is still a "contronym" in that its own domestication into the binary terms of association/dissociation insures that the independent use of each side of the binary will be haunted by the uncanny action of the opposite, installed at its interior kernel. To join is also to split away from; to touch is to pull away and, at the same time, hold tight. Maurice Merleau-Ponty's "flesh of the world" insists that this happens *simultaneously*, not in temporal alternation, although the polar states may be ritualized or "pictured" in succession. Pain and pleasure as separate modes of experience are preceded by the Real of pleasure-pain, but here we have an actual word, *jouissance*, which is the flesh-of-the-world's primary feeling basis.

¹⁰ The contradiction of the photographic shutter setting also applies to the section. To capture motion without a blurred image, shutter speed must exceed 1/500th of a second. But, to convey the *sense* of motion, the blurred photograph more effectively embodies the actual presence of the camera within an "imperfect instant" directly recorded on the surface of the film. While the section slice seems to represent a temporal instant cut across a time sequence occurring at a 90° angle to it, "in reality" (an invented reality to be sure) the slice takes time to make its cut and this time is analogous to the shutter of the camera as it passes across the film plane. The time of the "instant" is thus a ∂_1/∂_2 movement, and the effect of blurring sets up a tension within the section drawing analogous to an imagined anxiety of the materials whose coincidence has been questioned. The section drawing is *always* a question that falls into the category of an Aristotelian final cause. Although the section's objectivity should allow it to be made anywhere, the section is always taken at a "representative position" to show key relationships. The blur between the accident that favors objectivity and the subjective, selective positioning of the section "knife" merges with the imagined time of the cut, the ∂_1/∂_2 . The *blur* of the section's "shutter speed" more directly conveys the anxiety of the instant and connects this anxiety to the imagined anxiety of the materials who, like the little girl who wonders how she, born in London, her mother from Manchester and father from Birmingham had ever managed to all get together, back-projects a normal contingency to undermine its confidence. One could extrapolate this anxiety to cover all objects — particularly art objects — that are caught within the *blink* that reveals their unfinished and indeterminate basis.

The section drawing is a contronym where a projection use of a pictorial plane becomes a cutting plane where the representation meets the represented in a face-to-face collapse of distance between them, a 1:1 that is both a conjunction and a split. The section thus presents us with a condition of both “stereognosis,” a knowledge that is based on a chiralistic touching (left-right of the perceiver meets the right-left of the perceived) and “propriocept,” a “sense of self” (*proprius*) in terms of the relative position of one’s own limbs, torso, head, chest, back, and bottom. The section arrays the body of the building as a relation of parts that are not unified by anything other than the cut that “stereognosticates” it with the contronym of the plane that converts interior to exterior. Propriocept converts the meaning, “one’s own,” into the idea that a private meaning now has a public basis, so that the only way to possess one’s self is through an inside-out topological conversion that insists on the “now” of the contronymic relationship. The explanation is “palintropic” (one must explain first one thing and then the other) but the actual phenomenon is “palintonic” (coincidence, simultaneity, one thing happening *at the same time* as the other). This is exactly the same dynamic that quantum physicists use to describe the instantaneous “entanglement” of atoms which, though separated by millions of light years, reverse their spins at precisely the same time. Entanglement is a matter of time that destroys time in the process, a time that is outside of time, that literally “takes no time at all.” Entanglement requires another universe to exist beside the one Einstein defined with the speed of light as the limit of all space-time relations. And, because mass and gravity are co-defined within this closed, curved domain, everything is literally annihilated by the fact of entanglement. Yet, because it is apparent that the truth of entanglement has not put a dent on everyday reality, we have to conclude that entanglement-world exists *alongside* relativity-world, with its youth-preserving astronauts and bent gravity fields. In fact, we have to see how, in Einstein’s second and stronger presentation of Relativity in terms of a space that not only endures the curving deformations of gravitational concentrations but is *itself curved and self-curving*.

The section drawing puts this “alternative universe theory” in terms of a lateral motion made alongside the plane of representation, a moving orthogonal “now” of a view that converts interior to exterior, that relates without relating. The propriocept of the section drawing is the sideways view that, like Vertov’s camera in Dziga Vertov’s *Man with the Movie Camera*, must move in one direction and record in another, a right-angle direction. The choice of which side to point the camera is neutralized by the motion that suggests that the motion of the camera has split reality down the middle. The section begins once the camera moves but, by pointing 90° from the line of travel, “propriocepts” a plane that exteriorizes the interiority of the life-scenes it penetrates. The section has “turned to the side,” looked awry, taken a sideways glance or step. Its literality has become a laterality, the ladder that nests smaller inside larger spaces and times has become a “latter-all” that moves at a right angle to this logic.

The section is a plane that works like a wire cutting through cheese. Imagine however that the section’s cutting motion is simultaneous to the motion of what it cuts, that there is no possible distinction between “active” and “passive,” “figure” and “ground,” or “frame” and “contents.” The knife thrust into the material is met with the material pushing itself into the knife. This is the fourth-wall capability of the section cut, its ability to see only to “one side” of its planar division and yet claim that it is a panoptical view, the two sides as *tesseract* cut only to be reunited. Stereognosis makes this same claim, which is to say that the left of the world and right of the world are about the *same* world. This justifies pairing propriocept and stereognosis, an internal sense with an external sense, under the flag of the chirality that is, in the logic of the contronym, using one split-off component as sufficient to represent the whole. In real world terms, this is the



The section-logic of Vertov's *Man with the Movie Camera* "splits reality in two, the motion of its image-making apparatus reveals the internal chirality that is a result both of the forward motion of the camera and a "bi-fold interior" — a primordially split, internal condition. Thus, although the camera points orthogonally to only one "side" of the view available to it, this is simply the condition of the *tessera*, the necessary result of the turbulence introduced by inserting an exteriority (camera view) into a radical, and chiralistic, interiority. Lucretius's *clinamen* joins with Bloom's *tesseræ* to explain the split, the *Spaltung*, of the object of desire (e.g. flight) with the object-cause of desire, the *objet petit a*, the flight (*askesis*) and the cause or fright that provokes flight (*daemon*). Because the *Spaltung/split* is "primordial" in relation to the unconscious, the section-drawing logic of Vertov's moving camera is in the uncanny position of serving as an Eigenvector: a dynamic line of travel that works as a *pure signifier*, meaning that while it signifies nothing in terms of designation (the frame is empty) it designates everything through a kind of self-negation. Like Joyce's epiphanies, Vertov's camera opens directly on to the operations of the unconscious, the archaic, the "treasury of signifiers," Perfect Memory. It negates negation and replaces the signifier's dependency on binary distinction with the orthogonal, the section cut.

work, more fantasy construction, because the Symbolic can pay only in its own imperfect currency of inconsistent demands. The uncertainty of the *che vuoi?* never decreases. The only way out of this trap is inattentiveness, laziness, loafing. The *flanneur* of Benjamin's *Arcades* is the model of indifference required to establish a more flexible economy of enjoyment/desire beneath the radar of Subjectivity. On the perceptual level, this is the level of the meaningless detail, the incidental and seemingly boring malfunction, the repetitive mechanical motion, the Tramp amidst the finery of city life.

We encounter openings to the logic of autoeroticism in "off-hours," accidentally, in missed appointments or wrong addresses. Once off the grid of official space-time, the unconscious encounters *us*, we don't encounter it. Subjects look but cannot find what they're looking for. Autoerotic humans don't bother look-

say that the monastery is necessary to and even foundational to the idea of the evil it claims to be fleeing. One could make the more radical assertion: that evil comes into being only when there is a flight from it, and this evil is indistinguishable from the "god" who is planted in the center of the asylum as its protector and generative heart, surrounded by ritual and symbolic forms.

The section's motion-that-is-self-cancelling "shimmers" with a special kind of illumination unique to the dynamic equilibrium forced into being by the section. Just as Florensky made reference to the "Tabor light" as the special halo-effect of the luminescent religious icon, the light is simultaneously the motion of the section cut and the *form* of that motion. Florensky merges with Freud on the matter of how, close to the unconscious, there is an *increasing difficulty* of recognizing negation. In consciousness, we can encounter the unconscious on the "installment plan," so to speak. Brushing across openings giving us glimpses of the unconsciousness's complete inability to hold binary opposites apart or to give their poles independent, autonomous identities.

This can be seen either as an increased intensity and investment, a new energy demand to push past a normative reality maintained by polar oppositions, or a state of exhaustion where one is no longer willing or able to invest the energy required to maintain the negation required for binary distinctions. If the latter is true, the recovery of the unconscious's autoerotic/magical instability is more a matter of failing to put in the effort required for conscious maintenance of subjectivity. This is the continual investment in fantasies to cover over the gaps in the Symbolic, a "work effort" undertaken in expectation of reward, less anxiety, more confirmation. But, this reward never arrives without new demands for more

ing, but they find anyway. The “off-the-grid” aspect of the autoerotic has historically taken subjects in search of their lost humanity into caves, grottos, slums, desserts, or forests: Dante’s *selva oscurra*, the secret garden of *The Secret Garden*, the hidden passageways in old mansions. The point is that the labyrinth is *inside the temple*, architecturally speaking. The autoerotic is the seeming disorder lying at the intimate interior kernel of the Order of architecture, its official protocols and assignments. Thus every house is two houses, with an area to receive the stranger and other areas shielded from view. Here, Hestia (the wife) and her attendants (the daughters) tend the hearth, speak to the dead with spiced dishes and kitchen songs.

The Queer Feet

G. K. Chesterton tells a story about the relation of the public to the private parts of architecture, the temple to the labyrinth, in terms that convince us of the role of the contronym. In “The Queer Feet,” the Vernon Hotel hosts an annual banquet of an exclusive mens’ club, The Twelve True Fishermen, for which occasion the members unpack a set of ceremonial jeweled fish-knives. The master thief, Flambeau, has his eye on these and, realizing that the waiters and guests are both dressed in tuxedos, infiltrates both groups as an Other. In the back-and-forth traffic between the kitchen and dining room, when he faces waiters coming in his direction, he acts like a guest. When facing guests who would certainly not recognize him as one of their own, he plays the waiter. The key to his disguise is acousmatic: he walks fast when facing guests who expect him to provide them with something, he walks slowly when, facing waiters, he should look like a relaxed guest.

Father Brown, a Catholic priest who is also a practiced detective, has been called in to give last rites to a waiter of Italian descent who had suddenly taken ill. Filling out the death certificate in a small room adjacent to the connecting hallway, he heard Flambeau’s squeaky shoes and changing gait. What would cause the same shoes to move first fast, then slow? He concludes that the feet belong to a contronymic alien presence intent on stealing the silver. He intercepts Flambeau as he attempts to exit and, by revealing his logical deduction, gets the thief to confess. The acousmatic clue is the truth of the contronymic man in black, the principle of getting in and getting out, the “escape plan.” Its relation to the religious confession, by which an account of sin is matched in secrecy with complete forgiveness, shows how acousmatics, the voice as “drive” in Lacan’s revision of Freud’s system of drives (oral, anal, phallic; gaze and *voice*). The relation of the gaze and voice to *askesis*, escape from the *dæmon* that generates the reality of the *dæmon* — and in this story we are aware that the priest not the thief is the *dæmon* — comes with the knowledge that the *dæmon* is extimate: an externality that is relocated to the most intimate interior, in the case of “The Queer Feet,” in the small anteroom adjacent to the corridor connecting public and private.

Lacan, according to Jacques-Alain Miller, labels this corridor with the *poinçon*, \diamond , but in this case the *poinçon* is not the link between the barred subject and *objet petit a* that is the *matheme* for fantasy, $\$ \diamond a$, but the relation of the Big Other, A, with the *objet petit a*, the small other: $A \diamond a$. The external A is the same as the object-*cause* of desire, the aspect of the contronymic pair, the desired object and the object-*cause*, the flight and the fear that gives rise to flight, *askesis* and *dæmon*. The Vernon Hotel provides us a master plan of the Hysteric’s House because it shows the labyrinth inside the temple not as the simple binary of the public dining room and private kitchen, but as the *orthogonal* vector connecting the thief to the priest. Significantly, after confessing his sins, Flambeau becomes Father Brown’s life companion. They solve crimes together as a celibate couple, saint and sinner, both dressed in black.

This story shows us how to relate the factor of acousmatics (auditory drive) with the “invisibility” of the point of the gaze (optical drive) to other encounters with “gateways” to the autoerotic. Ethnography preserves a wealth of clues. In mystery religions, initiates are led, blindfolded, into dark spaces illuminated only by torches or candles, and taught mysteries whispered to them. Their secret knowledge, protected by oaths and riddles, is an “interior understanding” of how things work, a *kenosis*. The optical and auditory drives relate directly to the gaps in the Symbolic. While the oral, anal, and phallic drives introduce the human to subjectivity in stages, each stage involves a lack between demand and satisfaction that shows how the speaking human is different from other animals. The baby cries for food and but the mother supplies her breast only at certain times and for certain durations. The shitting baby finds that his natural “gift” of excrement is not well received, and that he must time this production as well. The romance with the mother is interrupted by the father, and the child’s erotic attraction must be converted.

In other words, each drive converts “natural need” into a demand that must be tailored to work within language’s private as well as public codes. The aim for satisfaction is thwarted in the conversion of need to demand, and the subject discovers that the Symbolic as such is riddled with gaps and inconsistencies. But, the optical and auditory drives work in different ways. Although they are related directly to the senses of sight and hearing respectively, their logic is universal. They relate to the autoerotic not so much as a bridge from the “primal human state” to the Symbolic of subjectivity but, rather, as elements that, resisting the Symbolic, connect *back* to a primary Real. They are the \diamond connecting the A of the Other to the *a* at the radical interior, the central void. They are both the agents of extimacy.



George Spencer-Brown has given a topographical account of the \diamond , as the short-circuit connecting the exterior of a concentric series of distinctions with the innermost interior. Louis Kauffman has called this connection an “Eigenform” or “Eigenvalue.” It is a kind of constant: something that doesn’t change that allows all else to change. Think of it as an object that, being fixed, allows lights from various directions to cast shadows across a variety of surfaces.

One example would be to see Lacan’s famous Borromeo knot, three rings overlapping each other, as a single ring whose three cast shadows make it seem that there are three rings not one, an idea implicit in the way the rings overlap so that if any one ring is removed the knot falls apart. The \diamond is an Eigenform for Lacan, too. He intended it to show how elements could be both “greater than,” $>$, and “less than,” $<$ — $\langle \rangle$, an interpretation that coincides exactly with Spencer-Brown’s. But, in a sense more directly related to the *poinçon*’s physical punch through the paper used for demonstration, the *mathemes* themselves could be shown to “leave the surface of the paper,” in the same way that Spencer-Brown indicated that the surface of demonstration was simultaneously material and imaginary. As material, we have to count the edges of the paper as a limiting frame, but since the demonstration on the writing surface specifies a generic space, this framed space is conjoined to an unbounded imaginary space that is adjusted to or even constructed from the written expression. The punch, the \diamond , shows how the external Big Other, A, is simultaneously a void at an intimate interior, *a*, not an object but a *cause*, a *dæmon* in relation to the flight (askesis) that is the object of desire caused by the *dæmon*.

Lacan offers another analogy that connects the \diamond with the section cut in another way. He explains that if we paint one surface of a Möbius band, the whole band is coated with a single color. If we cut the band, however, only one side is painted. The section cut can be regarded as a similar “interruption” of a closed curved continuum, and instead of thinking of two “ends” of space joined by a “hyperspace” link connect-

ing an extreme exterior with an extreme interior, the link could be seen as a break that allows interior and exterior to disconnect. The *poinçon* thus has the power of a contronym. It is simultaneously a cut and a connection, a break and a link. The <> combines with the idea of a punch to underscore the contronymic idea of “negation of a negation.” Thus, fantasy, $\$ \diamond a$, though not autoerotic, avails itself of the function of the wound, the hole made in the surface of representation. The barred subject $\$$ cannot possess the object-cause of desire, there *is* no object, but there is cause, just as fear, without manifesting itself, causes flight. Anxiety, fear as an anonymous presence that is present without having a specific location or temporality, soaks visible space and saturates temporal duration, disconcerting any attempts to structure an “if ... then” or a “now ... that.” It is a mismatch, a slip, a blur, a sideways glance, a thought out of kilter.

On this account there is no reason to celebrate the \diamond in Spencer-Brown’s nested sets as a “reunion” of first and last, inner with outer. It is as much a disconnection as a connection, and if we translate it into literal language we would have to say that \diamond means “loss of the ability to distinguish inner and outer.” Since distinction is negation, then we have double negation, saying no to no. Two ways of saying no: less than nothing, $<$, more than everything, $>$; the result $<>$, an excess that is simultaneously a lack. Or, two feet walking in two different directions, a waiter among guests and a guest among waiters, same squeaky shoes. There is one too many guests, one too many waiters, but the extra one will escape, creating a less that is a less of nothing. The \diamond is a hole in the $\$$ that is the waiter coming from the kitchen and the guest coming from the dining room. When they mingle the only difference is their rate of travel.

But, if \diamond is the hole in $\$$ made by a , it is also a movement back and forth, and the technical name for this is a spiral. Applying the two senses of *askesis* and *dæmon* to the object of desire (flight) and object-cause of desire, embodied as fear, we can see that the spiral makes particular sense in the void of Hades imagined by Dante as a spiral path leading to the arch-*dæmon*, himself inverted and frozen at the origin point. Spirals are numerically represented by their Arabic glyph, the number 9, and this number’s ability to enter and exit arithmetical calculations in Vedic mathematics is well known. Another way of writing 9 would be Spencer-Brown’s graphic for the Eigenform, the Lacanian extimate.

The idea of $\$$ walking to a as an energetic stranger then a walking to $\$$ as a lolling posh, squeaking all the time, is the Chestertonian *dæmonic*. Father Brown, his *askesis* marked architecturally by the small vestibule the management has given him to conceal these matters of death from the revelry of the wealthy guests, who would be offended by this *memento mori*, sees that the party has its own deaths-head in the form of a contronym dressed in black, moving palintropically between their $\$$ position, the servant, and their party position, a . The hole of the \diamond is of course where Flambeau throws the bejeweled silver service, a treasure down a well, tied with a chord to pull up later. The chord is picked up by Father Brown and used to pull up an entirely different treasure: Flambeau’s soul, which Brown has hooked and, with a jerk, will yank and reel in to reveal that there is a “thirteenth” true fisherman, or rather that The Twelve True Fishermen are instead $12+1$ or, since the 1 is an *asketic*, $12-1$, or 11. “I caught him, with an unseen hook and an invisible line which is long enough to let him wander to the ends of the world, and still to bring him back with a twitch upon the thread.” Brown like any priest is also famously dressed in black, but his *askesis* commands stillness, *palintonos*, in contrast to Flambeau’s *palintropos*. The fish and the fisherman are a monad, self-sufficient in that one moves but the other doesn’t, the other has stillness on his side, and stillness to the side, a lateral blur, $<>$. Flambeau’s Eigenform is his squeak, really two squeaks alternating left to right to left: chirality as movement, dynamic alternation, harmony varying only its pace.

We rethink Spencer-Brown's graphic of concentrically nested spaces. Left squeak, right squeak, left squeak, and so on, correspond to the odd and even number of frames. We are reminded of Edgar Allan Poe's story, "The Purloined Letter," about a scandalous letter hidden by placing it "to the side," amidst references to the game of Morra and the contronym of all mystery stories, the "odd evening." Finally the *acousmatic* Eigenform is picked up by Father Brown in his *poché* listening station: \diamond . He sees that the $\$/a$ of kitchen and dining room is really space torn in two by the *poinçon*. Lacan would see the $\$$ in the position of the master (Hysteric discourse) or servant (Master's discourse) and say that, in the former, the hole is the Truth, in the latter the whole is the truth, and that the masters imagine the servants having fun in the kitchen (the enjoyment of the Other) and thus overlook the one who has work to do inside the work, the thieving servant. This is the essence of Hermetic or Silent Trade, the practice of exchanging things left at remote crossroads, "gifts of Hermes," a self-regulating economy that, in allowing the trading partners complete anonymity, allows each to conceive of the other as a god who trades different things of equal value, defining equality by the act of the trade. What else is the market, anyway, than a system that establishes value on the fact of the trade? The crossroads is the perfect *poinçon*, a tear in space, also a well or hole into which treasures are pitched and out of which the same treasures are retrieved by pulling on a long chord.