



Donald Kunze <kunze767@gmail.com>

today's "VIRTUAL SESSION" of the metalepsis seminar

1 message



Metalepsis Seminar / Virtual Session 1

metalepsis seminar / WAAC / 20 September 2013

HERE IS WHAT YOU WILL HAVE TO BE HAPPY WITH ... A "VIRTUAL SESSION" OF THE METALEPSIS SEMINAR:

Some points:

1. Emergence will always complicate the interpretation project because it revolutionizes relations of the signifier to other signifiers and to itself.
2. The signifying chain, in any event, must be artificially cut short or compromised in any act of interpretation. Meanings are cut off from any extensive resonance within the chain, thanks to frames imposed (usually) by ideology. Note: neurosis imposes the same limitations, in order to produce the symptom ("sinthome" in Lacanese).
3. Unlimited semiosis (allowing the signifying chain to continue unabridged) is regarded as a pathological condition for ideology as well as neurosis, but psychosis identifies with it (hence, the projects of unlimited semiosis such as James Joyce's *Finnegans Wake* or Giambattista Vico's *The New Science*). Both Vico and Joyce were functional psychotics — artists who, in realizing their own "melancholia" connections to the signifier, confronted unlimited semiosis as both a problem and potential wellspring.
4. With unlimited semiosis, which would seem to offer any author a kind of "writing machine" continuously supplying material, insights, etc., the problem is how to conclude or terminate any sequence properly. If stories can't end properly, the internal symmetries can't bring about any "resonance" of meaning that raises the value of "signalizing" over literal signals. This problem necessitates some use of metalepsis, or internal looping, which values fractal-like structures (metonymies and synecdoches — in other words, "details") that import a virtual space-time allowing stories in stories, travel through time, the double, and contamination of the signifying chain.
5. The "problem of the ending" is converted into an advantage by using the artificiality of the break (compare to the "impossibility" of finding the location of the twist in the Möbius band) as the site of metalepsis, where the reader/viewer/audience "sees itself seeing itself." This is like the computer hacker's "worm," which invades unsuspecting computers and combines them into giant meta-computing networks. The audience's collective "brain" is enlisted to serve as the (extorted) unconscious of the artwork. The device of the ending is a portal facilitating this connection.

"TODAY'S VIRTUAL SESSION ASSIGNMENT" (meaning any time you can get around to it): Begin to think about emergence in the context of the characterizations of George Herriman's long-running comic strip (and a favorite of Marco Francari), *Krazy Kat*. First, **Google Krazy Kat** to get some background. Then, read **Gilbert Seldes' introduction** to see how this strip was "taken seriously" as a work of art, but then go beyond Seldes starting with the metaleptic elements that abound (playing with the frame, mainly). Also there is the primary item of the causal chain. Where the normal chain has it that dog>cat>mouse, Herriman has: dog>mouse>cat>dog. This is as weird as Lacan's Borromeo knot! You can find plenty of metaleptical elements but you should at first ENJOY the comic strip for its weird playfulness, and there are **quite a few facsimile reprints** out there that I invite you to

find and share.

I am "moving up" the issue of Krazy Kat, which had been reserved for later study, because the issue of interpretation weighs so heavily on your minds. The Kat demonstrates that mis-interpretation is a part of the hysteric's bag of tricks, and that misinterpretation is key to the phenomenon of emergence and open semiosis. Just pronouncing these words may present a challenge at this point, but soon you will be talking Krazy. After *Mulholland Drive*, you should also be dreaming Krazy, and we will talk about the death dream at our next session.

The [study sheet on Krazy Kat](#) is thick and hard to grasp at this point, but I include it so that you can get a head start. It is a pleasant way to be confused, whereas *Mulholland Drive* was perhaps an unpleasant way, unless you fall in love with the Club Silencio for some reason. (I am always moved by [Rebeka del Rio](#)'s rendition of her own Spanish language version of "Cryin' (written by Roy Orbison), 'Llorando'.")

You already have some other thick materials to digest, as per the [last essay on emergence\(y\)](#) and the [session newsletter number 4](#).

au revoir ...



Don Kunze

PhD / Prof of Architecture and Integrative Arts, Emeritus

web: art3idea.psu.edu