



## The Vertical View

Annoyingly sometimes, I read Lacan "vertically," seeing something like William J. Urban's multiple overlays. The trace paper on top has a drawing of the six terms I use to connect Lacan to non-Lacan so that when I watch a film like *My Man Godfrey*, I find it hilarious and brilliant while others say it's stupid and boring. My main argument is that, even if the connections I see in the vertical view don't pass the reality test, they were fascinating in themselves, and I experienced a kind of wonky *jouissance* just before it went sour, if it went sour, but sometimes it doesn't go sour. It goes all conversational and I am in a different layer, looking at things from a different angle. Even this description makes us think that anamorphosis is at work at the level of the text, suggesting that our problem might be to find just the right angle of view to make the stereogram effect work.

Vertical viewing is like the photo-analysis that used to be done with what were called photo pairs, two photographs of terrain taken from an airplane by a camera with two lenses. You'd put the photos on a table and use a special set of magnifying glasses on a wire stand that would allow your parallax to combine the two views and make a 3-d effect. I had to do this in a planning office in one of my summer jobs so I know it works. We also learned the trick of reversing the left-right order of the photos, so that instead of seeing the valleys as low, they would look like ridge lines. Amazingly, the contrast between the uneven heights of the peaks of hills and mountains, the liquid ridge lines were astoundingly even. In one view, you could "prove" the principle of regional hydraulic erosion and actually see the energy principle behind it.

I once used this personal experience on an exam in a topology class where the professor asked us to make up a question, give the answer, and explain why the question was good. I got a zero on this because the professor had never tried reversing the photos and didn't believe that it could happen. I wasn't annoyed because I knew I was right and he was wrong, I was distressed to think that it never occurred to this idiot to play with the photos, so he accepted some dogmatic idea about parallax and 3-d perception, and never had the *pleasure* of discovering how data can be hidden in reversals. In other words, I knew he was a

person devoid of *jouissance*. His other ideas were based on discipline and punishment rather than enjoyment.

My argument here is that experiment makes enjoyment possible. When we remain on the level of the page we are in a discipline and punish mode; thinking only about what is to be lost or gained, and how to fight for it. With speculation, the *ex falso* principle kicks in. Even if we are wrong with a speculation, even if *jouissance* goes sour, we enjoy ourselves. The more error the better, even. The whole text becomes a flow of energy, and like Heraclitus we are amazed that how *conatus* comes out of turmoil. Claudio has fortunately brought in Heraclitus's corrected saying ...

**In the same river we both step and do not step, we are and are not .**

Let me add another one.

**That which is in opposition is in concert, and from things that differ comes the most beautiful harmony (DK 8).**

Here we have two statements that are easy to convert into drivel. They could just be about the wonders of enigmas and oppositions, but if so, the what would we have? The *jouissance* would quickly sour. But, what if these happen to be about *conatus*, and then *conatus* is about cathesis, and cathesis is about an isomeric boundary, and the isomeric boundary is like switching around the two photos, and that's about the nature of parallax and all of a sudden we are back to Karatani and we notice what Karatani did not seem to know about, which was the stereogram, which he would have notice if he had ever worked with stereo pairs in a planning office.

With William Urban, we get a kind of meta-theory in a form that Lacan would approve of. It doesn't try to explain everything, it just proposes a vertical viewing, a relaxation of parallax so that something emerges in front of our noses that is self-evident and not argumentative. I love argument myself, but argument keeps us at the level of the page and the truth of Lacan seems to lie in the rhythm of his flow of ideas, not in any particular "product." Product, one of the positions on the field of Lacan's discourse mathemes, is at the point of "acting out" within the Symbolic, where the ++ expands to the +/- and -/+ to create a kind of equator to the torus. On the other side of the equator, the torus will contract to -/-, but because the torus is not a sphere, we have to ask what contraction means with a torus, which doesn't seem to offer contraction as a possibility. With sexuation, the -/- is the position of "there are no exceptions" to the woman's not-all principle. In the discourse overlay, what is this?

William J. Urban has it at the position of the hysteric. But, I have looked at the humoristic system as another "schema of fours" to find that the minus-minus is the position of the melancholic, and the iconography of Melancholia seems to agree. The torus "ends" at -/- but the end is not physically obvious, it's an "anywhere" like the katagraphic cut, which can be made at any point and still generate oppositional halves. By the way, if the universe is truly curved and closed, as Einstein argued, then anywhere is the center but also the nowhere, and Pascal's infinite sphere becomes the physical reality. Now we know who cuts the cake: the Bride.

$\overline{\exists x \Phi x}$ $H_d: \uparrow \frac{\$}{a} \rightarrow \frac{S1}{S2} \downarrow$	$\forall x \Phi x$ $U_d: \uparrow \frac{S2}{S1} \rightarrow \frac{a}{\$} \downarrow$
$\$$ <span style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">3</span>	<span style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">1</span> $S_2$
$a$ <span style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">4</span>	<span style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">2</span> $S_1$
$\overline{\forall x \Phi x}$ $A_d: \uparrow \frac{a}{S2} \rightarrow \frac{\$}{S1} \downarrow$	$M_d: \uparrow \frac{S1}{\$} \rightarrow \frac{S2}{a} \downarrow$ $\exists x \overline{\Phi x}$

Those who have been brides or dealt with brides know that the Cyclopean beliefs persist. The Bride is "she who must be taken against her will," otherwise the *manes* will be upset and bring bad luck down on the hearth where they are worshipped as a flame. In the world of architecture history constructed by Mark Jarzombek, there is no Cyclopean culture so forget about making this argument to the majority of our colleagues. There is also no unconscious, so there are many reasons to not waste time here.

All of a sudden, William J. Urban is giving us an interesting new argument for why rape is a *required component* of marriage, a very politically incorrect principle to say the least. don't worry, the rape is a charade to keep the dead ancestors happy. But, with the idea of the katagraphic cut as the distinction that makes the S, the subject, come into existence, things open up. In the discourse matheme, \$ is in the position of agency, and it is a letter; we have the "agency of the letter in the unconscious" and in cultural practices we have the charade the *suppresses* the truth of the meaning of the bride's abduction. Hey, even if this doesn't work out it would be quite an adventure to work out the details! The -/- has a lot of promise as being the point at which we cut into the torus. We also know that the cut into the torus is made along the entire tube, and we know how to make it. We twist the knife 360° as it completes a 360° circuit. We see the cut as it is butterflyed into two faces that are linked together. It is *just one cut*, but the cut has two faces! Now, in Lacan's essay, "agency of the letter in the unconscious," we have one cut that has two faces, but the faces are HOMMES and DAMES, the signs above the lavatory doors at the train station.

They are separated by a small space, this is important. This is a  $\partial$ , akin to the small angle off the surface of the canvas that we have to find in order to see the skull in the Holbein double portrait. The  $\partial$  means that something changes from black to white simply because we have shifted our angle of view very slightly, an angle of  $\partial$ . This anamorphosis amounts to parallax, where the slight shift introduces a dimension connecting the viewer with the viewed (cathesis). The principle could be stated in magic terms, since I, the viewer, make the viewed object change by something I do, a spooky action at a distance. This dimension is the same we find in the instrumentality thesis, that power of the subjective is to be found in the *tools* used to make a transformation, as in the wine to blood in the Catholic mass. If someone gives the hero a magic flute, all he has to do is play it to charm the opposition. Demons become angels if I play my magic flute. The small  $\partial$  is achieved on the subject side but it affects the object side. If I draw with a magic pencil, all the drawings will be beautiful, all I need to do is *possess* the pencil in a correct way. It must be given or found. The gift cannot be motivated, as in a quid pro quo situation. it must come out of the blue.

What does the hysteric *want*? She wants the Other to come up short, to be exposed as being empty: the Wizard of Oz is just a man from Kansas hiding behind a curtain. She wants to embarrass the Master because his sexual desire has operated as a kind of rape or blackmail. He is a black male, a Master Signifier without content, forcing Psyche to do a lot of unpleasant things. Psyche wanted to see Eros, against the advice of Venus and her son, because Eros was what he was in the dark. No content, all structure. Psyche, hysterical, then had to undergo three trials, like Cinderella. She wanted to erase the / across the A, the *Autre*,  $\mathbb{A}$ . The dark Other. She needed to cut the torus, and her trials duplicated the path of the katagraphic knife into the torus: a cut with two faces, linked: METONYMY. Now we know why Lacan's matheme for metaphor has an X beneath the S' above the bar, which is really a chain, S' ... S'.

The X is what is holding the two faces of the linked Möbius bands together. Like a chain linkage, one link is oriented  $90^\circ$  to the one connected to it. The twist allows the solid part of the one to go through the void part of the other. This is the same logic as the Borromean knot, where two rings hold together because there is one missing ring, one that is both below and above the pair: *cathesis* but also *isomeric*.

I love the story that Stephen Sondheim tells about what might have been one of his best-loved songs, "Send in the Clowns." It's a series of questions that Sondheim paced as a "kind of a waltz" by suspending the count to *float* the uncertainty of the dramatic situation. He says that Leonard Bernstein taught him this, that you don't always have to have squared off measures, 4, 8, 16, 32, etc. His design was provoked by the fact that Gynnes Johns, who sang the role of Desirée in the first edition of *A Little Night Music*, couldn't hold a note! How to turn this defect into an advantage? Sondheim shortened the "breaths" of the lyrics so that the question-form would lift the measure the same way a waltz lifts the feet of dancers with a little spin. The effect is to whirl the argument of the song, which is what the hysteric does in demanding that the *Autre* should be cut into,  $\mathbb{A}$ . As you step, you turn. Metonymy, S' ... S'. Now we know the X is a waltz, and comes in the form of a question, which we can trace back to Freud's question, "What the hell was the name of that artist I saw in Orvieto?"

The *ex falso* gives us a lot for only a little investment. EFQ forever! But now we know that the *falso* is the role of the missing ring in the Borromean knot, and Lacan gives us the Cayley-Klein table to identify the missing ring as the principle of the "e".

e a b c  
a e c b  
b c e a  
c b a e

or, if you can see it in the way Pascal finds that two sets of three points criss cross 1 and 5 with 4 and 2 by leaving out 3 and 6, then you know why there is a space between the restroom doors in the joke about the brother and sister, and how the "town", 7, 8, 9, is like the town that Lévi-Strauss described, where the villagers described as either/both concentric rings or pie-slices. The villagers didn't know Pascal or anything about projective geometry theorems, but they did know whether the threats to safety were coming from the outside or inside and this anamorphosis was the way they shaped their town.

In other words, you learn more if you make mistakes, EFQ, than if you stay on the page and insist on T and F. More error, more errors begin to tell you the space between the

*jouissance*, when the something. As per why restroom doors.

