

Secondary Virtuality, the Anamorphosis of Projective Geometry

Don Kunze

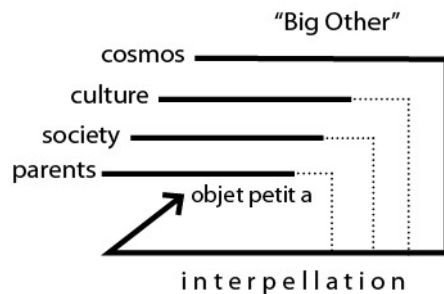


Figure 1

Ultimately, the Big Other cosmically reconnects to the interior of the *A/a*'s concentric formations, an apocalyptic crisis that strikes at the heart of the Imaginary's virtual ordering of the ego and its objects. Like Althusser's account of ideological interpellation, Lacan's Big Other presents a "forced choice" demand as an offer no one can afford to refuse.

Abstract It is tempting to construct theory about the Other using binary oppositions. Lacanian psychoanalysis avoids this by stressing the geometry of the Borromeo knot, whose three rings embody both sequentiality and self-intersection. This essay organizes Lacan's topological options around a "secondary virtuality" by (1) considering Mladen Dolar's expanded account of anamorphosis, (2) connecting the architectural void to the problem of non-enclosure of the standard figures of projective geometry immersion – the Möbius band, cross-cap, and Klein bottle, and (3) taking Pappus's theorem, the origin of projective geometry, to the twisted and folded spaces of the uncanny, where *unheimlich* ("un-homely") directly implicates architecture as an agency of topological transformation. Two examples, Chesterton's "The Queer Feet" (1911) and the 1951 science-fiction film, *The Day the Earth Stood Still*, demonstrate the continued relevance of Pappus's idea of secondary virtuality to Lacan's correlation of the Other and extimity.

The Other as Vector: Anamorphosis Expanded

The Lacanian subject emerges, dynamically, from within complex interactions of "big" and "little" others (*Autres* and *autres*) mapped first by the L-schema introduced in the 1950s. Lacan actualized the Freudian slogan, *Wo Es war, soll Ich bedeudet* — "Where *Es* was, there I shall be" — by setting the gender-neutral *Es*, "it" (the id?) as the destination of analysis. To reach this *locus*, the Symbolic vector of the Unconscious Other (*A*) must negotiate the border defenses, $a-a'$, set up by the Imaginary ego (*a*) and the people and objects in the ego's external world (a').¹ These small others layer their demands in successive pictures structured as "Euclidean locales." These locales buffer the virtuality of the ego's $a-a'$ axis; so, to get past these defenses, the Big Other must configure a completely different kind of virtuality able to penetrate the buffers. Where the ego relies on self-confirming pictures, the Big Other's virtuality must undermine this spatial confidence. Like Hermes, the Big Other is a lover as well as a thief, a herald who delivers secrets on a just-in-time basis. Figure 1 depicts a succession of layered defenses that give way to an end-run, at a moment where the Other "never comes when you want it but is right on time." Thus, what this just-in-time acrobat announces is always by definition an Apocalypse. In contrast to the "truths" of $a-a'$, the Big Other is a "truth of truth," a master signifier in relation to signifying chains. Whereas the ego has set up its others in familiar locales, the Big Other deploys extimity (both intimate exteriority and objective interiority) – the alchemies of negation, inversion, and self-intersection.² The subject's question to the Other, *Che vuoi?* – "What do you want of me?" – is crisscrossed into saying "I

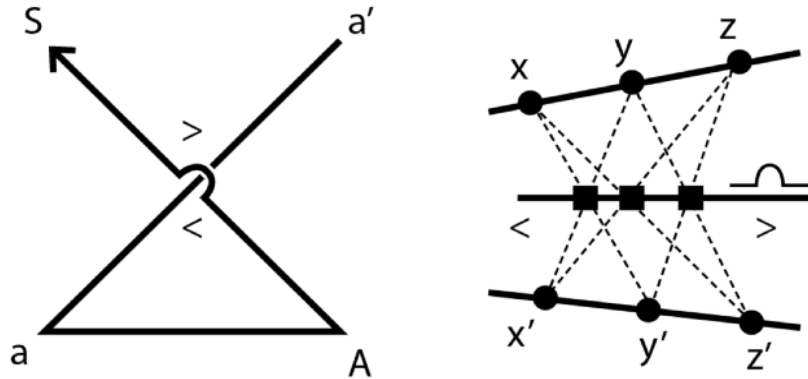


Figure 2

Lacan's L-schema (left) features a crossing that must take place within a constructed virtuality "inside" the Euclidean locale of the Analyst (a') and Analysand (a) as egos. The Analyst's strategy is limited to the function of the dummy in the game of bridge. The Analyst must choose between preceding the Analysand's blahblahblah with a suggestive nudge or following up with a cough, "hmmmm," or ambiguous murmur. There is an equally psychoanalytical virtuality within Pappus's two lines, whose own blahblahblah is the "anywhere" of the three points on each of the lines that are drawn "at any angle" to each other. The complex relations connecting Lacan's *Autres*, egos, master signifiers, and actual masters/ Others with their forced choices ("earth must reform or be destroyed") can be reconfigured within a second virtuality of effectiveness, which requires us to rethink psychoanalysis within the fundamentals of projective geometry at the level of self-intersection and non-orientability, radical restatements of the $< >$ aspect of the *poinçon*, \diamond .

know what you're telling me, but what is it that you *really* want me to do?" Desire is, as Lacan says through other slogans, what the Other desires; a message always delivered to an unexpected but (ultimately) correct address, arriving in reverse. The desiring Other is fundamentally a topology, a night-time smuggling operation (Fig. 2).

The Other's line of travel does not so much itself crisscross or twist as it is persuades the space containing it to crisscross and twist instead. Desire cannot complete the circle it starts by curving. It arrives at its origin both too soon and too late; it cannot be recognized in the logical convention of self-identity. The A vector's radical curvature undermines any such straightforward $X=X$. This *Autre's* evasion of the Euclidean defenses of $a-a'$ works like the lipogram in Georges Perec's novel, *A Void*, where the missing letter "e" forces other signifiers to swerve around the empty spot.³ The simplistic binary of inside and outside becomes a topologically complex compelling of an "outside of the inside" and "inside of the outside," a cross-inscription that might be written as o_i/i_o . Following the rule of all contronyms, negation doesn't simply self-negate, it transforms whatever's around it. It's like a double origami that folds both its surface and its medium.

Although Lacan mentions architecture directly only in Seminar VII (*The Ethics of Psychoanalysis*, 1959-1960), he is unambiguous in connecting it to an encircled void.⁴ When Lacan becomes interested in the logic of the Borromeo knot in Seminar XX (*The Limits of Love and Knowledge*, 1972-1973), we are given a streamlined version of the "stack with a tuck/fold" diagram given in Fig. 1. So, we know that Lacan, too, is aware of the geometrical weirdness of the *Autre* as an independent virtuality. Stijn Vanheule connects Lacan's thinking about virtuality beginning with his experiments with concave mirrors reuniting flowers with vases in the 1950s.⁵ Perhaps it would be more accurate to locate the idea of a virtuality of Otherness at the Mirror Stage, in that the spectral image *robs* the just-emerging subject, leaving him/her retroactively aware only of being a "body in pieces" (*corps morcé*). Lines of sight, some from the

subject, some from objects, bend the space they cross, creating virtualities inside and outside their cross-fire – hardly something one can easily picture in the Euclidean tranquility of $a-a'$! There is much to this story that cannot be told within the confines of this short essay.

Architects may thank Lorens Holm for mapping out the relevant topics stemming from the *Autre*'s radical curvature, by identifying its two essentially spatial (and architectural) conditions: the void and anamorphosis.⁶ Clues making brief appearances in Seminar VII were supplemented by Seminar XI, *The Four Fundamental Concepts of Psychoanalysis*, when Lacan described the scopic drive as a superposition of two opposed cones. Normally, these would be cones of vision, one from the observer taking in a “world of otherness,” the other radiating from the gaze, an objectivized void created by reciprocities aligning the observer with the observed. The intersection of the two cones, flattened diagrammatically into triangles, suggests both a limit, alternatively transparent and opaque, and a conic section – or (more radically) a doubled conic section redefining observer and observed as antipodal infinities. There can be little doubt that Lacan was thinking, in one way or another, about the projective space of non-orientable manifolds, the basis of figures such as the Möbius band and Klein bottle, that had fascinated him at least since “The Rome Discourse” of 1953.

Holm described anamorphosis as exceptions made in Euclidian linear space – using Lacan's own examples of Hans Holbein's *Ambassadors* and Parrhasius's painted curtain. But, I would argue that the potential role of anamorphosis, in illuminating the role played by projective geometry in explicating the vector of the Other(s), is more extensive. Mladen Dolar suggests that anamorphosis has an “ontological status ... a structure which has far-reaching consequences for the major questions ... of subjectivity and being.”⁷ I would add that the entire question of psychoanalysis's access to ethnography – the wealth of data tied up in the structures of art, architecture, literature, popular culture, folklore, cultural practices, and the like – depends directly on the function and field of anamorphosis. To show this, anamorphosis must be liberated from the confines set by Jurgis Baltrušaidis in 1957.⁸ Lacan knew this book well. It is clearly the source for his references to anamorphosis. But, Lacan was able to see beyond the specific examples of “applied anamorphosis” detailed by Jean-François Niçeron in 1638. At almost the same time, the brilliant mathematician Girard Desargues had realized the implications of a famous ancient discovery, the theorem Pappus discovered in 300 a.d.⁹ Although Desargues is best known to architects for his modifications of perspective techniques and stonecutting methodology, he made it possible to open up Pappus's theorem into a fully elaborated system of projective geometry. This defines a virtual domain where infinity (first presented in the form of the “impossible” meeting of parallel lines) is incorporated materially and algebraically within a spherical system where infinities appear as antipodes. Although the possibility of enclosure and exclusion seem to be sacrificed (this is one of Holm's central concerns), the way is opened to see the void – critical to both architecture and psychoanalysis – as substantive and effective.¹⁰

In projective geometry's joining of antipodal infinities, we find a basis for the concentric enclosures diagrammed in Figure 1. In Seminar VII, Lacan lamented about the wealth of materials lying just beyond reach as he turned from his examination of the anamorphic painting of the crucifixion copied from Rubens. “This object could never have been produced, never have had a necessary meaning without a whole preceding development. There is behind it the whole history of architecture as well as that of painting, their combination and the history of this combination.”¹¹ The collection of these examples of

anamorphically encircled voids was itself an anamorphically encircled void. The self-enclosing circle is another paraphrase for Fig. 1's echelon of frames.

Lacan, perhaps more than any other teacher, was painfully aware of his *mise en abîme*. But, his genius lay in his ability to connect the pain of this vertiginous lack to (1) extimity – the “inside” of his field of interest was also the “outside” of his relation to that field; and, even more profoundly, (2) projective geometry. When Lacan wondered whether architecture might be a kind of actualization or petrification of pain where “there is no possibility of escape,” he was intuitively precise in describing the status of the manifolds of projective geometry, whose surfaces offer no escape because they are curved and twisted but not bounded.¹² Is it any wonder, then, that Lacan would be drawn increasingly to those shapes where void and its rim are maintained topologically – a space where architecture maintains its “painfully petrified voids”?

To extend the *mise en abîme*, the relation of our understanding to this teaching is also anamorphic. We must learn how to read what Miller called the language of *sententia*, “a deep understanding of meaning,” through our own *sententia*. We could begin to look at Lacan's references to lips, rims, and eyelids; we might see how art and architecture elevate things into Things and non-Things. Our *sententia of reading* should seek to restore, as Lacan advises us to restore, “the primacy of the *Es*,” the void in the corner of the L-schema — “the zone of the Thing.”¹³ The “void” of this essay, and its “rim,” makes an anamorphic appeal to the reader in the same way Lacan stood at the edge of the history of such voids, to say that the form of the problem (of deep understanding) is the form of “the *Es* that we should not forget.” If such a wealth of anamorphosis's creations is there in the first place, this is sufficient proof that our own comprehension will also take the form of a rimmed void — what is, in architecture, the essence of architecture. My point is that commentary and examples have the same form.

When structures are moved from projective geometry space into the space of everyday Euclidean perception, their immersion into 3-space requires twists, folds, and self-intersections (Fig 2). Figures constructed with absolute precision in projective space appear to be defective in ordinary space. The Möbius band must twist to join its two sides and two edges; the cross-cap (two Möbius bands joined together) has to interrupt itself; the Klein bottle can't manage to hold anything inside – there *is* no inside! Immersion would seem to force the loss of the most evident function of architecture, its ability to contain and separate. But, these are functions that any “dumb box” can perform. For architecture, as opposed to “just” building, projective geometry connects to architecture's *most subjective and sublime* capability: its creation of, and identification with, the void. We see this particularly in architecture's relationship to the uncanny, where in German the home is the basis for both the word (*Unheimlich*) and idea. The uncanny directly involves the logic of cross-inscription employed by the big and little others. So, one could make this more radical claim: that projective geometry holds the keys to architecture's fundamental relation to other(s), which itself “obliges” Otherness to create the generative space out of which *all possible architectures* emerge. Just as, in psychoanalysis, the truth of the unconscious is able to escape *via* slips of the tongue and botched efforts to make sense, architecture also is a matter of eluding the guards at the roadblocks of rationality. In these terms, architecture happens, like the truths of the unconscious, when building drops its guard.

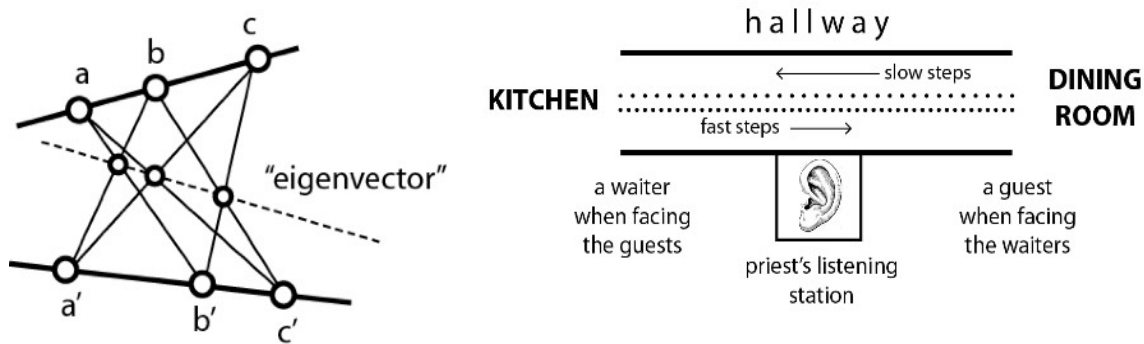


Figure 3

Pappus's Theorem (left), the historical origin of projective geometry, locates a third vector between two lines set at any angle to each other, by joining paired sets of points, placed at any location along those lines, in a zig-zag order: $ab'/a'b$, $ac'/a'c$, $bc'/b'c$. Like the vector of the *Autre*, the zig-zag "cleanses" the space of contingency. It is Lacan's truth of truth, Miller's law of law. The theorem explains the effectiveness of acoustic anamorphosis in "The Queer Feet," where another zig-zag conceals the presence of a "waiter who is not a waiter" and a "guest who is not a guest," the thief Flambeau. The "anywhere" of Pappus's two lines and sets of points becomes the eigenvector by which Father Brown identifies and confronts Flambeau as he tries to escape. The priest's final speech to the thief could be used as a definition of projective geometry and a gloss on Lacan's claim, in his essay on "The Purloined Letter," that there is nothing shoved so deeply into the bowels of the earth that cannot be retrieved by another hand.

Dolar's ambitions for anamorphosis translates directly to my more outrageous ambition: to redefine of architecture in terms of the projective space of the (Lacanian) Other. Word-limit restrictions of this essay prevent me from supplying even a minimum set of necessary arguments. Instead, I present two examples, where I hope it will be impossible to deny that the *effective* use of a space – the "efficient cause" of *architectural* space so to speak – relies entirely and uniquely on projective relationships. As a preliminary justification, I draw on Slavoj Žižek's inversion of the common phrase, "virtual reality," into "the reality of the virtual."¹⁴ In each of the three domains of Lacan's Real/Symbolic/Imaginary system (the emblem of which is, significantly, the Borromeo knot), Žižek describes how what makes any everyday event/situation actually work lies outside the pictorial reality we use to describe it. I identify architecture with this effectiveness. Architecture's efficient cause, in other words, is *virtual*; and, our inability to explain this virtuality in pictorial terms makes the situation uncanny. The virtuality of effectiveness runs counter to the perspectival ordering of "virtual reality." Rather, effective/efficient cause constitutes a *second virtuality* (V2), as resistant to pictorial definition (V1) as the (Lacanian) Real resists being described by the Symbolic.

My first example is G. K. Chesterton's "The Queer Feet" (1910), a short story about a Catholic priest who, called to administer last rites to a dying waiter at an exclusive hotel, discovers a crime in progress and works out how to stop it simply by analyzing an "acoustic anamorphosis." The second example is the science-fiction film, *The Day the Earth Stood Still* (1951) – an appropriate title that, in itself, suggests how "immersion" (here, portrayed by the literal landing of a space-ship representing the confederation of galaxies, who demand that earth governments put an end to nuclear warfare) has readily representable forms that popular audiences can easily understand, without any reference to projective geometry.

In popular art, folklore, and ethnography in general, projective geometry appears in the many forms of the uncanny: plot *twists*, spatial *folds*, and themes of the double, time travel, stories-in-stories, and contamination of waking reality by dreams and fictions. This is no accident. One of Freud's primary sources in his work on the uncanny, Ernst Jentsch, articulated an algebra of the uncanny that exactly reproduces the logic of extimity.¹⁵ In the two "antipodes" of uncanny literature, A, the living person fleeing death (but in reality constructing a path leading directly *to* death) is set opposite D, the dead person who has forgotten he/she has died. These two conditions relate by cross-inscription: A_D/D_A . They are not so much opposites as they are two sides of the same coin. Like the surface of the Möbius band, they curve continuously into two seemingly opposite, non-orientable states. As Holm would put it, they "refuse to contain"; but this incontinence turns out to be essential. It is what Žižek has called "the incontinence of the void."¹⁶ Non-orientability, incontinence of the Real (= projective surface), and the void – in particular as a *place of enunciation*, as the film *The Day the Earth Stood Still* makes so clear – are the uncanny co-constituents of the secondary virtuality where "things get done." The essence of architecture lies within this secondary virtuality, where the apocalypse brings about an end but also a revelation. The circle is not closed, but what goes up must come down – architecture's debt to gravity. But, gravity in this case is a rainbow, a refraction of the (anamorphic) space of trajectory, where the subject must, as in all cases of Apocalypse, realize what role he/she has played. To avoid the pseudo-riddle, of saying whether architecture is subjective or objective, we should say that architecture is a dialectic of pure opposition between the two positions, created *only* through the projective terms of secondary virtuality. This is architecture's debt to Lacan (if not also Hegel); and proof that "architecture can be psychoanalyzed."

Queer Feet Indeed

The genius of Chesterton's favorite leading man, Father Brown, is that he reminds us that "holy men" are naturally attracted to, and only barely distinguishable from, evil. They show how good and evil are not constructed through a binary signifier but, rather, as antipodal infinities within projective geometry. Thus, it seems natural that, when the priest is called to administer last rites to a dying Italian waiter just before the annual banquet of an exclusive club, he will discover and solve a crime. Appropriately, everyone will be dressed in black. With waiters as well as wealthy guests in tuxedos, the irony of capitalism boils down to the way radical differences in wealth can be conveyed with minimal, decisive gestures. This is the kind of Truth gesture intends to mask, through the fantasy that the servers are complicit with, and even more loyal to, the system of class difference than the served.¹⁷ All the more strange, then, that the priest sitting in a vestibule off the cloak room, with one wall shared to the hallway connecting the kitchen with the dining room, should hear a single pair of squeaky shoes literally "traversing the fantasy" – in one direction making quick steps, in the opposite direction barely loping along. Is this not "parallax" at its finest? – Not serving to induce perception of the third dimension but exposing a raw difference that resists domestication?

Fantasy lives in, and depends on, a primary pictorial virtuality (V1) where the visible lies on top of what it makes invisible, just as each ring of the Borromeo knot appears to sit on top of the others. But, like the Borromeo knot's trick of tucking each "top" ring under the bottom ring, a secondary virtuality inscribes invisibility *within* visibility using a secondary virtuality, V2, redefine minimal difference.

Mathematically, this can be traced back to Pappus's method of finding a third line determined by pairing points that, when used to make crisscrossed lines, defines a co-linearity that folds the space projectively (Fig. 2). It is not remarkable, then, how well Pappus's Theorem diagrams the situation of "The Queer Feet" (Fig. 3)? The two directions in the hallway conceal a "third vector" taken by a thief dressed in black, who walks slowly (to imitate a guest at leisure) when facing waiters; but quickens his pace when he faces guests coming from the other direction. Since no one knows him, they assume he belongs to the Other Group, servers to the served, served to the servers. It's an acoustic/acousmatic definition of the Other, providing a liminal middle track, thanks to a palindromic crisscross.¹⁸

This works the same way as the architectural "section drawing," traditionally made as an "orthogonal" (= indifferent) cut through both solids and voids, "telling the truth" of the building's structure, i. e. how solids support voids. Father Brown also "cuts a section," for spiritual purposes. In his "placeless" vestibule void, he draws the crisscross lines with acousmatic data, which is to say that he interprets sound in relation to the "voice of the drive" – a token of the Thing that resists interpretation. Priests are specialists when it comes to hearing the acousmatic truth of the sinner's confession. The acousmatic cannot help but tell the truth, the Thing, of the sin. When Father Brown deciphers the chiasmic calypso, his vocation requires him to go past the intellectual moment of solving the puzzle. He must realize an *antipodal* relation between his spiritual infinity and the equal infinity of the thief's drive to sin. He confronts the thief as he attempts to make an early exit, as a coat-checker would stop a patron who has forgotten to collect a hat. Father Brown: "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 recounts this as if he were explaining projective geometry to a class of first-year mathematics majors. In projective space, a line is written as a line and a point "at infinity," but it is equally accurate to say that the infinity at one end has an antipodal infinity at the other, because projective space is essentially spherical.

Don't Just Say Something, Stand There!

The Day the Earth Stood Still (Robert Wise, 1951; "DESS" for convenience) is a science-fiction anti-nuke film set at the beginning of the Cold War. The federation of extra-terrestrial galaxies is even more nervous about nuclear threat. They send an emissary, a humanoid (Klaatu), protected by an armed robot assistant, Gort. The space-ship lands on the Capitol Mall in Washington, D. C. – a speaking place, in contrast to Father Brown's listening place, but the geometry is the same (Fig. 4). The site flips the margin separating the known universe from the galactic beyond. Let me use S2...S2 to designate the array of signifiers whose chain yearns to widen its domain from a secure center to a less secure periphery; and S1 as the "master signifier" that is always beyond the reach of this structure (the perfect role for a space-ship carrying a super-intelligent alien and an infallible automaton). Normally, the S2...S2 chain "faces out" to black space, attempting to interpret (since ancient times) what it *thinks* may lie beyond. No matter that S1 first took the form of godly/heroic constellations marching to the tune of seasons; the S1's of quantum physics are just as enigmatic. They have no Symbolic status, in Lacanian terms, apart from their ability to spook the S2...S2 arrays. Pliny the Elder retells (*Natural History*) the anecdote about the contest between two Greek painters in antiquity, Zeuxis and Parrhasius. Zeuxis painted a *trompe-l'œil* bowl of fruit that tricked a bird into breaking its neck against the wall, but Parrhasius won because he painted a curtain that

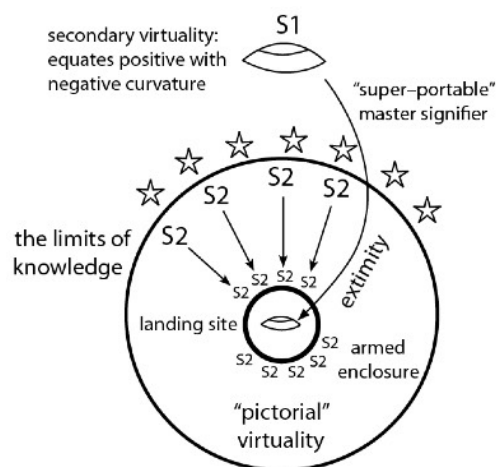


Figure 4

In landing on the Capitol Mall, Klaatu's space-ship simultaneously "extimates" the relationship of knowledge (S2...S2, signifying chains) to the "master signifier" (S1) held to lie both beyond and within. As the ineffable True, S1 cannot be assimilated by representation because it is structured "projectively," i. e. within an "outer space" (secondary virtuality, V2) that incorporates infinity materially. When S1 is "immersed" (i. e. when the space-ship lands), this Truth is portrayed as paradox, contradiction, or (as in the structure of Klaatu's demand that earth give up its nuclear weapons) a forced choice: not really a choice but an ultimatum. Note how the curvature of knowledge reverses, to surround the landing site with "weaponized" signifiers attempting (unsuccessfully) to *contain* the aliens.

fooled the judges who took the painted curtain to be real. Humans, who *speak*, break their necks in different ways, by conceiving of S1 lures in elaborate terms. Despite their non-existence within the Symbolic, S1's inspire unlimited imaginary infill. Capable of impossible feats and abilities, they are the stuff space-men are made of. No wonder, then, that an S1 can manage the trick of extimity, inverting the ultimate outside of outer space to an ultimate inside, a landing site. Earthlings respond accordingly, and array a militarized version of S2...S2: a cordon of tanks and soldiers encircling the site.

The acousmatics of *DESS's* S1 is the same as for "The Queer Feet." The priest *listens* with authority, Klaatu *speaks* with authority. Listening is equal to speaking if we understand the palindromic logic of projective geometry, where being active and passivity are indistinguishable. Both are dependent on a stable inside/outside relationship. Klaatu brings a gift (promptly shot to bits by a nervous soldier) but also an ultimatum. Lacanians would be quick to point out the connection between the site, which is a void extimated from an "out there" to an "in here," and the logical condition known as "the forced choice." This is the creation of a void out the intersection between two alternatives that are (in pictorial realism) presented as options. Really, there are no options; the choice to exercise freedom ends up in total determinism. A standard truth-table analysis shows what happens. A choice is presented: take A or take B (you can have either one but not both). The

"if" condition rules out the two "both" options of the table – T/T and F/F. We only have T/F and F/T left. But, in the forced choice, we find that TF and FT are actually linked; that if we choose the one we get the other, too; we lose, no matter what. The intersection, the VEL overlap, is doubly voided, first by the "or" and then again by the secret conversion of our choice to the choice of the Other.

Such, says Mladen Dolar, is the case with falling in love. Despite the extremely contingent circumstances of meeting, lovers *always* claim that they were brought together by fate. The forced choice logic means that *plus ça change, plus c'est la même chose*. Change doesn't change anything; or, as the ancient Chinese text of divination, the *I-Ching* puts it, what doesn't change is change itself. Given that pictorial virtuality (V1) idealizes change, secondary virtuality (V2) defines the mastery of the master signifier, S1, as an agency presenting an ultimatum: earth must embrace peace or be destroyed by the galaxies it's endangering should it engage in nuclear warfare. This is a forced choice in literal terms. But, this is also a forced choice in diagrammatic terms: a *void* that is the site of a "voice" commanding S2...S2 (pictorial) earthlings to reform or die. The orthography of Father Brown's priestly position, color-void

costume, and no-place vestibule are mirrored by Klaatu's super-human intelligence, his ability to blend into a crowd of earthlings after his escape from Walter Reed Hospital, and the extimity of the landing site. Structurally (architecturally), "The Queer Feet" and *DESS* are identical. Both align the forces of V2 using the uncanny crisscross of the projective plane. Both tell a tale of "immersion," when V2 logic finds itself in V1 Euclidean pictorialism, putting it at pains to explain, to sinners or earthlings, how infinity can be converted into algebra.

So, what is the advantage of having two stories, two S2...S2's so to speak, instead of just a master template, S1? Within each "picture scene," V1 details offer different ways of materializing the ideal design. Each detail is true to the requirements of the story. The priest has to be a credible inhabitant of early 20c. London. And, within the presuppositions of science-fiction, even a space-ship and all-powerful robot must obey rules of credibility. Fantasy loses its entertainment value if things don't obey their own "internal" logics. Thus, when Gort melts the weapons of offending soldiers with a powerful ray emitted from his monocular visor, it's not just believable, it "makes sense" that a highly intelligent culture could invent such a weaponized robot. What makes this device truly informative, however, is that it makes more sense than that provided as standard issue by science fiction. The space-ship doesn't just land on earth from a vague "out there" location. It *extimates* itself, transferring the S1's V2 logic along with its position "beyond" pictorial V1 virtuality. From the advantage of a "containing" position, outer space, it is now "contained." But, at the same time, the power of the stars must be conserved to survive the spatial flip. So, the collective energy of the constellations is condensed to create the weaponized eye-beam Gort uses against hostile incursions. The logic of this conversion mirrors the 17c. debate about extromission: do eyes passively receive light into their darkened interior, or do they not actively *look at* objects with an at-least-imagined power? Any complaint about "being looked at" presumes extromission. The force emanating *from* the eye exists, and not just in the folklore about the evil eye.

The insight into extromission from *DESS* carries over into actual theories of optics and visuality; but more locally it allows lateral transfers into other "sites" of ethnography and popular culture. So, what would extromission mean for Father Brown in "The Queer Feet"? We have not thought fully about the architecture of his situation, or about the full range of Father Brown's specular otherness. Like most whose vocation is "spiritual," an inner rather than outer vision is required. The custom of wearing black says as much, although white is an acceptable substitute for precisely the same reasons. Brown's outward vision is further compromised by the room he is given to write up the legal documentation for the Italian waiter's death. It has no windows; he sees nothing. He is architecturally blind. But, just as the blind are granted compensatory powers of seeing "beyond" the normal perspectival range of V1 – "into infinity" as it were – we have to think about how this blindness grants the priest access to V2 and its projective capabilities. Doesn't Father Brown's "acoustic parallax" tell us all we need to know about the infinity of the *eigenvector* of Pappus fame? Isn't it time to think about the Other as an S1 that begins as *inferior* to the S2...S2 chains of signifiers, an S1 that "puts on the black," that goes into a small windowless vestibule? Yes, we must. We must look at the hitherto undiscussed *portability* of the "priestly master signifier," and consider its relation to the antipodal infinities that, in "The Queer Feet," allowed Father Brown to say "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" – and for that

to be meaningful in the (theory-free) context of ethnographical/popular entertainment *and* in the theory-intense world of psychoanalysis.¹⁹

- ¹ Jacques Lacan, *The Ego in Freud's Theory and in the Technique of Psychoanalysis*, Seminar II, 1954–1955, trans. Sylvana Tomaselli (New York: W. W. Norton & Co., 1991), 109. For Lacan's explicit parsing of Freud's *Wo Es war*, see "The Freudian Thing, or the Meaning of the Return to Freud in Psychoanalysis," in *Écrits: The First Complete Edition in English*, trans. Bruce Fink (New York: W. W. Norton & Co., 2002), 347.
- ² Jacques-Alain Miller, "Extimity," *The Symptom* 9, *Lacan Dot Com*, <https://www.lacan.com/symptom/extimity.html>. Miller begins his exposition by describing the way the exterior, *A*, is present within the interior, meaning that the intimate is "Other-like," i. e. a parasite. Miller immediately applies this to the situation of analysis, the privacy of the consulting room. Here, "the extimacy of the subject is the Other." Miller quickly sees that there is a complement, where *a* is at the same time inside *A*, citing Lacan's early teaching, that "the other of the other of the signifier is the Other of the law." But, Miller then immediately realizes that extimity extends to Lacan's later opposition to the previous Lacan. Thus, extimity extends to Lacan's distinctive teaching style. His lessons are no longer to be understood "at the level of the signified" (*sensus*, explicit and easy meaning) but as *sententia*, a "deep understanding of meaning." Miller, like many of Lacan's commentators, connects the *objet petit a* to *jouissance*, the pleasure–pain associated with lack and desire. This is my justification for labelling Figure 1 with *A*'s adding to an exterior but then penetrating *a* at the innermost point. Each bracket is a combination of opposing forces, movement (act) and containment (framing). But, with every successive framing there is the potential of self–intersection and, thus, non-orientation.
- ³ Georges Perec, *A Void*, trans. Gilbert Adair (Boston: David R. Godine, 2005).
- ⁴ See Paola Mieli and Jacques Houis, *Figures of Space: Subject, Body, Place* (New York: Agincourt Press, 2017).
- ⁵ Stijn Vanheule, "Lacan's Construction and Deconstruction of the Double-Mirror Device," *Frontiers in Psychology* 2 (2011): 209.
- ⁶ Lorens Holm, "What Lacan Said Re: Architecture," *Critical Quarterly* 42, no. 2 (July 2000): 29–64. Available online: <https://doi.org/10.1111/1467-8705.00286>.
- ⁷ Mladen Dolar, "Anamorphosis," *S: Journal of the Circle for Lacanian Ideology Critique* 8 (2015): 125. Available online: <http://lineofbeauty.org/index.php/S>.
- ⁸ Jurgis Baltrušaidis, *Anamorphoses, ou Perspective curieuses* (Paris: O. Perrin, Jeu savant, 1955).
- ⁹ I wish to express my appreciation to Mr. Alireza Moharrer for introducing me to the history of projective geometry. A useful introductory text is H. S. M. Coxeter, *Projective Geometry*, 2nd ed. (New York: Springer-Verlag, 1987).
- ¹⁰ It would be hard to find a more elegant or exact statement of the problem than Loren Holm's: "[Architecture] might enclose this emptiness literally, in the sense that if architecture is about creating enclosure ... then this enclosure encloses emptiness. Except that if it is literal, then the emptiness must always escape, like the tomato seed which always skitters away when we put our finger on it. And if not literally, then the architecture activity (the will to architecture corresponding to the thrust of the drive), then this activity is itself a double gesture, both a compulsive acknowledgement and screening out of originary loss and traumatic encounter with the real." (Holm, *Ibid.*, 33).
- ¹¹ Jacques Lacan, *The Ethics of Psychoanalysis*, Seminar VII, 1959–1960, trans. Dennis Porter (New York: W. W. Norton & Co., 1997), 135.
- ¹² Lacan, *Ethics*, 60.

- ¹³ Lacan, *Ethics*, 137.
- ¹⁴ Ben Wright, dir., *Slavoj Žižek: The Reality of the Virtual*, 2003. Available online: <https://zizek.uk/slavoj-zizek-the-reality-of-the-virtual-2004/>.
- ¹⁵ Ernst Jentsch, “Zur Psychologie des Unheimlichen,” *Psychiatrisch-Neurologische Wochenschrift* 8, no. 22 (August 26, 1906): 195–98; and 8, no. 23 (September 1, 1906): 203–05.
- ¹⁶ Slavoj Žižek, *Incontinence of the Void: Economico-Philosophical Spandrels* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2017); *Sex and the Failed Absolute* (London and New York: Bloomsbury Academic, 2020).
- ¹⁷ P. G. Wodehouse’s creation of the perfect manservant in his “Jeeves and Wooster” stories tells the tale. It is the valet Jeeves who defends and supports the master-servant relationship by activating, as Lacan described in his discourse *matheme*, the servant’s responsibility for S2...S2 systems of knowledge covered by fantasies of appearances. Wooster is actually a would-be egalitarian at points, but Jeeves insures that the Master is forever confined by the irony of sublation: that any one master must contend with other masters over who gets “to signify the most,” producing the system of hierarchical class divisions. P. G. Wodehouse, *Jeeves and Wooster Omnibus* (London: Penguin, 2001).
- ¹⁸ The word “acousmatic” better describes how anamorphosis can work with sound as well as light. See Mladen Dolar, *A Voice and Nothing More* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2004).