# The Master's House

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By a definition that may seem terse, arbitrary, and even ridiculous at this point …

> … the "master" is *whoever* has a "house," meaning an archi-tecture that facilitates — but later explicates and under-mines — mastery. The architecture of this "house" positions the master and his house with respect to space around it, both in material and ideological terms. Thus, this architec-ture is similar to the topology of the "houses" of planets, whose spheres align in specific ways to create variable con-ditions of influence based on adjacency.

On the side of materiality, the master's house is one that is frequently easy to identify on account of its prominence in the landscape, its conspicuous display of wealth or control, its symbols, its grandeur. Clichés come to mind: the castles or manor houses that are the staple of British National Trust properties filled with fawning tourists; the plantation houses of the Deep South, set like jewels in fields of agricultural wealth; the less grand contemporary McMansions set behind gates and electronic security systems; the parts any house where occupants display their status through posses-sions, trophies, or precious objects.

Mastery is exercised through architecture in ways that are not always obvious. Mastery is not simply quan-titative superiority. It is not the "successful solution" of a functional, climatic, resource, or sustainability prob-lem, although it can be the way rhetoric situates a building project within these anxieties. Mastery, here, is meant in three senses in addition to the usual one:

> (1) the Vichian, and later Hegelian and Marxist, sense of radical historicism, in which formation of the idea of a mas-ter, and a master metaphor, is key to various economies of exchange, including the exchange of metaphors and me-tonymies to create autonomous "mentalities";
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> (2) The Lacanian sense of "false mastery" employed by the ego, following the mirror stage, in retroactively creating a contrasting "subject in pieces" (objective subjectivity) as well as objects that resist mastery ("partial objects," subjec-tive objectivity); and
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> (3) The reconfiguration of agencies and actions to modify spaces and times into Möbius-band-like topographies creat-ing "symptom structures" that include a variety of dis-courses and perceptual frameworks.

"The master's house" thus comes to stand for both the variety of architectural strategies taken to symbolize and culturally sustain the idea of mastery as well as the ideological and psychological structures that alterna-tively create and then undermine/explicate mastery. Because mastery involves a large range of topics in what might be called "the Freudian-Lacanian field," the psychoanalytic framework — where linguistics, rhetoric, optics, and topology interact closely — constitutes a laboratory for positioning the role of the unconscious in the process of constructing and construing mastery. But, because the Vichian-Hegelian-Marxian projects on the subject of mastery involve the creation of stable domains of political/ideological order, this unconscious repeats the insistent conclusion of Fredric Jameson, that the unconscious is *inherently* a political matter, and that its analysis requires a Marxist analysis. I concur but promote Vico's perspective into first place over Marx's because, I would argue, Vico anticipates Marx (and Hegel; and Lacan) in anthropological and linguistically interesting ways.[1]

This study is, therefore, presented as a kind of thesis about what a comprehensive answer to the question, "what is the political unconscious of architecture?" might look like. A thesis aggressively pursues the old Positivist ideal of falsifiability. Even the classic formulation of the scientific thesis appears in negative form: the famous "null hypothesis." Any position involving such diverse and historically-philosophically separate sources as Vico and Lacan has to construct fragile bridges over deep water. My strategy will be to disavow mastery as a goal of study and to face the potential damage of errors in advance, knowing that error will be an unavoidable component of any account. Does this mean accepting defeat in advance? Yes. But, in the spirit of Lacan's promise, in the face of the Gödelian paradox, to choose between incompleteness over inconsistency, inconsis-tency is the choice of the comedian and the politician. Incompleteness offers the advantage of treating the limits of mastery in a material way — as a boundary both characterizing the object of study as well as study itself. Also, the renunciation of mastery engages the issue of double negation, a key component in the issue of mastery, particularly in its relations to Hegel's famous master-slave parable. As Iris Murdoch would call it, this aims to be a "fairly honorable defeat."[2]

This recursion, which is really a reciprocity between the objects and methods of study, leads in the direction of a style of inquiry famously polished by Slavoj Žižek, for whom popular culture is both a laboratory and stage-set for psychoanalysis. In particular, film, which is experienced "authentically" in all of its copies, so to speak, provides the best field for discourse. In this study, Akiro Kurosawa's 1950s crime thriller, *High and Low*, provides multiple angles on the case of the mas-ter's house.[3] An industrialist set to take over his com-pany is interrupted by a kidnapping. His chauffeur's son is taken by mistake (the two boys were in costume, playing "cowboys and Indians") but the industrialist is persuaded to accept full responsibility, not only ruining his chances for closing the deal but ruining him finan-cially. The issue of double negation looms prominently, and here we can identify the relation of negation to the role played by metonymy as well as the differentiation of two types of metonymy, privation and prohibition. The background logic of *High and Low*'s plot is based on a plus-minus system privation: the ransom equals ex-actly the amount of money the industrialist needed for his take-over; the chauffeur's son played the role of an "exact copy" of the industrialist's; the industrialist's prominently visible house reciprocally metonymizes and is metonymized by the low docklands of Yokohama, where it, in the latter case, "stands (up) for" Yokohama because its "highest citizen" has come from the low class[4]; and, in the former case, the unknown location of the kidnapper necessitates a process of interpolating synesthetic qualities of the city and landscape (the ur-ban version of the Lacanian "subject in pieces").

Prohibition involves the dropped-out metonymy of wealth and its reciprocal force, the evil eye that envi-ously and literally hold the master's house in its gaze.[5]

The kidnapper's telescope casts a shadow that inverts the house's interior space, forcing police assisting with negotiations to crawl beneath the sight line. The X-structure of surveillance is optical but also rational, setting up the inversion that finally brings the victim and victimizer together in a final scene where reflections on the glass separating the two men anamorphically blends their faces. At this point it may be possible to speculate about how the components of the master's house constitute a "cipher" that combines perceptual data with the logical order of consciousness. Unlike theories of the unconscious that romanticize it as an inaccessible repository, this interactive model inverts the usual inside-outside relationship that plants the unconscious at the interior of the subject's "point of view." Rather, this analysis relocates the unconscious at the antipode of the point of view, the perspectival "vanishing point," released from its obligation to sit at the horizon line to play a wider role as the subjective object, the "exti-mate," the unlocatable gaze.[6]

According to Lacan, the master signifier is not simply a paradigm but rather a defect in causality itself that differentiates the human concept from universals, such as the "laws of physics," that play out tautological relationships without creating remainders. An example of this latter would be F=MA, or "force equals mass times acceleration"), Newton's second law of motion. The terms are exchangeable according to the standard laws of algebraic equations. Force *is* mass times acceleration; acceleration is force *divided by* mass, etc. Causality, however, is defective in that the effect can retroactively determine the cause. Such is the case with obvious fallacies such as *post hoc ergo propter hoc*, a common-place error illustrated with high art in *Tristram Shandy*'s episode of the warm chestnut that mistakenly fell into the aperture of Phutatorious's breeches, conceived to have been a trick played by Yorick. Alas! Lacan argues that the defect is more general. By an "impossible" topology not unrelated to the Mirror Stage's retroactive creation of the subject-in-pieces, who falls short of the mastery indicated by his/her very own spectral image in the mirror, one effect out of a contingent series can be moved out of place to become what Deleuze has labeled a "demark," a non-mark, a mark that becomes its own cause. In the Stephen Spielberg film, *Jaws*, the shark "stands out" from the order of nature to become a center of meaning, through which the greed of businessmen keen to keep the beaches open even in the face of danger, the moral degeneracy of teenagers having sex in the water, and the incursion of human activities on the domain of nature all funnel. Fredric Jameson summarizes:

> [T]he vocation of the symbol —the killer shark — lies less in any single message or meaning than in its very capacity to absorb and organize all of these quite distinct anxieties together. As a symbolic vehicle, then, the shark must be understood in terms of its essentially polysemous function rather than any particular content attributable to it by this or that spectator. Yet it is precisely this polysemousness which is profoundly ideological, insofar as it allows essentially social and historical anxieties to be folded back into apparently 'natural' ones, both to express and to be recontained in what looks like a conflict with other forms of biological existence.[7]

The master signifier works, therefore, not as a system of mechanical idealizations of the principle of substitution (permitted cases of mistaken identity, so to speak) but as a reversal of "antonomasia," the process by which a person or thing is given a name based on an epithet or attributes ("Old Hickory" for Andrew Jackson;

"The Little Corporal" for Napoleon) to the identification of a condition or situation with the qualities of a proper name. Reversed antomasia gives a literal proper name or the status of a proper name to a condition of mind or experience. Hitchcock's story about the origin of the McGuffin is key:

> It might be a Scottish name, taken from a story about two men in a train. One man says, "What's that package up there in the baggage rack?" And the other answers, "Oh that's a McGuffin." The first one asks, "What's a McGuffin?" "Well," the other man says, "It's an apparatus for trapping lions in the Scottish Highlands." The first man says, "But there are no lions in the Scottish Highlands," and the other one answers "Well, then that's no McGuffin!" So you see, a McGuffin is nothing at all.[8]

The McGuffin's emptiness and meaninglessness captures the essence of the master signifier, whose very power and pervasiveness is based on the fact that it has no logical relationship to any referent. Andrea Battistini has argued that the logic of reversed antonomasia was, in fact, what Giambattista Vico described as the "master key" to the mentality of the first humans, who perceived in a clap of thunder a "word of Jove" that meant to tell them something (but they knew not what). The key is that, in a series of signifiers, a final one is pulled out of place: a metonym "set higher" than the rest, which back-projects a point of origin that "must have been" the causal energy behind the previous series.[9] The connection between this "last term" and the "first term" creates a Möbius-band style topology whose meanings lie both on the lines of signification created from the backward and forward movement but also in the *poché* spaces in between, an anamorphic quality given to all terms in light of this reversal of temporal and logical directions.

My thesis is that the complex motions mediated by metonymy, anamorphosis, "demarks," and other features of the master signifier define material spaces and relationships that map out concrete features in works of art.[10] Using the film *High and Low* as a laboratory to test this idea, the "master's house" is the place portrayed in the film that corresponds to a specific part of the *process* of master signification. The relation of the house to the low docklands is also double: a literal landscape relation but also a semantic relationship between the master's logic of reversed antonomasia and the "servant's" logic of interpolation, where the "who" of the whodunit is sought through maps that triangulate the synesthetic clues gathered by the police during the "police procedural" segment of the film.

Because the crime story focuses on the problem of *naming* the unknown perpetrator, it has a special relationship to this thesis about master signification. It is my contention that the defect of causality cited by Lacan is directly related to the phenomenon of the proper name. It is important to consider how antonomasia can be reversed in both specific and general ways. Various national leaders can be called "the George Washington" of their country; but it is also the case that a more important feature of nomination can be effective. When Lacan described how the proper name relates to other kinds of signifiers, he used a mathematical analogy. The proper name, he argued, evidenced two kinds of negation. The first was a "-x" form, a *privation* or literal conversion of a positive status to a negative one, when the proper name assumed a place that did not before exist, within a series of signifiers (other names) that did not before have a place for it. The second kind of negation carries a quality of *prohibition*: 1/x as the "sublimation"

of a wish, a desire or demand denied or displaced. Combining the −x and 1/x yield the picturesque result of √-1, or *i*. Lacan explains this spurious demonstration by insisting that the point is that the result of naming is the "impossible-to-think" Real, effects that permanently and radically resist symbolization.

My thesis qualifies the Lacanian account with the implied convertibility (*i*) of privation (-x) and prohibition (1/x). This convertibility is the essence of Vico's account of the first moment by which the thunder is conceived as the word of Jove. That it is also the *name* of Jove is significant. The impossible-Real phenomenon of thunder becomes the basis of the first rituals: sacrifice, divination, marriage, and burial. The *dimensionality* of the new human mentality combines the invisible world of space and the non-immediate forms of time, past and future, with the notion of *prohibited* knowledge — "sacred" in its original sense of *both* reviled/feared and set apart. The √-1 quality that unites privation with prohibition in the Real of early religion appears, displaced, in the phenomena of the uncanny that are transmitted, through folk practices and superstitions, down to the present modern phenomenon of pleasure in the "pain" of suspense stories and films. In the spirit of uniting the causes of theory with materiality, I want to go further, to show how this Lacanian "Real of the name," reversed antonomasia, can be found in the primary structures of the uncanny and the deployments of the uncanny in architecture as viewed through the lens of popular culture.

### Components of the Unconscious of High and Low

**The enthymeme.** At the most generalized scale, master signification resembles the enthymeme, the kind of syllogism dedicated to rhetoric. Like standard syllogisms, the enthymeme comprises a major premise, in which a first and middle term are related ("All men are mortal,"A>B), a minor premise ("Socrates is a man," B>C), and a conclusion ("Socrates is mortal," C>A). The middle term, "man," 'B', is silent in the enthymeme. It is a metonymic aspect of the expression "Socrates is mortal" that, by being suspended, creates a bond between the speaker and audience. In actual applications, this suspension usually plays an ideological role. In suspension, the silent middle term becomes open to a wide range of associations that the audience believes the speaker believes that the audience believes … In *The Iliad*, Agamemnon tests the will of the Argives by telling them to go home. The effect of this inverted advice (-x) is to create, silently, the response of prohibition (1/x): the soldiers deem it cowardly to go home. Soldier speech constitutes an especially ideological type of discourse for ancient Roman and Greek thought.[11] Without the silent component, which "criss-crosses" between the universals of morality and the immediacies of martial conflict, no soldier would find a way to attach the contingent particulars of his own thoughts and experience to the "larger cause" of the personified city-state. Scenes of battle are framed "anamorphically," that is to say, they are not simply static time-sections of an armed encounter but the Bergsonian "dynamic time sections" that provide a topologically continuous space (Ø) that creates the stories of heroism, victory, and defeat. This Ø is counterpart to the iconic trophy, the stack of weapons, valuables, standards, and other devices of heroic uniform that, like the stack of stones (herms) used in silent trade, mediate without specifying particulars. Like the mechanical linkage of photographic images in film, the Ø "opens up" the static, infinitely divisible space to the imaginative engagement of the audience, who "complete" the film with their own unconscious contribution through the Ø/β function.

The enthymeme's silent middle term, B>B, converts particulars to universals to create ideological messages that appear in a quite different form from the "raw materials" of contingent experience. The self-cancellation of B>B, its zig-zag between container and contained, its twist-logic, produces a curious phenomenon: a space that serves as a "domain" in a functional sense, that is both divided (into two parts) and whole. If the unconscious is thought to be a kind of function, contingent experience is "mapped on" to a domain thanks to explicit instructions of the function. F(x)=y, the general form of the mathematical function, instructs each 'x' to find its place within the new domain, 'y'. This new domain is spatially structured by the function, F, which is "invisible" unless the patter of new locations can be discovered. The Lacanian unconscious qualifies the case of location in this way: each location is single and double at the same time — in other words, the condition of anamorphosis (appearance is based on the point of view). The *observer* is thus brought into the determination of location. This is not simply a thoughtful inclusion of intersubjectivity but a radical use of vectors relating subjectivity and objectivity.

The functional formula can be abbreviated. It is the same as that specified by Ernst Jentsch in his consolidation of the phenomena of the uncanny into two contrasting states: that of the dead thing or person that contains a kernel of life (DA); and that of the living person or thing whose essence is controlled by something dead (AD). The former condition is a variation on the Lacanian "partial object" — what Žižek has called, in a telling inversion of Deleuze's phrase, "an organ without a body." This is the severed hand of the dead concert pianist who revenges his murder in a grade-B horror film (DA), mirrors the function of the eponymous red shoes in Michael Powell's 1948 film, metonymies (parts of the dancer's traditional gear) that "dance for her" (AD). The automaton nature of the partial object, A or D, can appear as either the resistance to death that Freud called the death drive and Lacan associated with the period known as "between the two deaths"; or as a drive towards death as a kind of vanishing point, particularly the kind "disassembled" by Giorgio de Chirico (1888 –1978) famous "vanishing vanishing points" (VP²), which articulated the process of vanishing to allow this "point" to dart around corners and hop over walls.

AD and DA show how the enthymeme's middle term (B>B) is "uncanny" in its ability to work as a universalizer-particulizer machine, but how its function is not at all theoretically complex but, rather, the highly consumable stuff of the popular imagination. In *High and Low*, the film, like the enthymeme's middle term, divided into two parts that are really one part, or *vice versa*. The criss-cross is the film's psychological midpoint, the apex of two lines of action, the first characterized by a '-x' logic of exchange (where the exact amount of money needed for the industrialist's take-over is matched by the kidnapper's demand, etc.), the second by a '1/x' logic of spatial determination, where every clue is given in a synesthetic code (the kidnapped child's memory of sun angles, trolley sounds, a glimpse of Mt. Fuji, etc.). Synesthesia dominates the ordering procedures of the police: maps, interpolations, and traps. The theme of this second "line of action" is triangulation. The kidnap-

per's planning, his execution, and his flight yield three distinctive kinds of clues.

Strangely, these correspond to the three kinds of architectural considerations that Vitruvious defines as the basis for the standard drawing types of plan, elevation, and perspective/section: "ichnography," "orthography," and "scenography."[12] In the first case, a domain is staked out, so to speak. Then lines (or the buildings themselves) are raised orthogonally from the plan/site. Finally, the "scene" is constructed by placing the building in context, showing how sun angles create shadows in certain ways, how the building affords certain views, how qualities such as the thickness of walls and orientation of openings affect qualities of light and dark.

*High and Low* uses these Vitruvian qualities in reverse order, but in ways that require "dropping out" a metonymical feature and suspending it, secret and silent. The kidnapper has fixed the master's house with a telescope he has set up in his apartment down below. The metonymy of this optically enhanced variation on the evil eye is the shadow-line created by the edge of the house's window sills. This shadow line defines a triangle of invisibility that trap the police, who must not be seen consulting with the industrialist and his family. They scuttle close to the floor, forcing the traditional posture of the servant in the presence of the master, though it is they, the −x of the kidnapper, who direct the master when he negotiates with the kidnapper on the phone. Orthography, the pride and wealth represented in the master's house as a representative metonym literally raised above the docklands district, is the dimension of the Real, the line along which metonymies rise and fall. The metonymy of the kidnapper, his invisibility, is returned to the story in the form of the "acousmatic" voice over the phone. The suspension of any knowledge about the kidnapper's location is of course the *sine qua non* of any crime story. In kidnapping plots, the role of the voice is essential; so is the voice's relation to its unlocatability. We see the elaborate dimensionality of this relation when the kidnapper directs Kingo Gondo to take a high-speed train, watch for specific marked locations, and drop the ransom money in a specific way from the train. Knowing that the police will be filming the drop, the kidnapper plans in advance the angles of view, face-shielding hats, and concealed parking places needed for a "clean transfer." All of these details are normal for any crime procedural, but they are important clues for the critical understanding as well. They show how the "orthography" and "ichnography" must intersect using the shadow lines of "scenography." What we also realize, as critics as well as consumers of the entertainment aspect of the film, is that the criss-cross of scenography is the B>B, the anamorphic ω, the dynamic time section that affords (and structures) multiple points of view whose interpolation will achieve the pleasure of the film. In other words, the enthymeme's silent middle, B>B, can be constructed into multiple material conditions, ω, whose anamorphic quality in turn regulates the functionality of the audience's (and representative narrative characters') points of view. In this materialization, we see how chiaroscuro, the *encadrement* and rotational "bird's eye view" technique create shadows-in-shadows that position the audience both outside and inside the work of art at the same time, another version of the AD/DA uncanny.

**Metonymy**. The orthogonal line that facilitates the elevation of the master's house and the mirrored drop-out of the kidnapper — a medical student who has literally dropped out of his studies — should be considered as a symmetrical operation. In a sense, the two metonymies, master and servant, are a form of the −x logic: one "pays for" the other. They are the vertical dimension of the domain on to which the function of the unconscious maps the events and actors. Agencies are reversed: the servant becomes the master, the master the servant. Acts are inverted: the kidnapper's hate must be converted to care for the child in order to get the desired ransom; the master's love for his child is inverted because he must pay the ransom for his chauffer's son, not his own; and, most generally, the audience converts its anxiety, the essence of any whodunit, to the pleasure of watching.

The twinned metonymies are echoed with various devices, the most famous of which is the colored smoke that indicates, from the vantage point of the master's house, the incinerator the kidnapper has used to dispose of the ransom money suitcase. The case, specified by the kidnapper, was packed with a special powder that burned pink. Kurosawa "miraculously" shows us pink smoke in a few color frames sutured into the black-and-white film stock. At the end of the film, the industrialist's prize clock is shown with a price-tag on it. He has, in his descent from high to low, "paid the price" in an atomistic way. The drop is apparent, too, in his return to his old trade, shoe repair. In another scene, he is shown mowing his own lawn, detached, in a trance: a zombie who is now "between the two deaths."

The exchange economy of −x is itself shadowed by the 1/x "space of prohibition" that is the police procedural portion of the film. Here, the function of mapping that is the essence of the function is portrayed literally. The police work with a wall-sized map of Yokohama, connecting the dots, so to speak, of the synesthetic/anamorphic clues they have collected. Triangulation reveals the location of the kidnapper's apartment, the house near the coast where the child was held. The smoke locates the incinerator that pulls the final geometry together. These economies, it should be noted, have their own temporal anamorphosis, or B>B, a simultaneous relationship of past, where the clues have been left, and the future, where the kidnapper must be trapped. In the former, the gaze is centripetal: it focuses on the master's house from an unknown point of view. The acousmatics of the telephone voice and the relation of the kidnapper's gaze to the folklore of the "evil eye" that seeks to "even all scores" by redistributing concentrations of wealth, luck, or beauty focus on the objects of envy, the master and his house. In the second part of the film, the "1/x" phase so to speak, this directionality reverses. The police look outward: they set up surveillances, canvas neighborhoods, look outward freely from the master's house to the docklands below. The subtraction of the gaze and voice from perceptual space in the '-x' logic is transplanted by the inversion protocols of the '1/x' logic. Every point is a point *with respect to* the organizing framework of the hypothetical execution of the crime. The kidnapper has engineered a space within a space, intended to be invisible. The police must de-engineer this space to pull it to the plane of the map that serves as their plan of action. They are, it should be noted, the agents of 1/x, of prohibitions taken in the most recognizable form, "the Law." They are officers, but Lacan would ask, "officers of *what*?" The film allows us to give a rather perverse answer: "officers of the dead (-x) who 'make people pay' (x) for their crimes (1/x)." Gondo's status as the "dead man" is evident in his AD-like, going-through-the-motions, zombie nature

after his deal has been ruined by a case of mistaken identity. This, too, is ironic, for we may have overlooked the conversations early in the film about Gondo's presumption in "taking over the company," in appearing to be a captain of industry when in truth he began as a shoemaker. Agency is about mistaken identity. Acts, ultimately love or hate, lead us to the intransitivity and anamorphy of the final scene where Gondo meets the soon-to-be-executed kidnapper, whose DA, "refusal to die" (not to be successful) matches perfectly with Gondo's "refusal to live" (AD). Here, the exchange relationship between the two *systems* of exchange, privation and prohibition, kidnapping and police procedural, perform their final Möbius-band twist.

### The Architectural (=Political) Unconscious

The unconscious of High and Low displays many of the popular conceptions of what an unconscious should be. The themes, characterizations, and story itself create details that are overlooked, seen but not noticed, present only in a virtual sense. These constitute a "treasury of signifiers," present only under the condition that it is absent, a –x feature. They are opportunities held in reserve, a buried wealth that underwrites the film's basic story. The functional aspect of the unconscious, adds a "motive" element to these opportunities or "affordances." Like the motive of any crime story, the quality of prohibition must be present for a crime to exist: habeas corpus. Habeas, translated "We command that you have …" is a demand for evidence, but also the call for the appearance of the accused before a judge. The corpus is not the body of the murder victim, as is often thought, but the body of the accused, which must be brought to the imaginary screen of legal representation, the process of 1/x where contingencies are matched to laws. In the defense of officers charged with the beating of Rodney King in 1991, leading to acquittals that sparked the 1992 Los Angeles riots. The defense used video footage of the beatings that seemed to show clearly a group of policemen beating a black man severely and without provocation. Slowed down to a frame-by-frame presentation, the defense argued successfully that "no crime was evident," no event shown on any single frame that could be said to portray anything not allowed by policy and law. In other words, the 1/x mapping, *when allowed to leave out the Ø*, was able to exchange technicality for true law. The Ø, clearly, is related to the bonding of justice, required by common law, of the literal word of the law with the contingent circumstances of the hypothetical crime.

Word and image, logic and experience, law and order — these familiar couplings conceal a complex uncanny order. Without the materializations, afforded by the uncanny criss-cross of economies, the mirrored motions of metonymies, the creation of anamorphic conditions and partial objects, the silence of the middle term of the enthymeme, these are only polarized terms whose need for mediation, paradoxically, aims to sharpen the focus of the *necessarily blurred margin* that

allows for the exchange of inside and outside that Lacan identified with *extimité*, the "extimate." Clarity destroys the dynamics of the time-slices that Bergson used to compare experience to cinema, albeit in fits and starts; but Bergson's genius was to compare the mechanical apparatus of cameras and projectors to the mechanical nature of the unconscious, the Ø as automaton.

Bruce Fink has made Lacan's complicated numerical analogy of the unconscious somewhat understandable to non-native speakers of Lacanese. For a given sequence of, say, coin-toss results represented as 1's and 0's (e.g. 0010101110100101…), assigning numbers to represent the three possible conditions of contingency (Lacan used four) shows that there *must* be a consistent pattern of even and odd numbers. This rule resulting from randomness demonstrates how the unconscious "forgets nothing," "accepts everything," and "works without instruction." Similarly, the physicist Stephen Wolfram has shown how "automatons" (transformation rules based on adjacency conditions) are capable of producing not only patterned relationships out of random initial sequences but structures that are fractal — i.e. structured the same *at all scales*.[13]

Mathematical analogies do not satisfy readers who, more intent on a phenomenological reading, inadvertently commit a conservative, "right deviation," as Colin McCabe, the film critic and scholar of Freud and Lacan, characterized critical projects leading to a "universal mythology grounded in biology."[14] The swerve to the critical right is somewhat akin to the swerve to the political right: a Jungian reading that finds an "inner nature" to ground appearances, a unity behind diversity. The complementary left deviation, represented by Aflred Adler's project of locating Freud's workings of the psyche in social relations, shows how politics is, inevitably, a condition of "locating" the unconscious. The middle line, the Lacanian-uncanny line, is not politically neutral. Rather, it is radically political. Vico, in his idea of the *universale fantastico*, the "imaginative universal" that converts the contingent syllables of the thunder into the laws of Jove, the –x of metonymies that drop out all conventionalizable meanings from the word that James Joyce quoted as "bababadalgharaghtakamminarronnk-onnbronntonnerronntuonnthunntrovarrhounawnskawn-toohoohoordenenthurnuk," converts to the prohibitions of law by being *both* the name of Jove and the logic-of-the-name, the antonomasia that materializes the connection of privation and prohibition in the √-1 (unsymbolizable) Real.

The thunder happens in ways that are radically historical, radically political, because they are in effect the enthymemic basis of the ideology that distinguishes the stages of history, taken at the scale of cultures, groups, individuals, or even particular experiences. There is, so to speak, *always* a master's house, *always* an architecture of invisible-visible dimensions, *always* a ichnography and orthography linked by an anamorphic scenography. This is the meaning of the master and his house: the *politically* architectural unconscious.

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1. Giambattista Vico's *New Science*, according to some scholars, constitutes a prototype for Hegel's and, later, Marx's economic analyses. Because Vico involved the configuration of metaphor and metonymy in acts of perception and collective memory, he is also a qualified forerunner of, to some extent, Freud and, to a greater extent, Lacan. Giambattista Vico, *The New Science of Giambattista Vico*, trans. Thomas Goddard Bergin and Max Harold Fisch (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1984). Since the phrase "political unconscious" originates from Fredric Jameson's groundbreaking study of 1981, it seems only fair to make some specific adjustments to the question of architecture's politi-

cal unconscious. Fredric Jameson, *The Political Unconscious: Narrative as a Socially Symbolic Act* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University, 1981). For an insider's early take on this work, see Mark Poster, "Review, *The Political Unconscious: Narrative as a Socially Symbolic Act* by Fredric Jameson," *Nineteenth-Century Fiction*, Vol. 36, No. 2 (September 1981): 252-256.

2. Iris Murdoch, *A Fairly Honorable Defeat* (New York: Penguin Books, 2001). The matter of double negation is a key component of Lacan's account of the unconscious and, curiously, a complex function that varies considerably from language to language. Where, in English, the double negative is ungrammatical ("I don't want no advice"), other languages require it. Cases of triple and even quadruple negations suggest that this is a case where language meets the unconscious directly.

3. Akira Kurosawa, *High and Low* (film), 1963. The title is a translation of "Tengoku to jigoku," literally "Heaven and Hell." The story was based on *King's Ransom*, a police-procedural novel by Ed McBain (pen-name of Evan Hunter).

4. The industrialist, Kingo Gondo, began his career as a shoe-maker, a low profession because of the necessity to handle leather. In pre-modern, mostly vegetarian, Japanese society (1600-1868), leather crafts, along with grave digging) were the work of outcasts because of the necessity of handling the skin of dead animals.

5. The Lacanian mirror stage provides a diagrammatic template that describes how metaphor and metonymies are circulated within a field whose "economy" includes the creation of visual fields, management of the point of view, and the use of space-time as a medium for the *gnosis* of the mystery-story genre. The rhetorical-semantic need to "drop a metonymy" in the process of framing a scene, as the "metonymical" kidnapper must "drop out of sight" in order to place the industrialist's house under surveillance, he takes on the role of a Lacanian "partial object" — in this case, the "acousmatic" voice — that in the mirror stage relates to the developmental role played by the proper name within the schema of the symbolic order. Jane Gallop, "Lacan's 'Mirror Stage': Where to Begin?," *SubStance* 11, 4, Issue 37-38, A Special Issue from the Center for Twentieth Century Studies, 1983: 118-128.

6. The phrase "unconscious of architecture" can be read "the role of the unconscious played by architecture." Architecture plays the role of one of the primary terms identified by Ernst Jentsch as a component of the uncanny: the dead thing that nonetheless contains an element of life, an element that resists pure objectivity, DA. Ernst Jentsch,. "Zur Psychologie des Unheimlichen," *Psychiatrisch-Neurologische Wochenschrift* 8, 22(1908): 195-98 and 8, 23: 203-05. Translated 1995, R. Sellars, *Angelaki*, 2, 1. The corresponding subjective term is the "AD," the living subject who is haunted by a surviving element of the dead, a zombie, or (more conventionally) the subject and her unconscious, an automaton lodged in the center of the subject's being. The connection between AD and DA is structural but also metaphoric: the two poles define a circulation of metonymies along a Möbius-band style circuit analogous to the linguistic trope of the anacoluthon: a temporal series that is (re)defined by an "ungrammatical" concluding term that retroactively redefines the sequence of significations chiastically and anamorphically.

7. Fredric Jameson, *Signatures of the Visible* (New York: Routledge, 1990), pp. 26-27.

8. Sidney Gottlieb, *Framing Hitchcock: Selected Essays from the Hitchcock Annual* (Detroit: Wayne State University Press), p. 48.

9. Andrea Battistini, "Antonomasia e universale fantastico," in *Retorica e critica letteraria*, ed. Lea Ritter Santini, Ezio Raimondi (Bologna: Società Editrice Il Mulino, 1978), pp. 105-121. Vico accounted for the origin of human culture and mind in terms of a metaphor about thunder. The first humans perhaps already vocalized and used symbolic gestures, but the impact of thunder pushed them to conceive that the universe itself constituted a symbolic order, where the dimensions of time and space colluded to construct an intricate network of meanings deemed "divine" because access to them were based on rituals of divination. The sequence of a "push" on top of an already-in-place symbolic system was the same that Helen Keller reported when her teacher, Ann Sullivan, held her hand under a water pump while signing the word, "water." Keller reported that, although she had previously used signs to relate to the people and things around her, it had never occurred to her that the objects were transformed by their relation to signs, a kind of reverse causality that generated signifieds out of signifiers. Helen Keller, *The Story of my Life* (London, Hodder & Stoughton, 1914).

10. The reverse is also an interesting effect of master signification: the use of art to specify the "ideal contents" of thought and language. In effect, the reciprocity suggests a dialectical method, where theoretical processes and material artifacts interact and suggest gradual adjustments, either to the theory of signification or to the ways the artwork is characterized.

11. Nadejda Vladimir Popov, "Soldier Speech Acts in Greek and Roman Literature and Society," Ph.D. dissertation, Princeton University, 2008, iii-iv.

12. Vitruvius Pollo, *On Architecture*, trans. Frank Granger (Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press, 1962), pp. 25-27. "Scenography" comes from *skiagrafia*, the "casting of shadows" and, hence, relates to the more mysterious practices of foundation rites where representations of human shadows could be substituted for the flesh-and-blood victim to secure the spiritual safety of the building and its inhabitants. See Sir James George Frazer, *Taboo and the Perils of the Soul*, Part 2, *the Golden Bough: A Study in Magic and Religion*, 3rd edition (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1955), pp. 89-90. The *skia* was originally a tent or screen set up for the projection of shadows made by puppets or live actors. In Elizabethan England, the standard slang term for actor was "shadow." See Donald Kunze, "Skiagraphy and the *Ipsum* of Architecture," *VIA* 11, *Architecture and Shadow*, ed. David Murray, Journal of the Graduate School of Fine Arts, University of Pennsylvania (1990): 62-75.

13. Stephen Wolfram, *A New Kind of Science* (Champaign IL: Wolfram Media, Inc., 2002). Se especially, Chapter 6, "Starting from Randomness," pp. 223-296

14. Colin McCabe, "Introduction," in Sigmund Freud, *The Schreber Case*, trans. Andrew Webber (London and New York: Penguin, 2003), p. xi.