

# The Hysterical Topology of Singular Sites

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The operational framework surrounding the study, identification, certification, and maintenance of culturally sensitive “heritage sites” has depended customarily on “Cartesian” concepts of subjectivity (users, stakeholders) and objectivity (environment, monuments, sites) that append values and tags to arrays of physical artifacts and uses. This system breaks down in the case of the actual experience of monumentality because it obscures the very phenomena that sustain the civic space of monuments as such.<sup>1</sup> The question is: can one theorize about the singular? Singularity resists all symbolization, to say nothing of resisting theory. The situation resembles Sigmund Freud’s description of hysteria, coincidentally exemplified by the case of a Londoner who suddenly realizes an intense connection to the original sentiment embodied by the Charring Cross monument to Queen Eleanor.<sup>2</sup> Are not all remembrances similarly “hysterical” in their rupture of the transitive space of the “city of exchange” and their creation of a field of forces that radically resist being projectively mapped and tagged? Shouldn’t any theory of the monument begin with this hysteria — shouldn’t theory itself be somewhat “hysterical”?

The space of the hysteric, generalized as a “space of the monument,” requires a different theoretical framework than that usually applied by planners, architects, sociologists, and psychologists. This framework lies within the “Freudian-Lacanian field,” defined by Slavoj Žižek as insisting on a “clinical” interpretation of subjectivity (i.e. subjectivity in the light of the three classic forms of mental illness, neurosis, psychosis, and perversion) because, in short, these “clinical” questions constitute the ground-rules for subjectivity in general.<sup>3</sup> For Freud and Lacan, there is no “normal” condition of subjectivity, from which neurotics, psychotics, and perverts deviate. Rather, neurosis is the means by which the subject adapts to the world, accepts the “impossible” demands of his/her networks of symbolic relationships, and assimilates traumas that are inevitably encountered. Psychosis and perversion are, in effect, failures of neurosis to adopt. Without language and symbolic thought, the adaptations of neurosis and failures of psychosis and perversion would be unintelligible; retroactively, any study of language must therefore be *ipso facto* an account of the adaptation of the subject through neurosis, in light of the limits of this adaptation reflected by psychosis and perversion. This is the meaning of “the clinic” and the reason Žižek advises it as a middle road between the “left swerve” towards political advocacy or the “right swerve” of naturalism.

The use of pathology to define subjectivity is not new, or limited to the Freudian-Lacanian field. Modern linguistics sprang from the research on aphasia, based on the brain-damaged soldiers from the battlefields of Europe during World War I, whose aphasias could be grouped into two general classes, one dealing with semblance abilities, the other with relations of contiguity.<sup>4</sup> Out of these wounds came the theories about metaphor and metonymy that guided linguists such as Jakobson in constructing Structuralist linguistics and its variants. Pathology was also the basis of the popular

culture notion of the bicameral brain, based on the behavior of sixteen epileptics, each with a severed *corpus callosum*.<sup>5</sup> The pathology of Freud's studies is broader and more ambitious. Like Heidegger, Freud accepted the radical role played by the realization of death, but Freud saw this as an operational function that took many forms, most notably the "death drive," which was not a drive *towards* death but, in fact, a resistance against death, what is known in most cultures as the period between actual and symbolic death (Lacan: "between the two deaths"). Likewise, Freud's interest in dreams is not, as is popularized, concerned so much with interpretation as with the *manner* in which dreams speak to consciousness, a manner that helps to explain the role of the unconscious in the life both of the individual and society.

Freud's originality stems from early studies, such as his *in absentia* analysis of the autobiography of the psychotic President Judge Paul Schreber.<sup>6</sup> Another early essay, on the uncanny (*Unheimlich*) demonstrated Freud's ability to go between the cultural and individual levels of experience, which he would play out to great advantage in his *Civilization and Its Discontents*. This ability was a defining component of Lacan's "rescue" of Freud's work in the 1950s. Lacan emphasized the role of language, not just in social and cultural interaction but in the formation of the unconscious, which he held was "structured like a language." This was not a reductionism *to* language but a study of the limits of language and the relation of these limits to the imaginary and the Real, the other two domains of psychic life. To explain this triad of forces, Lacan followed Freud's interest in the death drive, the idea of partial objects generated by the drives, and other Freudian landmarks. He refined the idea of the uncanny into different features of his own work, most notably the function of the "extimate" (*extimité*).<sup>7</sup> The extimate can be understood on two levels. The first deals with the inscription of the desire/demand of the Other as a "center of being" that destabilizes any attempt to "contractualize" a relationship with the Real (the traumatic as such). The Other's desire is a symbolic construct, a demand that cannot be met or clearly known but which constitutes a force motivating efforts to find one's place within various social relations and structures. The other level of the extimate is the "intimate external," so to speak, where objects function as "partial" because of their unusual topological relationships that prevent them from being assimilated as functional or instrumental. Partiality can be illustrated by the function of some religious object, such as the Catholic chalice, which to a non-believer may have value as a historical object or example of fine workmanship, but which to a devout Catholic must be treated with the utmost reverence. Partial objects are partial because they seem to be separated from an idealized spatial-temporal complex, with which they yearn to be reunited in some idealized future. Like the Ka'aba stone in Mecca, the unmeasurable distance from which the stone is separated from heaven can be addressed only through ritual motions and prayers. It is not a geological or astrological object like other meteorites. Its value as "partial" is based on its topography of fallenness, creating an anxiety that translates into religious prohibitions and rituals. It carries its alien nature with it; it cannot be "domesticated."

All monuments to some extent draw on the logic of the partial object and the "physics" of extimacy. Because this theory, grounded in the function of the uncanny, is closely (one might say uniquely) tied

to Freudian-Lacanian psychoanalysis, theory of monuments must be reconsidered from scratch.<sup>8</sup> Because the theory of the extimate has to do with spatial-temporal structuring by a frame that separates an imaginary field of forces and subjective encounters, many examples from the arts, not just the visual arts and architecture but also literature, folklore, and ethnographic rituals, offer key examples. But, this method of “frame analysis” goes further. It requires that any site study develop in dialectic between a given site situation and selected works of art (visual arts, architecture, cinema, etc.). There is no claim for grounding the choice of comparative artworks in any historical or cultural relationship with the site. The dialectic, based on difference and in some cases antagonism, is designed to make the function of each term intelligible in the broadest possible terms. To assist in this assessment, frame analysis specifies five fundamental components that constitute the basic material functionalities of the framed condition, a kind of accounting protocol.

**The Double Frame (||).** Framed conditions are common, if not to say universal, if only because the frame begins with, and is grounded in, the distinction in language between the material construct of language (*énoncé*) and the “enunciation” that is the performative result of that construct.<sup>9</sup> An example of someone running into a room and yelling “Bomb!” understandably yields the result of everyone running out of the room, without any proof that a bomb is actually present. The material bomb exists as a hypothesis; it cannot be studied empirically. Yet, the structure of this *énoncé* quickly reveals that actions are always based on the suspension/concealment of some initial element, whose *absence* is required for action to proceed. The first frame of any site defined performatively (almost all sites are so defined), F1, is one that can be called a frame of “occultation.” The frame “occults” or makes invisible the object that is the *énoncé* — the presumed justification for framing. In theaters, the analogy of the auditorium darkened as the stage lights up, shows how occultation works in common practice. The audience must remain still and silent, occulted by the spectacle of the stage and the mutual desire of the audience to participate it as “silent partners.” Within the framed scene there are other representations of frames, even if not graphically represented. These inside frames (F2) signal the presence of invisible components within the framed field. Like the scene outside a stage window, which characters on stage look out of but the audience cannot see, these frames mark a margin that is both inner and outer. It is like a light switch that turns on and, instead of turning off with a reverse motion, turns to a third alternative set in counterpoint to the original position. A story told inside a story (exposition) creates a margin similar to that used by the teller and the listener, but the field enclosed by the second margin is analogous to the first framed condition, and the “told” becomes the “teller” presenting a new “told.”  $F1 \rightarrow F2(F1' \rightarrow F2')$  — i.e. there is no  $F2 \rightarrow F3$ , only a retroaction to occlude F1 at first and then F2 as soon as it takes up the role of being an internal audience using an inside frame.

**The “Lost Element,”  $a'$ :** The bomb in the example above provides a good example of the service of an object that is effective only when absent. In Alfred Hitchcock’s *Strangers on a Train* (1951), Guy Haines, a professional tennis player, forgets to retrieve an initialed cigarette lighter from Bruno Anthony, a talkative wastrel who has invited him to dine with him during their train ride out of Philadelphia. Bruno’s possession of this lighter provides the “efficient cause” by which Bruno blackmails Guy into a double murder scheme. Guy’s recovery of the lighter at the end of the film closes the action, but before the end, Bruno himself nearly loses the lighter, giving us an example of the “inside frame,”  $F1 \rightarrow F2(F1' \rightarrow F2')$ . There is no  $F2 \rightarrow F3$ : that is, Bruno’s loss mirrors and occludes Guy’s (that is, if he loses the lighter the blackmail situation neither exists nor doesn’t exist). Only when the “object arrives at its destination” (Guy’s recovery of the lighter at the end of the film) can the story be allowed to end. Generally speaking the lost element  $a'$  corresponds to Lacan’s *objet petit a*, the object-cause of desire. This is in a sense a fiction, without which any “fact” cannot exist. Hitchcock’s employment of this was famous: the “McGuffin,” or unprovable/unintelligible detail that can never be proved or even clearly known that, nonetheless, motivates the action. The  $a'$  element occurs “simultaneously” with the creation of  $F1$ . It is the sign of the “genre,” in the same sense that “Once upon a time” introduces a fairy tale in which frogs may be kissed into becoming princes. It marks a point to which narrative, spatial logic, or temporal logic will return through the rhetorical figure of analepsis (recovery).

**The “infra-thin” defect or margin ( $\partial$ ):** Just as a mystery story must have a clue that “stands out” from an array of expectations, the defect is identified because of its incompleteness, its lack of a required set of mediated relationships with contingent circumstances. The difference is never great; that is, it is always a detail that is easy to overlook; hence, its customary relationship to the “exceptional” vision or insight of the detective or artist, who sees what others are blind to. The  $\partial$  often works in coordination with  $a'$ . When Odysseus returns to Ithaca, he disguises himself as a noble stranger, but his old nurse notices a scar on his ankle while she washes his feet and recognizes it as a scar from a youthful accident. This  $\partial$  is the occasion for a new scene (vengeful murder of Penelope’s suitors), and in this sense  $\partial$  serves the inside frame,  $F2$ , as  $a'$  serves the main frame,  $F1$ . The  $\partial$  element is known by difference: it is either not exactly what would be expected, or an object that has been found to be slightly out of place or time. Because  $\partial$  typically initiates a “re-reading” or reversal of the conditions already traversed, it is key to the use of  $F2$  as an inside frame, a turning point. From this point, the framed field reverses to reveal hidden “anamorphic” contents — things that were there all along but were not interpretable until a new POV revealed them.<sup>10</sup>

**The anamorphic function ( $\omega$ ):** Anamorphosis is commonly described as a visual phenomenon, the concealment of a hidden image within one more evident. Only by taking up a special point of view can the hidden image be viewed. In non-visual cases, anamorphosis is more generally describable as a “square wave” function ( $\sqcap$ ), whose strict either-or logic admits no middle condition. The result is that the concealed image or interpretation “springs out of” its innocent container all at once, collapsing the dimensionality that had supported the normative view. In Hitchcock’s *Shadow of a Doubt* (1943),

niece Charley is told that her favorite Uncle Charley is really a serial killer, something that seems entirely impossible to her. Yet, when she sees how the clues fit together in an irrefutable way, this realization hits her like a bolt of lightning. The distance that had ordered her in relation to her family and Uncle Charley's unexpected visit collapses. She has discovered the gap created by  $\partial$  as opening up a new viewpoint able to see the anamorphic contents,  $\omega$ , of Uncle Charley's stories, which have concealed the real reasons for his excess cash, his philanthropic plans, his possession of expensive jewelry, and his unexpected visit. The anamorphic function points to the fact that dimensionality was constructed on the basis of  $a'$ , the dropped-out, missing element.

**The (acousmatic) pocket-space (L), *poché*:** Just as the story-in-the-story technique introduces an internal frame, F2, a literal enclosure or frame can function as a place of what Lacan would call the "acousmatic" voice.<sup>11</sup> In cinema, this is the voice that comes from offstage; its location cannot be determined. It appears from *inside* the framed scene but escapes the margin of the frame without returning to the space outside F1. It defies the either-or logic of the screen and, in so doing, creates a point for a transcendental voice. In Peter Weir's *The Truman Show*, an orphan is raised from birth to be the unwitting subject of a television series that films his every action. All his family and friends are really actors; he is the only one not in on the joke. The director broadcasts instructions to the actors through a closed-circuit system, but a dysfunctional car radio accidentally breaks into the closed circuit's frequency and Truman overhears the director's conversation. The radio becomes momentarily a part of the concealed "space of communications" that is also the space of production, the "fourth wall" hidden from Truman. In *The Wizard of Oz*, Dorothy and her four magical companions petition the Wizard to free them from their specific handicaps; their desire is at first met with a projection of a monstrous green face on billowing smoke and fire. The voice appears to be coming from nowhere until the dog Toto pulls back the curtain concealing the "ordinary man from Kansas" whose powers are unequal to the green face's appearance of evil genius. His acousmatic voice turns out to be more effective, however, for he is able to show how the quartet's problems had "anamorphically" concealed their very solutions. The "problem" of the first statement of their nature — a statement that emphasized only a lack — was the "solution" to the second statement, that their nature was all that they could wish it to be. The acousmatic voice is often as "recursive" in its wisdom as the Wizard is in this final solution, but the space-time manifestations of this wisdom is often the most interesting feature of the acousmatic voice. *Poché* (pocket space) can involve hidden rooms, false panels, concealed passageways, or attics such as the one Gregory Anton (Charles Boyer) employed in *Gaslight* to frighten Paula (Ingrid Bergman) into thinking she was going mad. Or, as in the case of *The Truman Show*, it can be a virtual space, a model of cinema's "fourth wall."

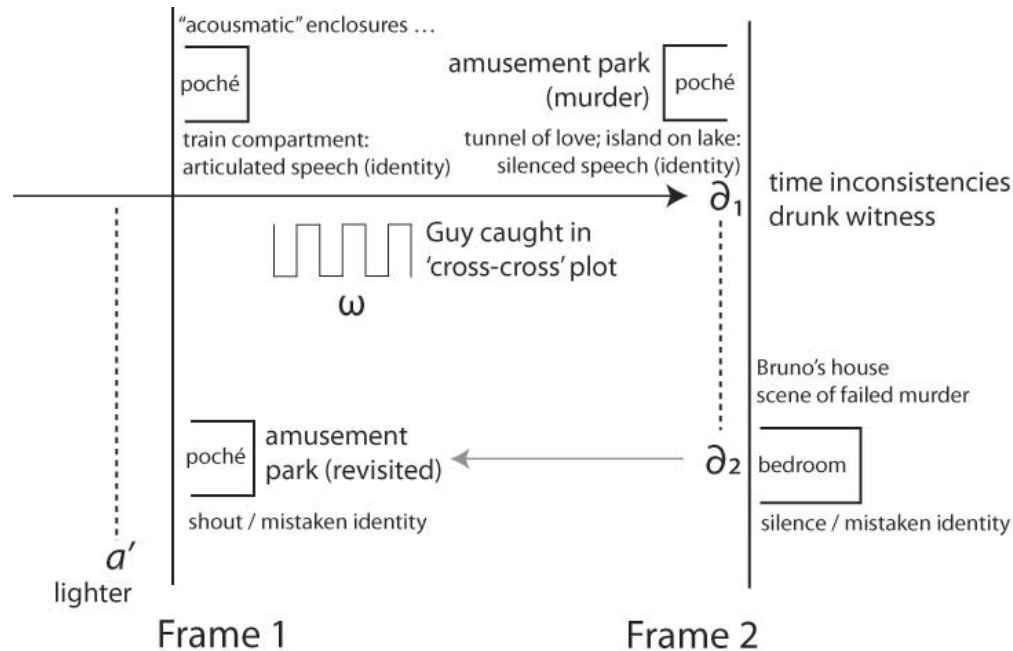


Fig. 1. The five elements as a diagram of *Strangers on a Train*. The symmetry of the frames is taken up directly by the film's theme, the crisscross plot. Uncannily, the monogrammed lighter makes this a perfect example of the Lacanian dictum, "the letter always arrives at its destination" — in this case the letters, A to G (Anne to Guy, proof of the gift of the Senator's daughter to a then-married man). The lighter in Bruno's possession is the "McGuffin" that seals the illicit contract for double murder; its recovery in the last scene ends the story. Along the way, "acousmatic enclosures" are the sites for various speech conditions that advance the action.

## Economy

The limitation of the logic of double framing (*encadrement*) to five functions aims to avoid the proliferation of terms and ideas that easily results from any analysis. The set —  $\|$ ,  $a'$ ,  $\partial$ ,  $\omega$ , and  $\Gamma$  — are intended to be partly self-evident and easily illustrated with popular culture examples. While the ideas behind any one of the functions may be complex, each functions within art, architecture, and literature with the efficiency of a "self-evident" element, able to be quickly grasped and used, if not comprehended consciously, by any audience. Everyone watching *Strangers on a Train* understands, for example, how the lost lighter enables Bruno to take advantage of Guy. There is nothing symbolically sophisticated about its role. But, there is evident sophistication in the way in which the lighter's function is coordinated with the other key elements of framing — how, for example, Hitchcock's use of scenes reflected in the lens of the murdered wife's glasses or, later, Guy's fiancée's sister use the inside frame, F2, to confirm and echo the glasses' role. These "cross-correspondences" deepen the esthetic interiority of the work of art and give audiences a resonant chamber able to amplify their suspense. In this sense, the five functions constitute an echo chamber that, like a sea-shell, is able to make any ambient sounds into the sound of waves.

Economy becomes the key factor in moving to full-scale landscapes, i.e. the sites and scales associated with heritage preservation projects, because economy must reflect the use of real materials in real politically-historically determined landscapes. Unlike the imaginary inventions and thin sets of works of fiction, architecture must "make its case" in ways that exceed the dimensions of a single performance. Even when architecture is transformed during festivals, the idea of performance is most likely to be associated with basic functions: structure, shelter, privacy, security, and the maintenance of comfort. Here we must keep our sight set on the performative through its "deposits" that endure past and between the intensified experiences of architecture as such. It is as if the sets for a film are not dismantled but allowed to stand, fragmented, between filmings. These would clearly have no meaning unless associated with the past and future occasions when they were employed as intended. The reconstruction of these "intended events" is the basis of the frame analysis of heritage sites.

### **Polythetic Sets**

In archaeology, artifacts are not often found in neat, chronologically ordered layers. The temporal record is confused by inversions, disruptions, and re-distributions. Objects deposited at one time do not always remain together as they were left. The "monothetic set" defines objects as they ideally should be found (but rarely are). "Polythetic sets" are logical constructs that allow for discontinuities and missing pieces. In any given landscape, the condition of the polythetic set is the norm. Overlapping uses, functions, mental and behavior structures, political agendas, and other forces that interpret the use and meaning of material features cannot be merged; the full range of the various "force-fields" cannot be reconciled into a single plan view. The condition is that of an extreme anamorphic state, where the evidence of the senses constitutes a "white noise" and any one coherent sequence of perception, conception, and use constitutes the single point of view that "pops forth" a "Real" concealed within the polyphony.

This model constitutes an anamorphic "machine" by which all such Reals are figures against the "ground" of white noise (contingency). The truth-claim of the polythetic method is that the figure-ground condition that constitutes the situation for analysis and theory is the same figure-ground condition that was the context for the formation of the phenomenon of civic space. In other words, "construction" (the production of a perceptual event using the material means of architecture and landscape) and "construing" (the later theoretical understanding of this production) are symmetrical. And, to a significant degree, the act of theoretical understanding resembles the "analepsis" of construction and reverses, thanks to the discovery of an "inside frame," the construction process. Reversal, a "retracing of the original footsteps," is the necessary theoretical comprehension of the formation of civic space. Construing completes the whole that is the total phenomenon of the civic; and, in construing, theory parallels the dynamic that *is* the collective memory.

The affinity between civic theory and its object denies theory the distance normally claimed by theory in the sciences but, more productively, sets up the conditions of an experiment.

## **There Is No Bone without Spirit There in the First Place**

The assumption made by many planners and architects is that there is a core of material realities that are the source for various subjective views taken of that core. While differences may continue to distinguish themselves from each other — beyond the level, even, of the individual, to be subject to the different mental states of an individual subject — the material core constitutes an index or reference against which subjective differences may be gauged. This is not just the position presumed by the popularization of the idea of the “mental map,” but a presupposition grounding the early landmark work done by David Lowenthal, Roger Downs, David Lynch, and Peter Gould. In an effort to give validity to subjectivity, these early works initially relied on a Positivist model of an “objective reality” serving as a ground, modified by personal, subjective encounter. Even when access to this reality was acknowledged to be limited or impossible, the idea of an objective ground persisted, and accessibility was ceded to mathematical models and sampling that revealed what lay beyond, beneath, or behind perception and conceptualization.

Social scientists have long been averse to philosophy; in particular, Hegel’s *Phenomenology* has been off limits for anyone wishing to be taken seriously as a sociologist, geographer, or psychologist (in the U. S. at least). Had the social sciences fought against this collective allergy, they would have realized that Hegel, in his analysis of phrenology, provided what might have come to be regarded as a “bullet-proof” argument in favor of materialism. While Hegel rejects the pseudo-science of phrenology (which, Donald Verene has argued, is actually at the heart of modern social sciences), he paradoxically endorses the idea that “the spirit is a bone.”<sup>12</sup> How does this tally?

Hegel’s strategy is simple. While phrenologists are portrayed as “pulling rabbits out of hats,” he makes the point that this cannot be done unless there is a rabbit in the hat in the first place. Material is material *precisely because it is already and always* spirit. This pre-investment of material with spirit is not a case of occult beliefs or hopeful idealist ideology but, rather, a case of the Hegelian dialectic in action. Fortunately, we can see it even more clearly in the case of mapping. To put it in the simplest terms, there can be no real presence of a phenomenon without the co-presence of a frame. The frame separates a space of reception from the space of perception and defines reality of perception in terms of the *dynamic exchange* between the two and the agents whose “agency” is this division. Thus, the dimensionality (of space and time) that affords a distance and, hence, distinction between observer and observed, perception and reception, and the frame are “simultaneous” phenomenon. There is “nothing there before perception” not in the idealist conundrum of the tree falling in the forest but in the ideational reality of sentience itself: There is NO THING before perception because perception introduces the *idea* of the thing, and *negation*, as a condition of its existence. Clearly, there is some materialist basis for perception and reception that offers a field of contingencies and conditions. But, this basis is only a priority. And, in every meaningful sense, even this “pre-history” is created, in “retroaction,” with the initiative of perception/reception.



When, therefore, the phrenologists of contemporary social science contend that they are making use of the “objective template” that is prior to all subjective conceptions, they are themselves using a logic of retroaction to approximate what is already approximated by subjects in their own conceptions. Social science (or any other) theory is only guilty of the same error made by all subjects: the retroactive creation of a condition prior to their own engagement with the perceived world.

Retroaction seeks to materialize, which is to say, “attribute to blind, mechanical chance,” the ground from which meaning arises. This is key to the claim for authenticity — the validity felt by everyone, and naturally so, that what they see before them is not a dream or illusion but what others would see if they could only but stand in their very shoes at the same moment. The “accident” of the point of view is, so to speak, “no accident.” It must structure itself as arising from blind chance — a glance in this direction, unmotivated, unconstructed, *un*-subjective; and hence actual, real, solid. With this claim, perception proceeds, thanks to the use of “nature” in the form of an automaton, able to validate the “anywhere, anytime” quality of subjective experience. Without this validation, we have no claim to live in a *world in common* with any other subject. The “common place” requires the automaton of the frame.

Once the perceptual moment is constructed out of this automatic retroaction, the first frame requires a second, an “inside frame” that confirms the space as perceptual but also plants within it an indelible “watermark” that is simultaneously an authenticating emblem and a “blur” or defect that contradicts the objectivity of the view. It is as if the photographer cannot eliminate the sphericity of the lens in an “orthographically” correct print. An artifact remains. Even Dante recognized this element, our  $\partial$ -function, when he described his first view of God: he *first* sees what is *behind* him. The vision is contained “anamorphically” as a reflection in Beatrice’s eyes. Herein is the paradox of *encadrement*, the need for two frames rather than one, which maintains the illusion of objectivity but cannot rid itself of the flaw, the artifact,  $\partial$ . The second vision “overlaps” the first with the precision of a fugue, but it is important to note that this anamorphic revelation is opened by a “password,” something that functions as a key to open the doors of perception to its inner contents.

Lacking a materialist basis in the degraded sense, the new “analeptic” (restorative) retroaction through the contents of perception becomes the *conception* (originally, the “conceit” or *concetto*) by which the original act of automation may be understood. What was suppressed originally is now revealed as the self-generative goal. The forward-backward motion initiated by the two frames, for all its seeming paradox, is the simple basis of the common joke form where something omitted or forgotten in the first half becomes the answer in the second.

A short example: *Distressed by her dying husband’s sudden deterioration, the wife asks what are his final wishes. —I want you to marry Sam Wasserstein. —But, she says, I thought you always hated Wassertein! —Yes, he sighed, that’s right.*

What has shifted in the joke is not the empirical basis, the words or sentences grammatically conceived, but rather the “enunciation” — the performative. Originally we think that this is the cliché of following the wishes of a loved one near death. We must revise this as soon as we realize that these wishes include punishing an old enemy by putting him into the marriage that we now realize was actually painful to the husband. The “missing part” of the first half of the joke supplies the answer in the second half.

Another joke, also Jewish, passed on by Slavoj Žižek: *A Russian resident of the Soviet USSR, Petrovsky, wishes to emigrate but must undergo an interview to obtain an exit visa. The interviewer asks him for two reasons why he wishes to leave the Soviet Union. —The first is that, when the Soviet Union collapses, everyone will blame the Jews. —But the Soviet Union will never collapse! responds the interviewer. —That’s my second reason, Petrovsky replies.*

Both jokes call for retroaction in a straightforward way. Because we understand the “genre” of story known as “the joke,” we preserve a mental record of what is said, as *énoncé* so that our revisionist reading of enunciation/performative will contrast with the conventional interpretation and “be funny.” The new interpretation will collapse the dimensionality constructed by the first performative presumed to exist. The humor is based on our possession of the second performative “all the time,” while we bought into the first.

The joke genre shows how easily popular culture is able to employ double framing as the *most efficient means* of conveying meaning to the *broadest* possible audience, in conditions where analysis, intellection, and conceptualization are put at a disadvantage, if not actually directly forbidden. In this way, popular culture is “more sophisticated” than most social-science theory that, by presuming a Positivist framing procedure, overlooks the process of retroaction and the creation of a second “recursive” internal frame. The “tell” or turning point of the joke,  $\partial$ , quickly reveals its anamorphically concealed second meaning,  $\omega$ . The use of *poché*, a privileged position from which messages from this  $\omega$  can be heard, are rarely embellished in the joke form, since the teller and the auditor directly embody these themselves.

### **The Unconscious of Place**

The Freudian conception of the unconscious has virtually disappeared from the social sciences and even from psychology, where, if it exists, it is often conflated with Jung’s idea of archetypes or suppression of socially unacceptable desires or motives. Neural networks and other neurologic phenomena have become the true underlayment of conscious ideas, linked with genetic determinism and viral-cellular influences. Despite the immediate behavioral and conceptual outcomes of these “mechanisms,” they are still regarded as a-behavioral and a-conceptual, as if the “pure mechanism” was the mandated goal of such research. Isn’t it clear, however, that no such pure mechanisms could have evolved had not the behavioral-conceptual components been not the effects but the cause, by virtue of simple competitive survival value in even a simplified Darwinistic schema? At the level where

behavior and neural structures are so intimately linked, why does social-science theory prefer to label behavior as genetically and neurologically determined rather than the other way around?

The Hegelian answer is, paradoxically, to take up mechanism as it stands: blind mechanisms; and, even more paradoxically, *the blinder the better*. Far from the ultimately teleological, deterministic chain that neurological reductionism seeks, it is precisely the element of impersonal automatism that, as Jacques Monod argued some fifty years ago, is the precondition for "pure spirit."<sup>13</sup> Frame theory specifies how this automatism is initiated by the act of framing; or, alternatively put, how the act of framing is initiated by automatism. However the split of the frame is described, the result, which corresponds to the "enunciation/performative" component of language, creates a "mind" out of the "mute substances" that are framed. This mind is not a conscious mind akin to the thinking subject, but *precisely* an unconscious: a minimally communicative repository of *everything that happens* within the "field" contingent on the substance's object-hood. This statement requires us to think of objects in the physical world as monuments in keeping with the German word for monuments, *Denkmalen* — "thinking times." What Christopher Alexander called, to the confusion of many, a QUAN ("quality without a name"), suggests that this idea has resulted from an entirely independent paradigm of thinking.<sup>14</sup> Where Alexander must stop productive thinking at what to him has formed terminological cliff, a Lacanian approach in contrast is able to recognize the synonym and carry it forward into well-traveled territory. This is the field of the "partial object," which appears to have an unconscious despite its alien and alienated qualities.

The expression, "the unconscious of architecture" offers a new approach to the theory of the monument and, by extension, to the theory of heritage sites. Lacan's theory of discourse employs the idea of a "double inscription," by which externality is "inscribed" within subjectivity (at its very center) and "internal" subjectivity is inscribed at the center of objectivity. The mirroring of this double inscription process is itself significant and will be taken up later, but for now it is important to note that the double inscription process, *extimité* (the extimate, or "intimate externality" as well as objective subjectivity), is the key force behind the partial object, the idea of an "unconscious of the object," and the conflict between the imaginary, the symbolic, and the Real that gives rise to the battle-ground between the two frames.

The idea of the unconscious *of* anything should not be confused with the idea that objects are magically animated by *conscious* thoughts. Detlef Mertens cites Benjamin's development of the idea through photography:

The technique that Benjamin singled out to exemplify how "the camera introduces us to unconscious optics as psychoanalysis does to unconscious impulses" was the close-up - the blow-up, the enlargement, the cropped image, the fragment. "With the close-up," he observed, "space expands." Moreover, "the enlargement of a snap-shot does not simply render more precise what was in any case already visible, though unclear: it reveals entirely new structural formations of the subject matter .... It thereby becomes tangible that a

different nature speaks to the camera than to the eye. For in place of a space interwoven with human consciousness one interwoven with unconsciousness steps in.<sup>15</sup>

It is also clear that Benjamin regarded criticism as a form of psychoanalysis:

For Benjamin, truth was hidden from casual observation, but resided in traces within the welter of base material. He considered it the task of criticism, like the task of history, to make fragments of truth visible and dominant. Regardless of medium, he considered criticism an activity of stripping its objects bare, mortifying them, dragging the truth content of what is depicted in the image out before it, not as "an unveiling that destroys the mystery but a revelation that does it justice." Thus the negativity and destructiveness of criticism opens up a moment of revelation, which in turn opens the future potentiality of the object.<sup>16</sup>

Combining the two regions of psychoanalysis and image, particularly the photographic image, invites us to compare the role of the "phi-phenomenon," the invisible/non-existent function that allows consciousness to see a discontinuous series of still images appear as a fluid, seamless depiction of motion. (We will not use the clinically more correct designation, "beta-phenomenon," but stick to the popular "phi,"  $\emptyset$ .) Benjamin's advice, to reveal truth content *to* the very image itself, set in a future moment (which Lacan would later identify with the future anterior), is entirely consonant with the experiment undertaken by Douglas Gordon, who "stretched out" Alfred Hitchcock's classic 1960 thriller, *Psycho*, so that it lasted 24 hours. By removing the function of the film's "mechanical"  $\emptyset$ -phenomenon, Gordon demonstrated that the audience would freely supply their own, reconstructing another film out of their own unconscious reserves. Note carefully, this was not a replacement of a neurological function by conscious ideas, but a replacement *of* one unconscious by another. The "currency" of the exchange, so to speak, never changed, only its mode of construction.

This maintained consistency emphasizes Lacan's reminders about the unconscious: that while it is a repository of all the details of mental life — including mental activity while we sleep — it is organized "like a language," meaning that it is ruthlessly symbolic, but in the sense of a cipher or code that resists our attempts to "break it down" into ordinary language. Ciphery without translation enables this modality of the unconscious to be transferred to "waking" situations where the "square wave" functionality of the cipher operates. This is primarily the condition of anamorphosis, where the "anywhere" POV of the normal image contains within it a "key" or "tell" position where the concealed image will pop out suddenly. This is a parody of Benjamin's idea of truth as well as Lacan's idea of the unconscious, but it does bridge across the paradox of the imaginary illusion that, for both Benjamin and Lacan, constituted the culture of enjoyment, with its false promises of access to the Real. Only by breaking into the coded  $\emptyset$  interior of the work of art could its unconscious be accessed. This breaking, a destructive externalization of what is most interior to the work, is the necessary critical act. It is an "oblique" intervention into what is normally sealed off by the suspension/invisibility of the  $\emptyset$  phenomenon.

In other words, the unconscious works like a code, but the code is never broken. There is never a caption or explanation of what the unconscious has “really meant to say.” There is only the negation of the negation (unconscious) of the imaginary, the recovery of the object-cause of desire, not in any “positive” form but in its structural relationship to the logic of *encadrement*, the space between the two frames. With this in mind, the phrase, “the unconscious of place,” can be exorcized from the romantic notion of the “sense of place,” a collection of qualities and influences thought to radiate permanently the subjective qualities of a personality. This idea of a speech of inanimate objects is evident in the 19c. conceit of *architecture parlant*. The problem with it is that the speech of objects remains strictly the language of the unconscious. It is *their* unconscious, not an imagined text or sound track.

This can be shown in the most radical case, employed centrally by both the Neapolitan cultural philosopher Giambattista Vico and the Irish *avant-garde* novelist, James Joyce. Both the philosopher and the writer described the thunder as the pure case of the unconscious cipher. Joyce actually went so far as to reconstruct the phonemic content of this “first word,” done in ten versions of 100 letters each, except for the last (101), adding up to 1001 letters. Joyce wished to emphasize the idea of a secret code. Vico focused on the structure of extimacy, which made the first humans imagine the thunder’s sound to constitute a voice, a word of authority and truth. In both approaches to this “unconscious of nature,” the word is never translated into a conscious content. It remains permanently unconscious, i.e. permanently a cipher, present as a half-speech (*mi-dire*), resistant to meaning and all appropriation. In other words, this unconscious is the essence of Lacan’s idea of the partial object, which is present only as a negative.

True to the logic of double inscription, the extimate, the negative is not simply absence or non-existence: it is the persistence of the negative, an oppressive eternal presence, without mediation and without relief. The unconscious of place could be called a “super-negative” in the sense that it resists dissipation or containment. To this extent, we can see that the construction of dimensionality, the *image-structures* of space and time, are precisely aimed at such dissipation and containment. The “motive for distance,” at the heart of the architectural *image*-ination, is the concealment/neutralization of this Real of the unconscious in its radical negativity. Every image aims to make this unconscious invisible, to reduce it to a blur, a *punctum sæcum* or blind spot. Thus, the unconscious is permanently unconscious, permanently negative.

So, what can be the motive and possible intended result of Benjamin’s project of uncovering the “truth” of architecture or photography, as specifically undertaken in his *Arcades* project? This project pushed forward Benjamin’s general desire to wake up from the nightmare of Capitalism, to “dis-enchant” its spells and fantasies. Yet, it was not typical of the kind of “Enlightenment unmasking projects” that Peter Sloterdijk has cited as the mainstay of modern cynicism.<sup>17</sup> Unmasking follows the rules that Todd McGowan has enumerated for the culture of enjoyment: discredit not just the universals used to explain things but the idea of universality in general. Level the playing field of criticism by denying any access whatsoever to theoretical universality, while employing the unmasking

routine to show that networks of symbolic relations as well as the structures of knowledge they employ are “nothing but” fantasies held together by thin threads. No substitute basis of knowledge need be established; knowledge *per se* is discredited as out of fashion.

This was not Benjamin’s desire. Like McGowan, he focused on the ideological role of the image and connected the “unconscious of the image” with a particularity that emerged as a universality as soon as it was printed, framed, and hung. The pointing of the camera and industrial procedures of reproducing the framed scene through photosensitive chemicals layered on the plate or paper was a valorizing, a creation of validity through image, whose authority radiated to the viewer, “interpellating” the point of view in the same way that any point of view feels validated by the authentic “automaton” of the visual scene, its dependence on the idea of chance. But, there is a fine line to be drawn that hinges on the issue of the unconscious. There is the school of thought that has been promoted by Jacques Derrida and Michel Foucault, which might be roughly condensed by saying that the gaze travels from subject to object and carries with it the potential to subjugate the viewed. This is the “male gaze,” for example, that Laura Mulvey made famous in relation to Alfred Hitchcock’s 1954 film, *Rear Window*. The gaze of power is typically male, its object typically female. The gaze, indistinguishable from the “hegemonizing” forces of Western industrial-political consolidation of knowledge and global domination, was a weapon to discipline and punish (as Foucault would put it in his analysis of panopticism). As such, whoever employed it was fundamentally a voyeur, “stealing” the visible away from those who possessed it as a cherished quality of subjectivity and privacy.

The distinction that puts McGowan and Benjamin in one camp and critics of the image’s “power politics” in the other is explained by McGowan. The voyeur kneeling at the keyhole, as in Sartre’s famous example in *Being and Nothingness*, is not penetrating a space without permission, he claims. The element of voyeurism is *already present* in the scene itself. The gaze of the Other is present as a potentiality, already-always taken into account, whatever the conditions of surveillance, secret or otherwise. The voyeur thus does not discover anything that is not already present in the first place; the voyeur steps into a role pre-designed for him/her. The would-be voyeur is interpellated by the visible as such, by the visible’s “automatism,” its relation to chance as recognized and defined by Aristotle as one of the supplements to the four classic causes (formal, final, material, and efficient). The voyeur’s obliging cooperation to fit within the scene already-always invested with voyeurism is the interpellating act, not the other way around as Foucault and Derrida would have it.

By getting the direction of the gaze backwards, Foucault and Derrida have consistently missed opportunities to see how the gaze operates as a partial object, or how visibility as such contains an “optical unconscious.” Followers of this view, and to some extent those who have taken up the position put forward by Deleuze and Guattari, have thus been forced into using the idea of the unconscious as a metaphor and not as an active, functional force. The unconscious is thus falsely tied to the concealed or not-yet-known motives and intentions of those in dominant social and political positions; not, as Lacan would have it, a fundamental component of subjectivity, taken anywhere and everywhere. The gaze as partial object extends Freud’s list of classic partial objects: the breast, shit,

phallus. The gaze and the (acousmatic) voice are, in effect, the post-mirror stage partial objects, the perceptual set that neurotic adults use in everyday life (mainly through their negative presence), the same set that psychotics address without mediation (cf. the Emperor's New Clothes) and perverts embellish with special glee. Partiality itself requires a topography, since the force-field of partial objects eludes mapping as much as it does any other form of symbolization.

The monument constitutes an example of how commonplace objects can acquire and adapt the topography of partiality for collective, cultural functions. The monument condenses the logic of the grave: the continuance of the name; the obligation to the symbolic that survives the (usually) disastrous encounter with the Real of war or some other sacrifice. The space surrounding a monument, which may be activated only during special events, shows how by imposing prohibitions on movement, presence, costume, and gesture the monument constitutes a topological alteration of space, a kind of "curvature." This could be thought of in terms of Einstein's General Theory of Relativity, but, as Žižek insists, one must take the second, stronger version into account. This is where Einstein moved from characterizing gravity's influence as a deformation of "normal" space to seeing that deformation/curvature was inherent in space as a whole. This returns us to the point about the voyeur's gaze being already-always present in even the private scene, or to the idea of the automaton-as-unconscious being an already-always component of the physical world, architecture, or visibility. The monument does not "curve" ordinary space into a particular festal or ritual form; it marks points where the primary festal/ritual form of (civic) space can be, for limited times, allowed to come uncapped. Just as the Roman holiday of Lemuria allowed the household spirits to roam about freely, the exception proved the rule that kept the *manes* within the precinct of the hearth, a miniature Hades of every household, guarded by the wife and daughters, servants of Hestia.

The "enjoyment" of the monument is really an enjoyment that the monument has of *us*, not our enjoyment of the monument. This follows the logic of the monument as a collective unconscious, an automaton able not just to trigger memories but to constitute them materially. In Freud's example of the Londoner captivated by the sad loss of Queen Eleanor 600 years before, is now instructive. The "hysteria" of the weeping Londoner follows the logic of the "discourse of the hysteric," defined by Lacan in terms of  $\$/a \rightarrow S_1/S_2$ , translated roughly as "the subject in a condition of obversion (extimacy), grieving as a *sign* of the Charring Cross monument's enjoyment of him, the agent of a knowledge (relation of signifiers) captivated/superimposed by the master signifier (the monument as a rhetorical sign).  $S_1/S_2$  is certainly an almost literal picture of any architectural monument: a spire mounted on a base inscribed with names.  $\$/a$  not so much an individual subject as subjectivity *per se* behind which enjoyment (the object-cause of desire = *a*) operates "in obversion," portrays a subject put "on stage," flipped from an observer to observed, enjoyer to enjoyed. The London hysteric is an exception to the passers-by only in the sense that he is, at the moment of his "capture," the *only one who understands and grieves*. This urban case repeats the universal formula for all grief: that it isolates, convulses, and obverts.

The term obversion is used in preference to inversion, since a simple turn-about does not carry with it the idea of authenticity. Obversion is the logical reversal of both subject and predicate (very loosely, "All dogs are good" becomes "No dogs are bad"), which preserves the truth value of the statement. Obversion works in cultural use of partial objects because partial objects involve the double negation, the "negation of negation," where extimacy is necessary. The monument is a "subjective object" *par excellence*. As such, it "does our remembering for us," is a case of the "unconscious of architecture." It does not keep us from forgetting the particular names that are inscribed on its base (although this is the "off duty" function of the monument, to be photographed and printed up on post-cards). Rather, it has inscribed *our* names within a totality of mourning, it has renewed our interpellation by the Name as Other.

A quick reality check can be provided by the case of the Vietnam Veterans' Memorial in Washington, DC. To some extent, the designer, Maya Lin, committed a key error. She progressed generally in the correct use of a doubly negated image (with invisibility inscribed at its center), but she gave into a moment of *mauvais fois* in giving this center a symbolic role. The dates associated with the names inscribed in the granite panels followed a converging order, A-C,C-B. If the list had been allowed to continue chronologically, the relation of the last name to the first, and the status of the list as a histogram of the war's rate of casualties would have provided a Real by submerging visitors in the depth of a doubly-negated mirror image at the very point where the "ends were (literally) not in sight." Despite this key error, the monument is read as if the ordering mistake did not exist. The beginning is legible as a beginning, the middle as middle, the end as end.

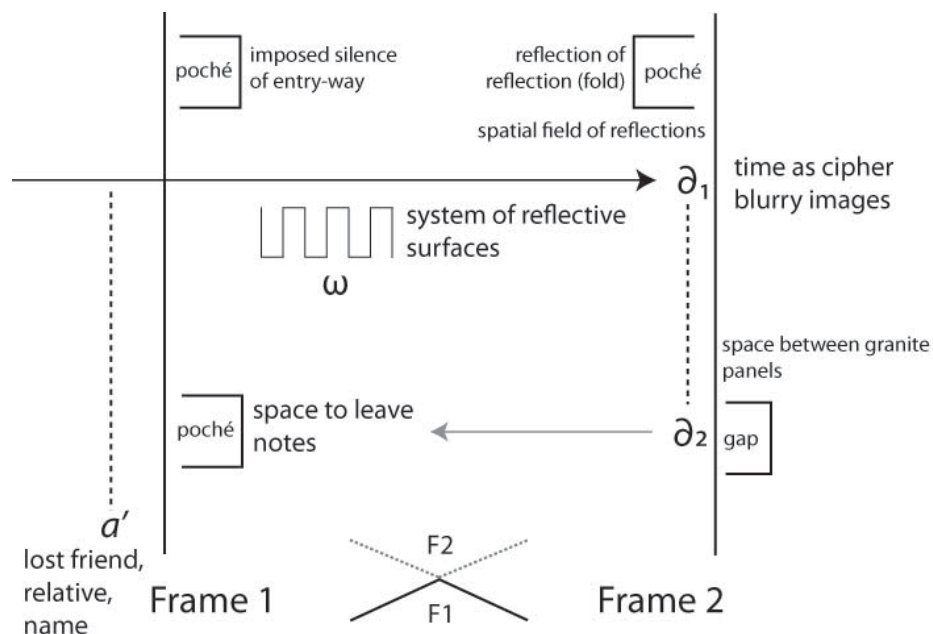


Fig. 2. The Vietnam Veterans Memorial, Washington, DC, is a literal double frame where double negation (the mirroring of the mirror image) works with the chronological order of the names to open up a "magical" use of the joints between the granite panels, where the Lacanian dictum comes true, "the letter always reaches its destination."



In this project there are clear roles for all elements of the double frame:  $||$ ,  $a'$ ,  $\partial$ ,  $\omega$ , and  $\sqsubset$ . The correspondence of the "lost friend," possibly only a fictional construct for many visitors, to the optical status of the visitor that is suppressed/dropped-out at the entry-point of the site allows the latter to serve in the role of the former as the mirrored surface increasingly dominates as the walk descends. The V-shaped walk wedges into the earth to create a shadow opening, resembling an open grave, where, as in the Roman festival of Lemuria, the souls are let out to wander. The act of placement is taken up by the need to find specific names using a register-guide, and the presumption that the location has some relation to the chronology of the war (only partly the case). The frame, F1, with a fold/defect,  $\partial_1$ , creates the internal frame, F2, that is eschatologically internal as well as optically internal. The space between F1 and F2 is perceivable as a temporal overlap, an opportunity for communications that will later be forbidden; hence, the gaps,  $\partial_2$ , in the granite, become the means for leaving notes to the deceased. This is a "perfect monument" in the sense that every element is represented directly, in a physical form that is also a diagram of its function. Even the defect of the architect's conception — the chronological of the second series of names — uncannily "corrects" an over-literal use of the chronology as a literal histogram. The center and periphery, as Pascal said, are the same thing. The double frame creates a condition of over-determination, where an unintended error leads to the target even more quickly than the correct path.

The structure of the monument, candidly displayed in the Vietnam Veterans Memorial, can also serve when the theme of national preservation is made into a popular narrative. One case is Hitchcock's 1935 film, *The 39 Steps*. The frame begins with the truncation of a shadow figure entering a music hall. We see only his hands and feet, metonymies of "partial objects" that, compounded with his role as a national hero, make his identity (a visitor from Canada) and his unintentional involvement (an "automaton" — chance — selects him for sacrificial duty) the ingredients of  $a'$ , the dropped-out element associated with the audience's "exile" in the fixed seats of the darkened auditorium. This pre-death is the first death, and what follows is the interval between the two deaths, the two frames, F1 and F2.

Hitchcock establishes the anonymity of the audience through an act, "Mr. Memory," where audience members are allowed to challenge the performer by asking him questions about dates, names, and other statistics. His memory defeats all of their challenges until a gunshot alarms the crowd (cf. the function of the *énoncé*) and the Canadian stranger is taken in hand by Annabella, a spy working for the British government. She is being followed and used her own gun to shake off her pursuers long enough to get Hannay to conceal her in his apartment. She makes him aware of a "dimensionality" of surveillance, pointing out mysterious men in trench coats who seem to be lingering about the apartment. Their lines of sight cause both Hannay and Annabella to creep carefully about, avoiding the windows.

The window, a perfect example of an inside frame, becomes vitriolic when we see that it has been used as a means of entry; one of the trench coat men has gotten in and stabbed Annabella; the window-curtain fluttering in the breeze alerts us to this breach. Annabella has just enough breath to

beg Hannay to carry out her mission by finding a spy who lives in Scotland, identifiable because he has a missing joint on his little finger ( $\partial$ ). He must elude the spies who are still surveying his apartment so he trades clothes with the milkman and, like *North by Northwest* some twenty years later, catches a train using the ruse of traveling with a woman. She does not cooperate at this point, as did Eve Kendall in the later movie. She will figure later in the film, first as a betrayer, later as a partner ( $\omega$ ).

The McGuffin that serves *The 39 Steps* is a description of an aircraft engine, memorized by the same Mr. Memory who first performed in the music hall at the opening of the film. We will meet him at the end of the film, on a stage in London. Hannay, apprehended by the police in the theatre, asks to stay long enough not to interrupt the show; when he recognizes the theme music and sees Mr. Memory again on stage, he shouts a question that Mr. Memory will be *compelled to answer* — “What are the 39 steps?” Before Mr. Memory can finish, this *énoncé* has its intended enunciation: the super-spy with the missing little finger shoots Mr. Memory from the balcony; again the theater audience runs out of the exits. This time, however, the dying Mr. Memory provides the *second half* of Annabella’s secret, the formula for the engine. The security of the British nation is preserved by reuniting the two separate halves of a single message ( $\omega$ ), the broken edges ( $\partial$ ) of which had constituted a cipher for the characters to follow and the errors made in deciphering took place in a variety of *poché* enclosures ( $\sqsubset$ ) — theaters, train compartments, bed cabinets, country homes, county jails, and country inns.

The Vietnam Veterans Memorial and *The 39 Steps* have nothing circumstantial in common. Yet, their structures are so nearly identical that we can compare individual elements to find aspects that eluded our first survey. Each element,  $\sqsubset$ ,  $a'$ ,  $\partial$ ,  $\omega$ , and  $\sqsubset$ , has something to say in addition to its alternative service in one or the other works of art.

**The double frame,  $\sqsubset$ :** In *The 39 Steps*, the inside frame is the theater inside the theater in which we watch the film, first the smaller music hall, then, at the film’s conclusion, the larger, famous London Palladium. The two theaters are linked by the theme music used to introduce the Mr. Memory act. Hannay whistles this theme during his flight through Scotland but cannot remember where it came from. When the Palladium’s orchestra strikes up the tune, he realizes the connection between the first and last theaters and, with this, the key to the mystery. Both theaters are effective as mnemonic devices not just because Mr. Memory is himself a mnemonicist but because of the acousmatic use of the tune, which accentuates the acousmatic functionality of the *poché*,  $\sqsubset$ . The tune’s enactment (enunciation) is suspended while its literal form is retained by Hannay’s whistling (*énoncé*). This is also Mr. Memory’s trick: he remembers only the *énoncé* component of things; he has no knowledge or even awareness of the meaning — the performative component — of what he remembers. He is a “memory machine,” an automaton.

**The sacrifice,  $a'$ :** Hannay is, specifically, a visitor from Canada. He is not an American; the Americans will join the war effort so much later that many British will accuse them of waiting to take the glory but avoid the suffering. Canadians are well regarded from the start; they act as British

subjects and volunteered for service although there was no Canadian draft until 1944. They were “strangers,” as is Hannay, doubly a stranger because the audience is a “collection of strangers.” This emphasis on anonymity is traditional in monuments, that in essence cite the “anonymous”/unknowable sacrifice of those whose identities have been erased — the “unknown soldier.” In essence, all soldiers killed in action are unknown (detached from their living identities). Re-attaching them involves *locating* where they fell, following the memory practice of using places to remember names.<sup>18</sup> Hannay is selected “at random” by Annabella to hide from her German-spy pursuers. A stranger comes to town and is selected at random to participate in a sacred ritual — this ancient motif works well when we take up the POV of the victim, and where themes of disguise, sacrifice, doubles, riddles, and mock executions become the normal components of an escape thriller. A hymnbook is left in the breast pocket of the overcoat a farmer’s wife has given Hannay (feeling guilty that her pious husband has betrayed him to the police). The thick book saves Hannay from the bullet shot at him by the super-spy. This a complex of “metonymies of metonymies” (metalepsis) uses double negation to advance our “dead hero” through the space of the double frame. These readily understood tricks keep him from learning that he is dead (the “unconscious” of the  $\hat{a}$ ), although they come close to giving away the secret by being such an improbable series of all-too-lucky breaks.

**The defect ( $\partial$ ):** The defect can operate at the level of omission (the non-appearance of something, made evident by its place in a series), the over-presence of something, displacement (being in the wrong place or showing up at the wrong time), or dysfunction. Scale dysfunction can be a matter of too large or too small (Alice’s predicament in *Behind the Looking Glass*; or Goldilocks’ dilemma in “The Three Bears”), but it is particularly effective when something is both too small and too large,  $\langle \rangle$ , a condition that effects a flip or obversion: the Lacanian extimate.<sup>19</sup> Such flips typically employ a chiasmus: the smallest of a group of large things becomes the largest of a group of small things; a dunce among wits becomes a wit among dunces. Scale dysfunction can take place as a part of a “motility dysfunction” (trip gone wrong, flat tire, etc.). Hannay, trying to elude police by marching along in a parade of Salvation Army demonstrators, slips into an auditorium where he is mistaken for the invited speaker. To remain concealed, he must paradoxically become the most prominent figure in the auditorium, speaking with a borrowed name about an unfamiliar topic. Here, the *poché* space of the auditorium creates the perfect acousmatic conditions. After getting his own name wrong (he must read it upside down from the poster hanging on the podium) Hannay not only delivers the required speech, but his ignorance of the facts requires him to use rhetoric to stir up the audience far beyond what the political organizers had expected. The  $\langle$  of hiding became the  $\rangle$  of a successful political rally speech.

Later, the extimate as  $\langle \rangle$  is enacted as the car carrying Hannay and Pamela, his accuser and now handcuffed to him as a co-prisoner (the woman who knows too much), to an undisclosed location is stopped at a bridge by a herd of sheep. Taking advantage of the confusion, Hannay bolts with Pamela and uses the bridge topology to step into the shadows and then out again. The art of brief invisibility served elsewhere in the film as a comic motif. Hannay got the milkman’s costume to slip out of his

apartment by telling him an expected lie instead of the truth (his girlfriend, a married woman, was upstairs and her brother and husband were outside); an “amorous” cover worked briefly in the train by kissing Pamela, their first encounter, just as the police were searching the train compartments. The allusion of being a lover is used a third time when the couple check in to a country inn. Fortunately, this time Pamela overhears a phone conversation by their pursuers that convinces her that Hannay is telling the truth, and she converts into an ally.

Where Benjamin argues that photography reveals the unconscious of the visible, he emphasizes the close-up, the detail. These, he notes, are not simply quantitatively different from normal reality, they reveal a wholly different reality going on beneath. In this claim, Benjamin subscribes to the  $\langle \rangle$  aspect of the detail.<sup>20</sup> This early articulation of the  $\emptyset$  function argument calls into play such amorous pockets and intervals that afford the heroes invisibility. The “close up” is the honeymoon couple kissing, which we may modestly refrain from staring at. If we do look at it, it is explained as what it seems to be, an everyday romantic appropriation of public space. Hitchcock makes use of these amorous  $\emptyset$  pockets to allow the heroes to disappear just long enough to slip away unnoticed; but he takes the amorous component for real and makes the escaping couple, accidentally brought together, fall in love, as if the automaton of the initial predicament had a good side. The alliance of  $\partial$  with  $\emptyset$  shows how invisibility and difference realize Benjamin’s heightened awareness of an unconscious. It is never *just* a cheap trick to escape the cops.

**The anamorphic lovers,  $\omega$ :** A code or cipher is an anamorphic content that operates within a seemingly contingent grammatical expression. The expression gives the code its cover by meaning something, by being subject to interpretation or misinterpretation. The code’s meaning, however, is monothetic. Its precision is guaranteed by the contingency of its container, the apparent lack of determinacy.<sup>21</sup> This ideal combination of chance and necessity could be connected to the division of enunciation generally. The grammatical component is the “merely conventional structure” that allows speakers and listeners the usual latitude of interpretation. When, however, there is a code contained, the code takes up the role of the enunciating act: its purpose is to set in motion specific acts immediately, without question. The example of the shout, “Bomb!” in a crowded room shows how this special case can be focused, but the extrimity of the situation, to show how ciphers work in language. The “invisibility” of the cipher corresponds to the invisibility of the bomb, the lack of any option to subjectivize or interrogate the bomb, the bomb’s lack of a place in the socio-cultural network. We must look at anamorphosis in this way.

Necessity is the unconscious, hence its close relation to ciphers. The anamorphic image’s “sweet spot” is the cipher key put in terms of a point of view. This POV does not mean that anything is known, thanks to this special access; rather it means that nothing is known. The cipher is, as a cipher, ungrammatical until translated into some other form.<sup>22</sup> As a cipher it contains only a “self-indexing” function that guarantees its internal integrity, its independent form of *énoncé*. In this way we can see how *énoncé* works as an automaton, and how, as automaton, it becomes the ideal basis of the “unconscious” of any material condition. In Mertins’s essay on Benjamin’s discovery of the optical

unconscious, the phrase is rarely used without connecting it to the idea of two spaces that are interwoven: "... in place of a space interwoven with human consciousness one interwoven with unconsciousness steps in." Mertins replaces the English translator's choice of "exploring" and "penetrating" with "interweaving" to capture the active tangle suggested by the German *durchwirken*. Inexplicably, the translator of the Schocken Books edition of *Illuminations*, Harry Zohn, ignored the useful and conventional translation, "interweaving," in favor of inaccurate metaphors, just as Edmund Jephcott and Kingsley Shorter translated the vivid "interwoven with consciousness" as the bland "informed."<sup>23</sup> Interwoven, in short, is the stuff of anamorphosis: the idea of mutual interpenetration, one set of signifiers being more prominent, the other lying hidden, there for structure (*énoncé*) but available to index a secret code at any time.

The automaton of *énoncé* is the McGuffin of Mr. Memory, who is unconscious of the meaning of his remembered formula for the performance of the secret aircraft engine. There is no use asking Mr. Memory how the engine works; he is the material paper on which the cipher is written. His key, old as Simonides, is to discount *any* relationship between the memory place and the memory contents. His business is *énoncé*, not enunciating. The performative element is for others, the spies who will take the formula and create a more powerful German engine. This logic reminds us of the essay, "On the Marionette Theater," where Heinrich von Kleist argues that the puppet comes closest to divine mind because of its extreme lack of intentionality and autonomy. The pure unconscious is without value, without meaning. This unconscious, however, cannot exist or play its peculiar role without its antipodal foil, the conventional cover, the everyday. One, in its ordinariness, the other in its inscrutability, the quotidian world and the unconscious are the constituents of the anamorphic Real.

**Poché enclosures (□):** In *Strangers on a Train*, the carnival park on the edge of Metcalf offers an unusually vivid case of the "para-site" — a space outside the normal space traversed by the train between Mitford and Philadelphia but still officially within the space by the convention that allows for just such exceptions to the normal. Like the French word, *parasite*, this place beside a (main) site also means "noise." The acousmatic role of noise is one that has been approached scientifically, under the heading of stochastic resonance, and it is useful to summarize that phenomenon. With very weak signals, such as the motion of predators in a pond, the sensitive hairs on salamanders' backs cannot detect an impending attack without the presence of other sounds in the point. Uncannily, white noise, instead of obscuring the already weak signals that will save the salamander's life, actually reinforces it. This is somewhat like saying that Hegel's "negation of negation" exists in nature, that spirit is quite literally a bone! Acousmatics in human perception is sound in relation to a frame, and as a Lacanian partial object, the *voix acousmatique* carries its frame with us. What happens when the frame is formalized, as is the case with the ornate electrified entry to the amusement park in *Strangers on a Train*? Just as Hannay was able to step into a pocket of invisibility by engaging in mock amorous activities, the whole amusement park constitutes a single mega-shadow, also dedicated to physicality and eros. Bruno pursues Miriam, Guy's troublesome wife, who has come to the park with two boyfriends, a surplus that relates to her obsolescence as a faithful wife. This combination of surplus

characters and characters with a surplus (Miriam is also pregnant), coupled with eros to provide a perfect invisibility. The unconscious is unconscious precisely because it's invisible to the ordinary view. This condition does not require, as Benjamin discovers, literal invisibility. It is more effective when, like Edgar Allan Poe's purloined letter, the unconscious is plainly displayed, in full view, but that the subject (and subjectivity in general) is *blind* to it. Visibility that results in invisibility through blindness is one way of writing a perfect formula for the partial object. Technical invisibility would homogenize the partial object into an object that just momentarily lies out of sight. The partial object is *permanently* invisible, not because we *can't* see it but because it *refuses to be seen*. Its negative objectivity engages a negative subjectivity.

*The 39 Steps* treats acousmatics as its formal organizing theme. The two theaters — *auditoriums* — the anonymous music hall at the opening and the London Palladium at the end, are like the two tin-cans connected by a string that children used to use to simulate telephone communication. The tune that connects them is the one that Hannay whistles but cannot remember "where it comes from." The dislocated tune works like the Yellow Brick Road in *The Wizard of Oz*. It is the mandate by which dislocation as such becomes a template for travel. The tune establishes the beginning and end of this travel.

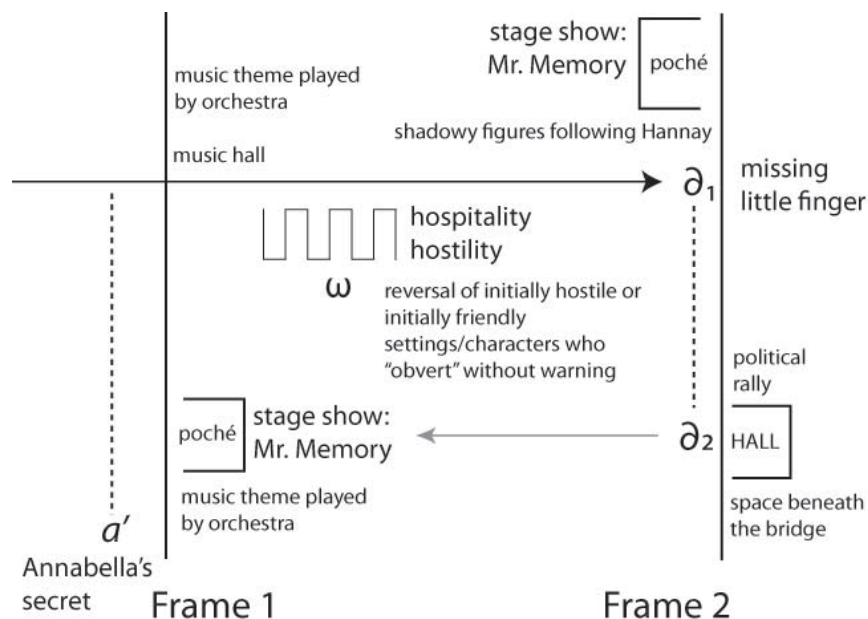


Fig. 3. *The 39 Steps* as enunciation uses the secret concealed by the spy Annabella and memorized by the automaton, Mr. Memory, to initiate an action plan in absence of this key information. The two theaters create an acousmatic symmetry to begin and end the journey through (mostly) the Scottish highlands, ideal setting for the use of the famous McGuffin.

Hannay is escorted to the first steps of his own Yellow Brick Road by the mysterious Annabella, brought to the final conclusion by the practical Pamela. Dislocation is equated with the puzzle that is

charged by the McGuffin — i.e. one with a resolution but not an answer. In joke terms, the solution to the second stage (the escape from the “police”) is provided by the first (the conversion of Pamela from antagonist to partner), and the punch line involves a shift in the POV.

The second or inside frame, the “acousmatic” music hall and its variants, demonstrates the necessity for the margin between F1 and F2, a space where the fugitive attempts to direct his own “show” and is misrecognized and falsely accused. This is inevitably an anamorphic field where motility, extimacy (as both the authenticity issues of  $\diamond$  and scale inversions of  $\langle \rangle$ ), and identity figure as the three dimensions of fictive time-space.

Because there are no literal monuments in *Strangers on a Train* or *The 39 Steps*, many literal-minded planners and architects would find no relationship to the issues of heritage sites and their essential monumentalism. They associate monuments with monumentality, ignoring the scale inversions that have always been a part of the relations between the living and the dead. They also tend to regard the issue of the “unknown soldier” as separate from monuments were the listing of names serves as a primary focus. Here again, modern planning ignores the essence of identity in relations between the living and the dead. For sites that seem secular and historic rather than memorial, the tendency to focus on captions and tagging that makes sites legible within a salient narrative overlooks the issue of depth — that there are multiple channels of meaning where negation, dialectic, and mirroring are active in maintaining key ambiguities that, by avoiding the simplification of captioning, preserve key affordances linking past with future cultural acts.

Lacan’s thinking carefully distinguishes three separate but linked domains: the symbolic (the relationship of signifiers within language and other systems), the imaginary (a rival domain that aspires to mis-represent and mis-identify), and the Real, the field in which traumas and experiences are retained in full detail, in a cipher-system that resists symbolization and the imaginary.

Transactions between these three domains defy Cartesian explanation. They require topology rather than projective maps, dialectic rather than explanation. Theory written without topology and dialectic is worse than no theory at all, and Ganiatsas has rightly called for a moratorium on such thinking.

Frame analysis proposes the possibility of a future suspension of this moratorium, accompanied by a general opening-up of theory in all arts disciplines. The five terms of this *lingua franca* are not the only aspect of this new era, but they do constitute a restoration of traditional thinking and practices linking art and cultural life to the extent that expressions such as “collective memory” should no longer sound strange or figurative but, rather, the norm against which any idea of personal memory should be seen as the fiction.

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1. Vassilis Ganiatsas has summarized the failure of theory in general to overcome these Cartesian axioms. “Paradigm Shift in Heritage Protection? Tolerance for Change, Limits of Change,” Romualdo Del Bianco Foundation, [http://www.fondazione-delbianco.org/seminari/progetti\\_prof/progview.asp?id=2061](http://www.fondazione-delbianco.org/seminari/progetti_prof/progview.asp?id=2061), last accessed April 1, 2011. Ganiatsas argues that, because of the universalizing tendency of any theory, the particularity of the heritage site is inevitably reduced and falsified. This essay takes up this critique as a challenge for how theory might approach the singular as such. Its prescribed coupling of heritage site

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analysis with the analysis of (otherwise unrelated) works of architecture, art, and literature aims to create a means of preserving singularity in the face of the greatest possible variety of conditions and analytical frameworks. The singular as such is the basis of works of art and, by analogy, the cultural function of monuments.

2. Sigmund Freud, [to be completed].
3. Slavoj Žižek, [to be completed].
4. See Ernst Cassirer, [to be completed].
5. Julian Jaynes, *The Origin of Consciousness in the Breakdown of the Bicameral Mind* (Princeton: Princeton University, 1976).
6. Freud on Schreber [to be completed].
7. Lacanian extimate [to be completed].
8. Freudian-Lacanian uncanny [to be completed].
9. Theory of enunciation [to be completed].
10. The reference to "infra-thin" is intentionally intended to refer to the writings and works of Marcel Duchamp, who presciently focused on this singular function as key to his own wry artworks. Duchamp was (in)famous for defining the infra-thin in terms of paying a visit to a public toilet and finding that the seat is still warm. The idea is clearly aimed at a difference that cannot be easily conceptualized or even represented but, nonetheless, significant. It is a "minimal difference" that exercises enormous leverage in contrast to its elusiveness and apparent frailty.
11. The acousmatic voice was the second of the two partial objects Lacan added to the Freudian list of breast, shit, and phallus. The acousmatic is the voice that cannot be located, the voice that cannot fit within the network of symbolic relationships or that network's physical fields. More generally, "acousmatic" is about the condition of (dis-)location in general. The police pursuing a suspect make a map of the city and try to put together clues from witnesses who provide only fragments; the suspect is somewhere but nowhere. This is the condition of the *énoncé*, the object whose absence (a') leads to a framing procedure directing actions of potential discovery. Poe used the same logic in his short story, "The Purloined Letter," where a missing letter creates a field demanding that the police find a hiding place. The hiding place, however, retained the negative quality of the *énoncé* by not being hidden at all but left in plain view. Poe's use of ciphers and symmetries anticipate the method of frame analysis completely. See Richard Kopley, *Edgar Allan Poe and the Dupin Mysteries* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008).
12. Verene on phrenology [to be completed]
13. Jacques Monod, *Chance and Necessity*.
14. Christopher Alexander on QWAN [to be completed].
15. Detlef Mertens, "Walter Benjamin and the Tectonic Unconscious: Using Architecture as an Optical Instrument," *The Optic of Walter Benjamin*, Vol. 3 of *de-, dis-, ex-*, ed. Alex Coles (London: Black Dog Publishing, 1999), p. 207.
16. Mertens, *op. cit.*, p. 297. Reference to Walter Benjamin, "Ursprung der deutschen Trauerspiel," *Gesammelte Schriften* I, I (Frankfurt: Suhrkamp, 1974-1982), p. 211, English version in *The Origin of German Tragic Drama*, trans., John Osborne (New York: Verso, 1977), p. 31.
17. Peter Sloterdijk, *The Critique of Cynical Reason*.
18. Simonides of Ceos realized the theological/eschatological significance of memory and employed his memory technique to aide the families of those crushed beneath a collapsed banquet hall where he had been performing. With identities destroyed by the fallen stones, location became the only means of connecting bodies to *names* and, hence, allowing burial rites to proceed. As with all souls caught between the two deaths, between literal and symbolic deaths, the trauma of the first death must be settled symbolically, by crossing the victim's bones, by ritual, by encomia at the funeral, which "cross bones" equally effectively with poetry. [to be completed].
19. Lacan used <> as an aspect of the poinçon (◊) he used as a "matheme" to define relationships of "one or a hundred things." The ◊ sign, commonly encountered as the conductor's punch on a train ticket, was derived from a silver-smithing mark guaranteeing material purity. The <> relates more directly to the extimate, the double inscription of inside and outside.



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20. The revelational potential of the detail was a feature of the proto-Surrealist tricks of Raymond Roussel, whose methods, described as *la procédé*, included describing in incredible detail the content of illustrations used on such items as water bottle labels.
  21. This is the logic of the password, about which Lacan had much to say. The password appears as an innocuous, random statement or expression. It is however a *mi-dire*, a speech divided in half, and its contingency is illusory. The code it contains is specific and non-contingent: a 1:1 cipher coupled with an unambiguous instruction to act. The strange speech of the Papin sisters, two psychotic domestics, arrested after they had killed their employers, made Lacan realize the relationship of *mi-dire* to psychosis and, hence, Freud's analysis of the Schreber case.
  22. Even when translated into "ordinary language," the cipher is only one half of enunciating: the pure act, an instruction to act. Its pure performativity is evident in the military uses of ciphers within "ordinary language" transmissions, but when transmitted in pure form, such as the German enigma codes of World War I, the performativity component was its substance; the indexical (*énoncé*) qualities were the code itself.
  23. Walter Benjamin, *Illuminations*, trans. Harry Zohn (New York: Schocken Books, 1968). Mertins also reclaims the phrase, "interwoven with consciousness," instead of Edmund Jephcott and Kingsley Shorter's "informed by." The translators have erased all relationship with the unconscious by using bland, misleading, and inaccurate substitutions that work like inverse metaphors: instead of alluding to relationships outside the literal meaning of words, they ignore the relationships with the unconscious already present in the conventional expressions! Walter Benjamin, "A Small History of Photography," *One Way Street*, trans. Edmund Jephcott and Kingsley Shorter (London: NLB/Verso, 1979), pp. 240-257.