

## CRISS-CROSS METHODOLOGY

The point of abbreviating the logic behind the four 'discursive' bases of fantasy constructions so that they can in turn be discovered in and related to popular culture conditions is to realize a methodology that accommodates the conditions of polysemy, self-reference, and other 'non-Boolean' conditions that fantasy involves. This methodology is a condensation of a condensation and, as such, dauntingly brief. But, each research condition requires for a unique means of elaboration, so anything more than a skeleton methodology would quickly be substituted by a fleshier, more applicable adaptation. The short form is the only form. Elaboration in the face of a specific topical condition is the necessary second step, not given here except as a generic potentiality.

### 1. REAL: where death $\neq$ life

*The relation of life to death stands for any 'incommensurability' condition, where an attempt to relate the terms through some 'transitive' formulation results in a contradiction. For life/death, the contradiction lies in the negative status of death yet the 'counter-inscription' of death into life and life into death, via fantasy.*

### 2. FANTASY: separation $\Leftrightarrow$ anxiety

*This second step can be empirically demonstrated in most cultural conditions where a boundary separates something positive from something non-existent. The experience of death is Real but resists symbolization. It is therefore the boundary condition that is treated in terms of 'a', the Lacanian object-cause of desire, understanding that desire is the desire of the Other and not a 'personal adaptation' without cultural reference. Desire is the basis of the distinction between separation (absence motifs) and anxiety (presence motifs).*

### 3. $\neg$ LIFE DEATH $\Leftrightarrow$ DEATH LIFE

DA  $\Leftrightarrow$  AD

*The counter-inscription of the uncanny can be applied to other situations where the intransitive boundary condition applies. This avoids the (self-contradictory) practice of resorting to a new, vague term to take over the fact of incommensurability/intransitivity (such as 'the sacred' or 'sense of place'). The new term simply displaces and postpones the problem.*

### 4. D || A $\Leftrightarrow$ A || D

*The gap/double-boundary is the proper focus of research, since it is 'a' as such that facilitates fantasy; the forms of fantasy are not in question except as correlates of ethnographic or pop culture practices.*

### 5. cf. || $\rightarrow$ a

Previous documents, including the 'cheat sheets' relating theory of discourse to the Aristotelian causes, are essential in understanding the methodological implications of the criss-cross. The intention is to create a consistent critical network within which research can activate topics that, though they involve 'recursive' (self-referential) elements and themes, can articulate meaningful goals, narratives, and conclusions. A methodology is by its nature a series of steps. Criss-cross methodology confronts the issue of the intransitive boundary as central to human experience, found in a variety of forms. The 'uncanny' is helpful in understanding the cultural and historical contexts of such boundaries. The criss-cross methodology and its uncanny heritage necessitate a model of a divided knowledge base: one favoring the study of 'objective subjects', another favoring 'subjective objects'. This is not an attempt at poetic inversions but a response to the fundamental role of division/boundary itself: it is the act of dividing, rather than the results, that is determinative.

**Quoting from 'The Basic Crisscross':** 'The creation of 'two kinds of knowledge' is consistent with the divided path of fantasy, and its commitments to identity/authenticity (Freud's 'identity') and semblance (Freud's 'optics'). Metonymy's use of affordance, adjacency, etc. is the poetic method of parataxis and the general 'narrative' structure of the humanities. Metaphor's creation of picture-like representations relies on a screen model, a semblance/disguise mode. Motifs and paradigms may be withdrawn at this level to recombine at the level of popular culture, the arts, literature, etc., following the relationships determined by metonymy and metaphor or, respectively, artifact and representation'.

In his 'graph of desire', Jacques Lacan articulates the necessity of two chains of signifiers, one devoted to the conscious mind, the other to the unconscious.<sup>1</sup> The former is metaphoric, the latter metonymic; it is easy to see that also metaphor is a matter of affordances and adjacencies (tuchē) while the latter is radically 'automatic'. But, Lacan used the idea of double inscription to describe 'the ultimate inseparability of unconscious motivations from conscious ones'. Our 'short circuit' for this complex idea and its even more complex graph is the inside frame, which inscribes the antipodal point (e.g. death into life) not simply but doubly, inside a frame that creates a space between the antipodal point and its host domain. This space allows for an autonomy of presence/absence, as in the case of Panopticism, where just such a frame is inserted into the penal space of a ring of prison cells. The inside frame (left column, step 4) is the basis of the (1) conversion of the

<sup>1</sup> "The Subversion of the Subject and the Dialectic of Desire in the Freudian Unconscious," *Écrits*.

QED: The double bound IS the Lacanian 'a', but don't tell others; they are not prepared for this term.

6.  $\Leftrightarrow = \$$

*The subject and subjectivity is defined precisely by the double bound, which cannot be directly symbolized but only 'experienced' in ways that resist representation. The resistance per se can be explored. It is the subject's misrecognition and inability to fit within networks of symbolic relations that is the material of research.*

7.  $D \parallel A \text{ AND/OR } A \parallel D = S2$

(i.e. S2 has 'two modes')

*The subject is related to two modes through fantasy: anxiety and separation. This directs the subject to 'sources' — i.e. cultural repositories of dreams, narratives, projections, etc. that substitute for the lack of access to the real cause of trauma, namely the 'lack of access' itself.*

8.  $S2's \text{ two modes} = S1$

*Because the two modalities, anxiety and separation, are not 'equivalent' in any way (i.e. they are not complementary, or two parts of a whole, or minus/plus versions of each other), the 'management system' that determines the economy by which meanings can be circulated in the face of these obstacles is S1, a 'master signifier'. This is the primary goal of research — to discover and articulate the master signifier, in all its 'contradictoriness'.*

10.  $S2_a$  — 'anxiety'; metaphor; tuchē (master, hysteria), Ad.

$S2_b$  — 'separation'; metonymy; automaton (analysis, university), DA.

*Metaphor modalities and their relation to neurology and ethnography can be helpful in unpacking master signification. At the level of the subject per se, behavior, personal belief, and aspects of tuchē and automaton can be used to play out (scholarly) analysis.*

'natural' or transitive condition to one of orthogonal/independent relationship, such as the 'magic' role of shadows conceived by folklore (i.e. that the shadow or soul can move about on its own); and (2) the 'contamination' or interference of the independent natural element with its original cause. Using the shadow example, the subject now 'hosts' its shadow rather than simply producing it through the natural laws of illumination. Like any host/guest situation, as evident in the roots of terms for hospitality (host, hostile, ghost, geist, etc.) the guest is 'doubly inscribed' within the host, evident in the customs related to hospitality. That is, space is made within which the guest is permitted a certain autonomy of presence and absence, of desire and demand.

This methodology, derived from the criss-cross logic of double inscription, offers escape routes at a number of points along a given line of inquiry. The history of the uncanny, its relation to neuroscience, literature, optics, ideology, etc. allow the researcher to branch out to an example in popular culture or scholarship at almost any point. The trick is to balance the 'exogamous' method of involving many heterogeneous sources with an 'endogamous' procedure that uses only a single tradition or line of examples and sources. Without some exogamy, research will become esoteric within a set of special terms used by a particular discipline. Without some endogamy, the relation to 'traditional' questions valued by a discipline will erode, leaving the research without a critical audience.

'Wild theory' (i.e. complete exogamy) can succeed but typically its authors have achieved 'authenticity' in some prior way, or rely on a reputation of celebrity. Conservative discipline-based theory runs the risk of becoming trivial, forgotten, and superseded by competitive, newer work. Durable research must incorporate materials or methods that resist being appropriated, even if there is a concurrent risk of being misunderstood or even misunderstandable.

The uncanny itself is a topic that is almost completely resistant to assimilation; to understand Freud or Lacan well is to recognize that their theory has drawn from this to, itself, being resistant to assimilation. Lacan was notorious for his 'opaque' language and ideas. Freud's durability was simply falsified by psychoanalysts who realized that the mystery had to be 'gotten rid of' if they were to profit professionally from Freudian ideas.

A method is something shared, so any methodology must regard the social aspect of theory from the beginning. Discourse is ultimately discourse about discourse. Critical theory is ultimately community based, just as the Platonic dialogs are essentially inter-subjectivity in its pure form. As with the dialogs, the container engages the logic of the contained. Plato's classic topics, justice, truth, etc., are 'doubly inscribed' within the dialogs' dramatic framework, without whose 'enunciation' (level of the unconscious) any statement (level of consciousness) would be impossible. As in Borges' story, 'Tlön, Uqbar, Orbis Tertius', all knowledge involves an implicit conspiracy, where learners assume the identity of avatars and disappear within their costumes and signs.