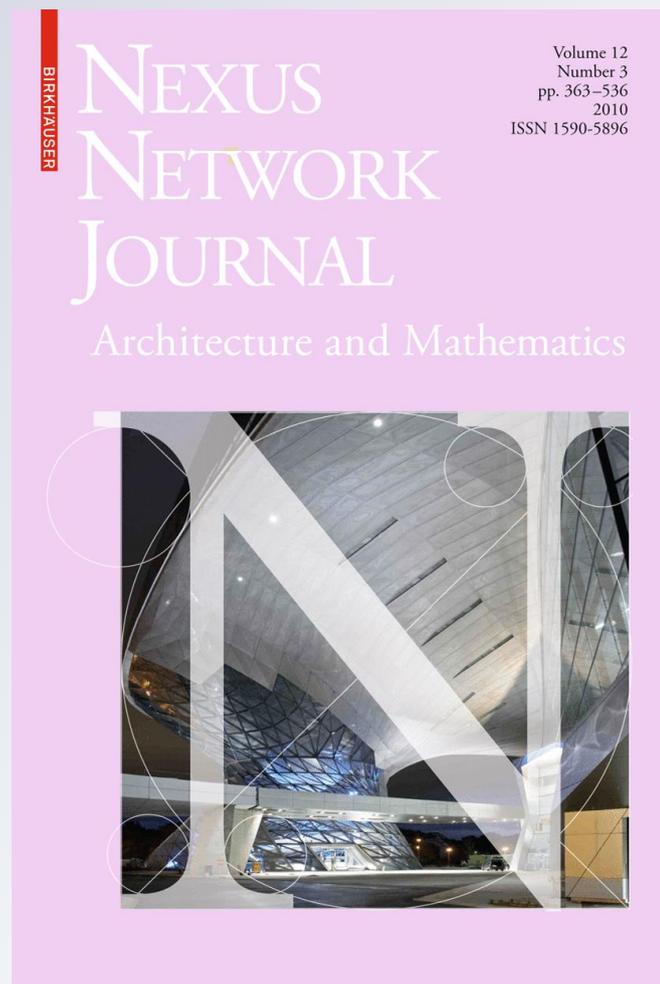


# *Chiasmus, Artificial Memory, and the Arts of Arrangement*

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## *Chiasmus, Artificial Memory, and the Arts of Arrangement*

**Abstract.** Few figures of classical rhetoric can claim more spatial relevance than “chiasmus,” the figure of symmetrical convergence used by poets, novelists, rhetoricians, mnemonicists and others. Is chiasmus a tool of literati who appropriate spatial forms to pull their plots to closure, or is there an independent architectural tradition of chiasmus? If one pulls together the clues about metonymy, the logic of arrangement, one can discover an intriguing link to Jacques Lacan’s similar design of the human psyche and his topological investigations. The Vitruvian sequence of *venustas*, *utilitas* and *firmitas* may suggest to some nothing more than an arbitrary division of architectural interests. Ritually, however, the relation of *firmitas* not just to material stability but to the traditional rituals required to secure buildings from both collapse and curse, even if figurative, offers connections to the chiasmic design of foundation rites, where sacrifice secures the life and security of structure.

### *Two lines of thought: metonymy and metaphor*

When the French psychoanalyst and theorist Jacques Lacan read the news about the sensational murder case of the Papin sisters, he was fascinated, and continued to be fascinated, with the way the sisters spoke.<sup>1</sup> In another case, a school teacher who had gone insane began to speak in fragmentary sentences that were luminous and prophetic. These instances of female paranoia led him, in explicating the “mirror stage,” to develop a more general theory of truth that confronted the Gödelian set-theory limitation of how theory can include itself.<sup>2</sup> Because discourse must be subject to the rules it explicates as universal, the phenomenon of *mi-dire*, of “saying half,” became for Lacan both a style and a method. This style was evident in Lacan’s spontaneous use of puns, alliteration, abrupt breaks (aposiopoesis), and prosopopoeia. Lacan’s knowledge of classical and Biblical literature undoubtedly fueled his conviction that *mi-dire* was not simply a method or presentational mode but a means of thinking and discovery.

Catherine Clément, the French philosopher-novelist-artist and one-time student of Lacan’s, wrote:

Mid-speak (*Mi-dire*). Not the whole truth. A treatise on the correct usage of reserve in literary style: Lacan’s style is such a treatise – it is unceasingly reserved. His formulae, figures, and tropes are allied with negation, with the negation of negation, and with all resources of grammar that turn plain assertion around and stand it on its head. ‘I tell the truth – not the whole truth’. When the truth is conceived ‘whole’, it cannot be anything but the complement of the man. But the truth is not ‘the whole truth’, it eludes the grasp of man, his culture, and his language [Clément 1983: 63].

Rhetorically, the essence of *mi-dire* is metonymy: speech broken into parts that, in relation to other parts, achieve “meaning effects” (rather than direct, signified meaning) from incompleteness. Lacan’s interest in types of metaphor was partly a response to the

prevailing linguistic interests of the day in the “metaphoric” nature of semblance and the “metonymic” quality of contiguity. Semblance and contiguity had been identified, in the famous analyses of neuropsychologists Gelb and Goldstein of brain-damaged veterans of World War I, as the typological structure of aphasia.<sup>3</sup> Reasoning backwards, semblance aphasia (blindness to semblance relationships) and contiguity aphasia (inability to conceive of tangent relationships) pointed to a “deep structural” axis of metaphor and metonymy, lying beneath language and thought. Roman Jakobson readily associated metaphor with poetic thought and metonymy with rational functions. This led many to conclude that metaphor was developmentally primary and that metonymical rationality later “overtook” it both in personal development and cultural genesis.

Lacan’s reversal of this view of metaphor as primary was related closely to his interest in the mirror stage, the event through which the young child, encountering his/her reflection in a mirror, achieves a self-conception of mastery and unity, at the expense of recognizing that this mastery is based on the externalized view of the Other (“Other-ness” is a better translation of Lacan’s *l’Autre*), a mastery which had to be reinforced and defended by the ego’s constant attention to appearances and defending the subject’s place in the networks of symbolic relations.<sup>4</sup> Commentary on the mirror stage often misses two subtleties of Lacan’s idea. The first is that it is the *imaginary* realm that holds the key to the subject’s unity, but the treasure this key unlocks lies in the *symbolic* realm, where the subject is assigned roles to play. The second subtlety is that the reversed mirror image is that it is *not quite* what others see. The stereo reflection and the public image are separated by a *minimal difference*, a small gap that operates like a micro-force between two atomic particles, a case of “difference in itself.” Left and right are also a matter of what makes a face out of what is otherwise just one side of an object. And, as we know from folklore, the left hand will accumulate a reputation for evil, the right will be the side of light, origins, the good, and the Law.

This small gap between the mirror image and the externalized self that the ego uses as a “marker” in the game played in the social world is a mark of the subject’s authenticity as well as the dimension that allows it to stand outside of the three-sided game played by the Lacanian trio of domains: imaginary, the symbolic, and the Real. The marker-image will be used by others *to stand in place of* the subject and will always be a locus of misrecognition. Others will create personalities for the subject that the subject will discover only gradually and imperfectly. In contrast, the mirror image belongs to the subject “directly,” through a logic of touch. The gap between the “nothing” of the marker-image and the subject’s unique possession of the mirror image will constitute a mark of authenticity, to be punched into every situation. The subject will feel that, although no one could literally stand in his/her shoes, others *could and should* see the same thing, feel the same thing, think the same thing. The recognition of impossibility is the mirror image, the rhetorical demand is the marker image, the subject’s social mask. The coupling that links the two is the mark of the certain and is a kind of action of certification, a making.

Truth, in terms of *mi-dire*, is not just a combination of the two powers of the mind, semblance-metaphor and contiguity-metonym. Metonymy’s partial nature stands for the process of truth – “truth by halves” – and goes to the heart of the mirror stage’s primal condition of its own truth told in halves, and halves of a half. After the mirror stage, the normative meanings of the two kinds of metaphor are turned on their heads. Semblance will always involve *mis*recognition, contiguity will always involve *cutting* space, time,

and logic so that half of the matter is hidden. This strange state of affairs calls for some further understanding of metonymy.

### *The mi-Dire of Simonides (and beyond)*

When Lacan took on the matter of the five drives he had constructed from Freud's three (anal, oral, phallic, plus the scopic gaze and acousmatic voice), he made a point of saying that they were all partial. That is, the object or aim (*but*) of the drive was not directly achievable. "No food will ever satisfy the oral drive, except by circumventing the eternally lacking object" [Lacan 1998: 180]. The image of the drive was a line circling around a gap or, in some cases, a line moving up through a rim representing the goal that the aim had "overshot." Metonymy made sure the gap would be there. The gap allows for an escape, a place where the Real can set up shop, a funhouse and smuggling emporium. But, there are two kinds of franchise locations for this Real. Ed Pluth describes:

There is a first real ( $real_1$ ) ... and there is another 'second-order' real ( $real_2$ ), which is an effect of the symbolic order itself.  $Real_1$  sounds like a typically 'realist' notion: the real consists of stuff 'out there' that language tries to symbolize.  $Real_2$ , however is not outside the symbolic, as  $real_1$  seems to be. This second-order real 'is characterized by impasses and impossibilities' that occur in the symbolic order itself. In what I think is his best definition of this understanding of the real, Lacan said that 'the real can only be inscribed on the basis of an impasse of formalization'. Instead of being a field of referents that language aims at, this version of the real is a stumbling block in the field of signification itself.<sup>5</sup>

$Real_2$ , like a defect, is the aspect of the gap that makes the circling drive seem like a machine encountering, over and over, some programming error that sends it back to the beginning.<sup>6</sup> Interestingly, we have all encountered this as a comic device commonly employed in popular culture: the inane and irritating exchange between the comedy team Abbott and Costello, "Who's on First?" Because the first baseman's name is actually "Who," the confusion circles around the question as the pronoun and the proper name vie for dominance. In the Cyclops Episode, Odysseus uses the same trick, telling the giant he has just blinded that his name is Ouisis, "Nobody." "Who has blinded you?" the other Cyclopes ask when he calls for help as the Greeks escape beneath the sheep. "Nobody, that's Who!"<sup>7</sup>

Metonymy always puts off the meaning question, but this indefinite future involves the present and the past as well. Lacan used the future anterior tense, the "will have already happened" time sense, to define the subject not as a past or future but as a future in which "What is realised in my history is not the past definite of what was, since it is no more, or even the present perfect of what has been in what I am, but the future anterior of what I shall have been for what I am in the process of becoming."<sup>8</sup> This simultaneous forward and backward motion is the point of the Real –  $Real_1$  – where we can really exit to some exterior. The two varieties of Real are related to the partial object, generalized as the famous Lacanian *objet petit a* (the otherwise untranslatable "object-cause of desire"). The "matheme," or condensed expression, that Lacan used for fantasy was:

\$◇a

The  $\diamond$  is the *poinçon*, or punch, the mark of authenticity because, although it is different for every subject, it is authentic for each. Thus,  $\text{Real}_1$  and  $\text{Real}_2$  structured a space that lies between them, the “inner” and “outer” versions of the Real; just so, the *poinçon* can also be written as the scale dysfunction,  $\langle \rangle$ , “both smaller and larger than.” The inner  $\text{Real}_2$  is an “internal” (dys)function of the symbolic order itself, while the outer  $\text{Real}_1$  is the point at which what seemed to be the container turns out to be itself contained and escapable. In the Arena Chapel in Padova, Italy, Giotto shows the angel of the Apocalypse rolling up the human world as a geographer might roll up a map to put it away.

Where is the payoff in extending the *mi-dire*, and other Lacanian ideas such as the mirror stage and the metonymical vs. the metaphorical “reals” to the classical art of memory? One area was mapped by Lacan himself, by his interest in ancient philosophy and classical literature. Clément comments that his appreciation stemmed from first-hand knowledge of primary texts. Like Freud, Lacan saw in antiquity, and especially in the products of ancient art and literature, a proving ground, if not a battle-ground, of the psyche. The complementary benefit of Lacanifying the memory lore is to rescue its real magic. Why, in fact, was the popular study of Lullism (the art of memory created by the thirteenth-century Catalan mystic Ramon Llull) completely eradicated at the University of Paris? According to Ivan Illich, it was the Church’s conviction that such arts were magic – and they were correct.<sup>9</sup> Looking for the origins of the invention of artificial memory should not end with the Simonides story, for the arts of memory were ancient by his time. His story, apocryphal in many ways, shows that space and memory already ruled over an uncanny playing field, each sharing media and method with the other. The most famous “theater of memory” was invented by Giulio Camillo, who made no secret of his use of the Kabbalah and other “esoteric” lore. In short, artificial memory was from very early times regarded as a kind of machine that actively created meaning rather than passively stored facts. Modern misunderstanding has bracketed artificial memory – along with its engagement of profound philosophical issues – within the categories of antiquarian curiosities. The case of Simonides provides more than enough evidence to correct this situation, and it is probable that Camillo capitalized on this apocryphal story.

The story of the invention of artificial memory comes to us from several classical sources. Most modern readers will have encountered it in Frances Yates’s popular book, *The Art of Memory* [Yates 1966: 1-4]. The poet Simonides is invited by a local celebrity and politico, Scopas, to entertain his guests with a poem commemorating his victory at a wrestling meet. The guests are assembled in the banquet hall, and Simonides memorizes their names using the method of place, by which he associates each guest’s name with a mentally pre-constructed memory place. He delivers his poem but Scopas is not pleased by Simonides’ insertion of a passage in honor of the twin gods, Castor and Pollux, a gesture of piety to protect the host from the evil eye, which a poem filled completely with congratulatory braggadocio would surely have done. The impious Scopas withholds half Simonides’ fee, telling the poet, rudely, that he can go to the gods (i. e., “go to Hell”) for the rest. Simonides returns to the banquet but is called outside by “two youths” who, it is said, wish to speak to him. When he gets outside, the two are not anywhere to be seen, but before Simonides can return to his unfinished meal, the banquet hall collapses. All inside are crushed, Simonides has been saved by this spurious interruption. Before he can leave the scene of disaster, relatives anxious to identify the victims beg him to stay and help. Thanks to his employment of the art of spatial memory, he is able to name each

corpse on the basis of its location amidst the rubble. The relatives, whose religious scruples can now be satisfied with the proper burial of their kin, reward Simonides generously, making up for his lost fee. With true poetic justice, it is the braggart Scopas who, in the end, goes to the gods for his reward.

Yates makes no special analysis of the story; in an earlier study, I described the clear chiasmus used to preserve the symmetry of the story's two main parts.<sup>10</sup> Scopas, a wrestler, is one half of a pair, and this is the clue that sets the pace. Simonides divides his poem in two, and the second half is, like Scopas, a matter of twins. Scopas withholds half of the fee, suggesting that the gods pay the rest. Simonides is called out by two men. At this point, the chiasmus reaches a turning point where the narrative folds back on itself to "correct" the divisions-by-two. Where the system of memory places was used to store names, the places now yield the names back, for burial's sake. Grateful relatives restore the withheld fee. The "poem" is realized, now as a funeral encomium, and Scopas himself goes to the gods.

Taking into consideration the *mi-dire* sheds new light on this chiasmic structure. The presence of an internal Real<sub>2</sub> and external Real<sub>1</sub> make us able to see how the narrative of memory is a space "held open," collapsed, and then re-opened. True to the *mi-dire*'s tradition of juxtaposing the living and the dead but restricting their communications to reverberations and whispers, the first part of the chiasmic story is dedicated to the living, the second to the dead, and the clues connecting them can be intuited but not spoken out loud. With the false request to see two mysterious men outside (the Dioscuri appearing in person to thank Simonides for including them in his poem?), we have the Real of salvation. The living turmoil of the contentious banquet and the lethal turmoil of the collapsed building are hinged by a momentary breath of fresh air outside the space of memory. When Simonides returns inside, it is to the second kind of Real: the "partial objects" created by the art of memory, composites of names and places. No one has made the comparison of the memory object to the partial object, or of the system of memory places to the *mi-dire* of the oracle or prophet, but there are clear advantages to do so. These do not take us away from the original practice of artificial memory but, rather return it to an origin that has so far remained obscure.

### ***The Topology of X***

In language, metonymy has to do with the meaning effect generated by a partial string of signifiers, where the signified (referent) as such is *postponed*. For example, the crown, one element of the king's symbolic paraphernalia, "stands for" the king. Detached from the king (absence of the referent, the signified), it still has a certain uncanny power, as if to say that the order of cause and effect has been reversed: "whoever wears the crown is the king." The crown as metonymy postpones the matter of who is king, by creating a "meaning effect," an essence, that is *missing*. The king, in Lacan's terms, is "castrated by the symbol" of his power, and this is the meaning of castration in Lacan. The price of joining the network of symbolic relationships in the social order is precisely this castration (by the metonymic symbol of the location of one's place within the network).

Metonymy in architecture has to do with how boundaries are drawn to make parts that have this representative magic. In this sense, every project is but a fragment of other possible projects, and the house implies the city: the "meaning effect" of the utopian microcosm. Because every built project is a "partial object" – a fragment in comparison to a larger whole that it specifies by asserting itself as an example of "how things should be done" – the boundary is significant because it relates to the "reality out there," what is

in popular terms “the solid world of facts.” But, there are also “inside frames” that refer to a kernel of the Real that, in every architectural project, works as the gambler’s “tell,” or truth-revealing detail. This can be an internal unintended inconsistency, a hidden flaw; or, as in the work of Carlo Scarpa, it can be a detail that reveals the entire idea of the building. In ancient building practices, this kernel would be addressed by sacrificing a victim and burying it with ritual that secured its place as the guarantee of the building’s solidity and security.

The story of Simonides’ invention of artificial memory is a link between these primary architectural practices and the metonymy of the signifier that is common to all human thought. In a sense, it is architecture’s interpretant, its central enigmatic key. The chiasmus of the story shows the relationships. In Lacan’s theory of metaphor-metonymy, which is by extension his theory of language and the structure of the unconscious, the formula for metaphor is:

$$F(S'/S)S \cong S (+) s$$

The signified effect (s) is created by the substitution of one signifier for another (S'/S). Lacan’s is a “purist” definition of metaphor, one that precedes the more literary versions. One of the signifiers in this replacement process becomes the stand-in for the effect itself, S (+) s. The signifier is “charged” (“pulsated”) with the signified; it exceeds any particular signifier, and is the means of incarnating the meaning effect. Lacan’s formula for metonymy is quite different:

$$f(S . . . S')S \cong S (—) s$$

The Ss are signifiers, and the ‘s’ is the signified *effect* (in place of the illusory “signified”). S . . . S’ is a chain of signifiers, each succeeding the other in the temporal sequence. The movement from one signifier to another creates the idea that there is a signified somewhere, beyond the signifiers. “S (—) s” means both “signifiers in absence of a signified effect” and signifiers and signifieds separated by a barrier, across which we can experience meaning only as a *resonance* or echo. The bar is important, not in its usual mathematical sense but as something that *cannot be crossed*. In metonymy, the line between meaning effects and the signifiers that produce them is prohibitive. It represents a gap (like the gap separating the subject’s mirror image and the image stand-in that Others will use) that can’t be crossed. The meaning effect of metonymy is sensed as a resonance or sympathetic vibration. Because of the bar, there will always be a here and a there, and an echo or specter that, if it makes it to the other side, can do so only as a kind of ectoplasm or, more benevolently, the distant, haunting call of some wild bird or beast.

The bar is evident in the Simonides story through the chiasmic structure, which divides the tale into two halves. It is across this bar that we have only suggestions of an uncanny connection between, for example, the half of the poem dedicated to the twin gods, the Dioscuri; the half of the fee “made up” both by the grateful relatives of the crushed guests and by the gods themselves, who seem to have some connection to the mysterious youths who called Simonides out of the banquet hall just before its collapse; and the half-and-half structure of the memory place itself, a place that holds a name, the system of spatial memory. These halves call out to each other across a bar they will not cross without destroying the “signified effect.” Spookily, they are epitomized by the crushed bodies, about which two points should be noted: the bodies cannot be identified (semblance dysfunction), and proper burial depends wholly on determining their

location according to the system Simonides had used to recall their names (contiguity). Contiguity, too, is “dysfunctional” in the sense that Simonides’ method was to place the names into *his* memory place, not the literal space of the banquet hall. The story depends on this central irony: that Simonides could not have discovered his method by means of this disaster without having already employed it before the collapse. Even if Simonides’ “memory place” had been the banquet hall itself, it would have been re-shaped by a symmetry of counting required by the method.

The issue of contiguity points to an important Lacanian theme. When Lacan discovered the centrality of the mirror stage, it was Melanie Klein’s theory of the importance of metonymy in early childhood development that served as a guide. The child’s relation to the mother is one of parts. Not-all of the mother can be perceived, and this “not-all” quality itself becomes the key component in the child’s relation to the mother as the model of all subsequent Others. The other is a treasury of signifiers; a seemingly endless source of signified “effects”; but these effects are conditioned by absence – missing signifiers or components that become the very essence of the Other. The Other *is*, if anything, this lack; this missing part. The subject’s relation to the other is radically metonymical.

In the Simonides story, thanks to chiasmus we have an exceedingly vivid picture of the treasury as signifieds and the Other as lack: the banquet hall with its guests, in its proper erect form and, then, in collapsed ruin. Chiasmus tells us the relationship between the two. There are two roles for the “bar” that separates the signifiers from the signified effects, or “meaning effects.” One is the boundary of the doorway. When Simonides is called outside, it is to the kind of Real that constructs a dimension of escape, a position that will afford him the ability to interpret the disaster,  $R_1$ . The other role of the bar is miniature and internal. It is the dividing line that manages the economy of halves that dominate the story. The split poem, the divided fee, the name of each guest and the memory place that Simonides employs to retain it. These amount to “internal dysfunctions in the operation of causality” that are  $R_2$ , the second type of Real. The portability of  $R_2$  allows any segment of the signifying chain within the “treasury” of the banquet hall to resonate. Places echo names, missing fees resonate with the idea of two youths who call Simonides outside, the prophecy of Scopas will be, spookily, fulfilled. These *loci* of the “inner real” create an echo chamber that works, like a sea-shell, with any wind that blows across it. The seemingly visual method of memory places turns out to be an acousmatic voice, Lacan’s fifth “partial object.”

The coupling of gaze and voice, where both deploy a metonymical-dysfunctional logic within a form that could be called a “treasury” is found in the second most famous example of artificial memory, Giulio Camillo’s *theatro della memoria*. Whether or not this *theatro* existed as an actual structure or only as an *idea* described in the book Camillo wrote under the sponsorship of Francis I has never been determined. If it was a structure, as some eye-witnesses claim, it was lost shortly after Camillo’s death in 1544. The main features are described in Camillo’s 86-page book, *L’Idea del Theatro* (1550).<sup>11</sup> The single user of the theater occupied a small area comparable to a stage. Around this area, was an “auditorium” whose seven rows and columns defined a set of forty-nine (7x7, a perfect number in the lore of number magic) memory places.<sup>12</sup> Each place was defined by a crisscross logic set in motion by a bottom row of “seats,” the planets. The seven tiers stood for the generation of the world from these archaic planetary qualities: the uppermost tier described human institutions, tools, and arts. The horizontal program

followed the logic of the planets, as a generational series beginning with Saturn and ending with Luna.

Like Simonides' banquet hall, this "treasury" was filled with "partial objects." Each of the items Camillo specified to fill the forty-nine compartments was conceived in the "emblem tradition." This was the art related to the "military device" used to identify the soldier, his rank, clan, and deeds. With the rise of printing, emblem books became the obsessions of the literate classes. Rebus-like images were accompanied by poetic riddles that challenged the reader to guess the hidden mysteries of each of the topics: "wisdom," "virtue," "prudence," etc. The emblem books were perfect examples of Lacanian *mi-dire*. They spoke the truth, but only a part of it. The metonymy of text was the riddle form, akin to the genre of children's riddles in the style of "What am I?"; qualities were enumerated through personifications of abstract ideas.

Camillo's memory theater was not the classical memory place where things to be remembered were stored for later recall. It was a place that demonstrated the idea, later expressed by Giambattista Vico, that memory was the same thing as imagination [Vico 1984]; see also [Bayer and Verene 2009]. The user of Camillo's theater would "remember" the whole of human wisdom by imagining it. In a sense, Camillo (and Vico) defined wisdom in a very Lacanian way: it could not be lost because it had never been possessed, but because it was not lost it could be imagined through the fiction of loss. The treasury of the Other was, precisely, its defectiveness. This defect manifested itself first in the rebus-like objects Camillo placed in the compartments of the auditorium. Each was "partial" in the same sense that Simonides' banquet-hall guests were composite monsters of place and name. The linkages holding the theater together as a whole were also defective. The user was required to reason from the position of God rather than man. The mnemonicist was, as in the tradition of *mi-dire*, to become the shaman, the prophet, the mystic.

Another defect in the "string of signifiers" called the memory theater could be found in the first row. Six of the "seats" are, according to the general design, planets. The middle position however is not Apollo, who is found in the row above. On the first row, he is eclipsed by the "banquet of the Breadth of Being, which is the image of the Divinity," and banquet is the name given to the entire second tier. What is the meaning of the banquet and why does this internal chiasmus, which exchanges the place of Apollo and pulls the second row down to the first, occur? Camillo explains – but only in part – in ways that make him seem to be a sixteenth-century precursor of Lacan: "Two have been the productions which God has made, the one from within his essence of His divinity, the other from without" [Wenneker 1970: 217 (*L'Idea del Teatro*, p. 17)]. Do the two Reals of the Banquet also establish, as they do in the Simonides story, a space, a "treasury"? The production from within, Camillo explains, was the word that initiated the world. This was guided by the number 7, a composite of 6 and 1, and 6 was a "chiasmic" number, both the product and sum of its parts. The external Real was a matter of formation from *prima materia*. This, too, was dominated by the number 6. In the Pythagorean tradition, all things proceed from the "Gamone," six entities that progress from God (as father) to God as son, to angelic mind, to the "soul of the world," or Chaos, to the breath of the soul, to generation. These steps were represented by the thermodynamic sequence of sun, light, flame, brilliance, heat, and generation. The "Banquet of the Gods" may have a correspondingly climatological origin. The story goes that Okeanos invites the gods to the banquet, in what is now Libya. The meaning of this has to do with the belief that the sun drew up moisture by its heat and, at the spring

equinox, drew the gods from their home on Mount Olympus to the south. Just as the seasons begin in spring, the material world begins at this point where the northern hemisphere's elements are warmed by the moist breath of Okeanos, who, Camillo notes, existed before creation.

With an internal Real<sub>2</sub> of emblems and external, oceanic Real<sub>1</sub>, it is easier to see how the bar of metonymy gives rise to memory as *mi-dire*. The missing signifier of the Other will not be symbolized, but as the ultimate partial object, it will be the voice of the mnemonicist; the gaze embodied by the cabinets of the theater will become, literally, the *audi-torium* where vision gives way to an "acousmatic" resonance afforded by chiasmus. Is this the answer to the ancient riddle of the meaning of the letter E inscribed on the omphalos-stone at Delphi? On the final row of the theater, in the place of the Banquet, Camillo describes the "most noble" image of Hercules (*Ercole*), as a sign of "all the sciences pertaining to things celestial, to this world and the abyss" (the three parts of creation).

Since the symbolic Theologians wish Hercules to denote the human spirit, which like the arrow of three points, can penetrate with one the celestial secrets, with another, those of this world, and with the third, those of the abyss. Therefore, it shall contain a very distinguished volume, in which shall be seen organized without exception all the sciences with all the 'links' pertaining to their particular 'chains'. And finally, eloquence as the shelter and ornament of all, eloquence, I say, relating to prose expression, in all its kinds, since poetry is solar, and it shall go to the image of Apollo among the muses. ... This image, therefore, shall include a volume pertaining to design, architecture, painting, to perspective, modeling, to sculpture, and all their appurtenances. And the division shall be of such small categories, that the disposition shall appear marvelous.<sup>13</sup>

Recent excavations at Annapolis, Maryland, have uncovered the first intact example of the Yoruba practice of "cosmogram."<sup>14</sup> In short, this is the creation of a design within a building through the concealment of objects inside door jambs, beneath floor tiles, and so on, so that curses and blessings could be reinforced by delivering curses/blessing at the precise moment when the subject-victim stood in the proper location. In this "treasury," like Camillo's and Simonides', there is the partial object, the guest and the magic name with the power to kill or bestow eternal life. There is the bar in its internal and external forms: the internal logic of halves, of pairs with a missing twin; the external dimension that affords the *magus* control and agency. There is the metonymy of parts, and the meaning effect. In short, there is the *mi-dire*, the only way to speak the truth. In this African practice that gave American slaves some sense of mastery in a world where they themselves were the misrecognized subjects "castrated" by the symbols of their servitude, we can hear the echoes of all foundation rites, all magical practices by which buildings, cities, and graves were secured.<sup>15</sup> Chiasmus, the logic of halves, the 'E' of the oracle, suggests that Vitruvius's conception of the architectural virtues of *venustas* (the celestial), *utilitas* (the world), and *firmitas* (the abyss, the place of sacrifice, of the part that resonates the whole) were not far off the mark.

Notes

1. In February 1933, all France was horrified over the news of the savage double murder committed in the town of Le Mans. “Two respectable, middle-class women, mother and daughter, had been murdered by their maids, two sisters who lived in the house. The maids had not simply killed the women, but had gouged their eyes out with their fingers while they were alive and had then used a hammer and knife to reduce both women to a bloody pulp. In both cases, there were no wounds to the body. Apart from some gashes to the daughter's legs, the full force of the attack was directed at the heads and the victims were left literally unrecognisable.” <http://www.geocities.com/neil404bc/crime.htm>, last accessed January 12, 2009.
2. Popular culture's view of Kurt Gödel's observations on the subject of recursiveness does little more than scratch the surface of his revolutionary 1931 paper in response to Alfred North Whitehead and Bertrand Russell's *Principia Mathematica*. See [Nagel and Newman 1958].
3. For a comprehensive review of this issue, see [Cassirer 1957: 205-278].
4. The theme of the “armored” ego was emphasized by Hal Foster in his treatment of the mirror stage; see [Foster 1996: 208-211].
5. [Pluth 2007: 17]. Pluth's citations have been omitted for the sake of clarity. I thank Nadir Lahiji for pointing out this very important contribution to Lacanian studies.
6. For those not familiar with Lacan's theory of the drive, demand (asking for) contains two components, one that can be symbolized and a “silent” vector that, because of its resistance to symbolization, removes the goal from the aim of demand. The result is a motion that circles around a missing/silent object that is the “object cause of desire,” what Lacan called *l'objet petit a*, the “small other,” a material cause that functions primarily through absence.
7. Richard Ellmann reports that the extremely name-conscious James Joyce considered Odysseus's name to be a composite of *outis* and Zeus — “Outiszeus” — and, hence, a “divine nobody.” This illuminates his use of the Greek letter E to represent Giambattista Vico as “Earwicker” throughout *Finnegans Wake*. The E is related to the ε found on the omphalos stone at Delphi. See [Ellmann 1977: 13].
8. Lacan's interest in the future anterior stemmed from Freud's account of regression in terms of the analysand's future discovery of where the id was. “*Wo Es war, soll Ich werden*” is the phrase so often used in reference to this. “Where it [the Id?] was, there I [the Ego?] shall be.” Ellie Ragland-Sullivan discusses this phrase at length and points to Lacan's own interpretation of this motto of regression to mean something substantially different from the traditional id/ego translation: “It is one's duty to emerge from a place of unconsciousness being to recognize the truth, that one's being derives from having been an object of unconscious and alien principles. Only in the movement of seeing oneself emerge from the unconscious can knowledge become truth” [Ragland-Sullivan 1986: 12]. Ragland-Sullivan further observes that the famous misinterpretations of this Freudian phrase (Jung, Bachelard, Jones) have exactly inverted its meaning, making the unconscious a matter of myth and symbol. In his attempt to restore the Freudian meaning, “Lacan takes the dream quite literally as a ‘discourse’ spoken by an unconscious subject and, what is more, in the language of everyday discourse. The dream discourse becomes a rebus or enigma, however, because it is formed and reorganized by the primary-process laws of condensation and displacement and, thus, is distorted by the time it surfaces to the conscious level” [1986: 13]. In other words, the dream is the metonymy of a (metaphoric) consciousness, a form of (female) “paranoiac discourse.” The significance of this view is heightened by the fact that Lacan saw regression primarily as a *topographical*, not a temporal, process. In Seminar XI, Lacan notes that the *Ich* of Freud's phrase is the subject, and “where the subject was” was, precisely, the dream. “The subject is there to rediscover *where it was* – I anticipate – the real ... *The gods belong to the field of the real*” [Lacan 1998: 44-45].
9. Ivan Illich, personal communication, October 1989.
10. Yates can be forgiven, since none of the primary sources for this story (Cicero, Quintilian) refer to it other than a curious anecdote. The earliest claim of the story's chiasmus is my own; see [Kunze and Wei 1986: 65].

11. My resource for Camillo's theater is a doctoral dissertation [Wenneker 1970], which includes a translation of *L'Idée del Teatro* and an extensive analysis.
12. The reader will note both the "chiasmus-like" effect of 7x7, two sets of lines crossing at right angles, and the chiasmus of the aliquot number 6 (1x2x3, also 1+2+3) which makes 6+1 such a good choice for a theater, whose space must include and then "disavow" a dimension based on hearing. In the '6', the single user of the memory theater is both in on stage (6+1) and in the auditorium (in the 6's).
13. [Wenneker 1970: 348-349 (*L'Idée del Teatro*, pp. 82-83)]. The three-pointed arrow is, we conjecture, the E of Delphi. This makes Joyce's appropriation of it as the 'E' of Earwicker, his nickname for Giambattista Vico, and the coincidental role of the ear in psychoanalysis, even more provocative. In both cases, understanding ("science") is based on the resonance afforded by accumulated detail and the role, in all "treasuries" of the Other, the missing signifier.
14. [Wheeler 2000]. This article cites the work of University of Maryland Prof. Mark Leone and archaeologist Jessica Neuwirth, of the Historic Annapolis Foundation, on the Brice House.
15. The Yoruba practice of constructing cosmograms is not so unusual if one includes, in this family of sympathetic magic practices, Hopi mandalas, therapeutic circular dances of the choruses in ancient Greek theater, or even the geometry of the Federal Mall in Washington, D.C.

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Donald Kunze has taught architecture theory and general arts criticism at Penn State University since 1984. He studied architecture at N. C. State University (B.Arch.) and received his Ph.D. in cultural geography in 1983. His articles and lectures have engaged a range of topics dealing with the “poetic” dimensions of experience. His book *Thought and Place: The Architecture of Eternal Places in the Philosophy of Giambattista Vico* (New York, Peter Lang, 1987) studied the operation of metaphoric imagination and memory in landscape, architecture, and art. As a Shogren Foundation Fellow, he developed a system of dynamic notation that adopted the non-numerical calculus of George Spencer Brown. As the 2003 Reyner Banham Fellow at the Department of Architecture at the University at Buffalo, he extended the calculus to a “screen theory,” a graphical approach to problems of the boundary in art, architecture, film, and geographical imagination. As the 2008 Nadine Carter Russell Visiting Chair at Robert Reich School of Landscape Architecture at LSU, he applied boundary language theory to the problem of the surrealist garden, involving film theory, topography, and the phenomenon of the death narrative.