metalepsis master guide ("the calculus")

A "master guide" in Lacanian terms is a cruel joke if not an outright impossibility. This is, rather, a guide to the use of metalepsis in, among other things, Hegel’s parable of the master and the servant, which makes Hegel, as Žižek put it, a “the ultimate thinker of autopoiesis, of the process of the emergence of necessary features out of chaotic contingency, the thinker of contingency’s gradual self-organization, of the gradual rise of order out of chaos.” Well, this also means that metalepsis is the inner logic of autopoiesis (“aw-to-PEE-i-sis”) and is able to show the involvements of diegesis/mimesis, cross-inscription, reversed predication, and (Lacanian) extimity as well. To master anything involves the ability to take it up from any angle, with pieces missing, in contexts that elude definition. The aim of this guide is to condense the logic of metalepsis into an economical set of terms whose graphic actions are able to show "what’s happening" and at the same time suggest links to other contexts and vocabularies. We start with Gérard Genette’s useful limitation of metalepsis as a violation of a mimetic field by the structures or occupants set apart from that field by the function of diegesis — establishing a “point of view.”

Detachment of the observer is central to Western thinking and theory. Reattachment is a specialty of folklore, the uncanny, and the literature of the fantastic, where we can be harmed by someone attacking our photograph (semblance magic) or our stolen scarf or tie (contagious magic). The overlap of this highly logical phenomenon with religion and magic points to culture’s extensive engagement with the uncanny in general. To define architecture as a “site of exception” rather than as a compliance with the demands of clients, codes, and materials gets to the heart of how venustas is different from utilitas and firmitas. Thanks to the key relation to Eros, venustas is fundamentally demonic, fundamentally exceptional. Architecture in short is not the same as building, although it is both within and a part of building. Metalepsis also offers insight into the fragile construction of political sites amidst the demands of ideology. Without expanding too quickly into a Theory of Everything, the calculus of seven or so terms pauses to consider how the exception might both break and make the rule.

reversed predication …

A process of “turning the tables,” where the (smaller, contained) part takes over control of the whole that contained it. This is most easily demonstrated by figure-ground reversal, where the void is seen as a solid, or in anamorphosis, where what seemed to be a blur or stain becomes an image, throwing the rest of the composition out of focus.

Calculus Notation: A>B becomes B>A, or A>B  and A<B: A<>B.

horizontal vs. vertical …

The point of view takes up a “vertical” perspective on a “horizontal” sequence of places and events. Experience takes place, metaphorically, inside the horizontal and, from that
position, imagines that it is controlled by vertical forces, which also constitute a “just before” and a “just after.”

*Calculus Notation*: vertical elements A and B “frame” a horizontal series of events, places, or things: A<…>B.

**sequentiality** ...

A process of reversal, where the (smaller, contained) part takes over control of the whole that contained it. This is most easily demonstrated by figure-ground reversal, where the void is seen as a solid, or in anamorphosis, where what seemed to be a blur or stain becomes an image, throwing the rest of the composition out of focus.

*Calculus Notation*: < ... >. The series, as series, involves a sequence of reversed predications: < → >.

**diegesis/mimesis** ...

Diegesis includes all framing operations to establish a point of view “at a distance from” some imaginary sequence of events, actions, or things (mimesis). The distinction of diegesis and mimesis (Gérard Genette) is a set-up for the collapse of this distinction in the rhetorical figure of metalepsis, but first a boundary must keep the two elements separate.

*Calculus Notation*: diegesis (<> frames mimesis (...): < ... >

**master/slave (Hegel)** ...

Hegel’s parable about mastery involves the metalepsis whereby the superiority of the master becomes an inferiority, when the master realizes his dependence, in matters of honor and not just service, on the servant. “Slave” is used to indicate that the servant has no will or language of his/her own, but is an automaton — but an automaton that will gain power.

*Calculus Notation*: the master’s superiority A>B becomes the slave’s advantage, B>A. A<>B is Hegel’s *Aufhebung* (preservation through negation) and the mimetic sequence, <...>, involves the servants reversed predications of nature, nature>human → human>nature, also “nature<...>human.”

**Great Chain of Being** ...

The sequence of reversed predications can be modeled as a universal, with a deity at the top of things and mute substance, without any will, at the bottom. In between, layers of “reversed predications,” each being ruled by some superior element and, in turn, ruling an element below, constitute a hierarchical (vertically organized) order.

*Calculus Notation*: God<>matter, with <...> as a sequence of hierarchical relationships. The metalepsis of the Great Chain takes the form of miracles, omens, etc. The reversed predication of God<>matter points to the “automaton” nature of miracles as well as the theological nature of machines.
cross inscription ...

This is the basis of the “two poles of the uncanny” (Ernst Jentsch), the living subject drawn mechanically to an inevitable encounter with death (A₀), symmetrically balanced by the momentum of the dead subject beyond the moment of literal death (D₀), the interval known as “between the two deaths,” the actual death and symbolic death. A and D “crisscross,” each appearing as a void at the center of the other, a process akin to interpellation by ideology (Louis Althusser).

*Calculus Notation:* A>D and D>A become A<>D. A and D appear in each other as phenomena, ϕ, that combine the negative in positive appearance: ϕ/-ϕ (hence, Hegel’s *Aufhebung*, the uncanny, reversed predication, and detached virtuality).

the ϕ phenomenon ...

The ϕ stands for “phenomenal” (appearing) but also the invisible glue that holds appearances together, as in “the ϕ phenomenon.” The expression, ϕ/-ϕ, notates the combination of reversed predicates, <>, that appear as “miraculous” and “exceptional” within a sequence, <…>, in the process of metalepsis. Thus, ϕ/-ϕ is also the collapse of the dimensionality constructing the detached point of view of diegesis and the hallmark of “detached virtuality” (forms: the double, travel through time, contamination of reality by the dream, the story inside the story).

*Calculus Notation:* A<>B becomes ϕ<>-ϕ, “estimated” as ϕ><-ϕ and appearing in the sequenced field as an “inside frame.”

sorites ...

The sorites is a logical puzzle, a “pile” that inheres in every part (the proposition that a single grain of sand is still a “pile of sand”). The part-whole relationship engages the logic of metalepsis. The grain is a pile before any other grain is added; so the collective idea is “already there” and cannot be removed as grains are taken away. George Spencer-Brown describes this as a logic of reversed predication. The sorites is useful in describing how sequencing is always a case of “delayed” predication and delayed reversed predication. (“The other shoe is waiting to drop.”)

*Calculus Notation:* <…> is always <>→>. The sequence, ..., is always <> and, potentially, ><, a “site of exception.”

site of exception ...

Within any sequence/field (horizontal experience) an “inside frame” can open up that interrupts the vertically imposed (ideological) order. This takes place with a recognition of interpellation, both as a *past event* and a *location*. The negation/preservation of the element inscribed at the heart of the subject/subjectivity can be opened up dimensionally by a collective imagination via detached virtuality.
Calculus Notation: $\psi/-\phi$, interpellation inside the horizontal field, $<...>$ retains the ability to restore a “prior order,” $A$, along with an automation of destiny, $B$, as in $A<...>B$.

venustas/demon ...

In Lucretius’s materialism, “atoms” flow evenly through a void, “horizontally.” They are held in place by a vertical order that coordinates their even, parallel flow. This can be interrupted by clinamen,” a swerve, that is akin to consciousness and, hence, diegetic formation of a point of view. In terms of horizontal indifference, this is a demonic counter-force that pushes back against vertical ordering, which before this point had operated invisibly. In Vitruvian terms, the even flow is maintained by the equal but opposed polarities of *utilitas* and *firmitas*, function and material structure. *Venustas*, or “Eros,” appears to this horizontal regime as a vertical “demon.”

Calculus Notation: horizontal order, Lucretius’s “even flow of atoms,” $<...>$ is invisibly ordered by vertical coordinating forces. These are brought into consciousness only when “demonically” opposed by *venustas*, as $\psi/-\phi$.

Lacan: extimity (extimité) ...

Subjectivity and objectivity, for Lacan, are functions of the cross-inscription of interiority and exteriority. Objects reveal their “topological identities” when they are “out of place,” i.e. as “subjective objects” (the Freudian “Thing,” the Lacanian “partial object”—breast, feces, phallus, gaze, voice) or “objective subjects” (the unconscious as automaton). Topology, normally invisible within the horizontal perceptual/symbolic field, $<...>$, appears as a “site of exception” when brought to light, i.e. permanently uncanny.

Calculus Notation: $A>B$ is estimated as $B>A$ (reversed predication). The expression $A<>B$ is a model for fantasy ($\Diamond a$) and the unconscious, as $\psi/-\phi$ appears within the horizontal field as a site of exception, subjective objects or objective subjects. Detached virtuality is always involved.

Rancière: dissensus ...

*Disensus* ("disagreement") is the opposite of ideology, where *consensus* is imposed. The calculus shows that *disensus* is always materialized, through detached virtuality, as a “site of exception,” demonic (venustas) within the horizontal field. Ideology, previously invisible, is made visible (for the first time) through the “counter-action” of *disensus*. The horizontal order then is seen to embody directly the framing elements that had ordered it.

Calculus Notation: *venustas* and ideology are coupled, as $\psi/-\phi$, appearing in the horizontal field as sited exception.

ideology vs. political ...

Because ideology uses interpellation (cross-inscription) it remains (vertically) invisible/unconscious until countered by the “venustas” of the political. The political is thus always a matter of “affiliation,” but also affiliation is revealed to be a feminine (no
exceptions) rather than a masculine (based on one exception) logic. The “not-all” of the Lacanian feminine is embodied in the $\phi/-\phi$ that appears as a site of exception within the predication field, $\langle...\rangle$. The gap, ‘/’, involves the process of sexuation.

_Calculus Notation:_ $\phi/-\phi$ reveals ‘/’ as sexuation, re-engineering the (masculine) process of political af-fil-iation as feminine. The entire horizontal predication field (cf. “sorites”) is feminine.

**detached virtuality** ...

Virtuality ordered vertically (Cartesian space and time) aims at contiguity and continuity. This guarantees that the “hidden sides” will be revealed if the field is rotated (POV constant, as in digital virtuality) or explored (field constant, as in narratives of travel). Sites of exception interrupt this continuity through metalepsis, a collapse of the distance required by Cartesian framing. Detached virtuality thus takes forms using themes of its original attachments and insulations guaranteeing the integrity of the field of predication, $\langle...\rangle$.

_Calculus Notation:_ $\langle...\rangle$ is homogeneous, the vertical is invisible until opposed by the “demonic” exception, taking form as a “detached virtuality,” $\phi/-\phi$.

**the master signifier** ...

Žižek characterizes the Lacanian master signifier as a substitution of effects for causes, as in the example of the shark in the Spielberg film, _Jaws_. One could simply say that the master signifier is a case of reversed predication, but the implications are that reversed predication is then a basis for a revised order of the whole (horizontal) field of remaining predications, i.e. an “inside frame.”

_Calculus Notation:_ $A<>B$ becomes $A><B$. As $\phi/-\phi$ the master signifier is a “material universal,” Vico’s “imaginative universal” (universale fantastico).

**Aristotelian causality**

The problem has been, for Aristotle’s account of causality, how to incorporate the two types of accident, “natural” (automaton) and _tuchē_ (human affordance) with the classical set of four (efficient, final, formal, and material). The calculus allows us to explore the aspect of causality (which for Lacan is really a causal _chain_) in terms of metalepsis. Thanks to Lacan’s distinction of enunciation as an act and énoncé, content, we can divide the mimetic content of efficient cause from the “remainder” of desire (the _objet petit a_) and re-assign this ‘a’ as the agent of metalepsis. Within the predicative filed, final cause (intentionality), with its remainder of _tuchē_ (affordance), reversely predicates to the coupled causes, formal and material. Material cause, MC, is the “uncausing cause” just as efficient cause, EC, was the “uncaused cause”: EC$\langle...\rangle$MC. The predicating field is metaleptically “invaded” by $\phi/-\phi$ in the forms of chance, automaton, and exception.

_Calculus Notation:_ $A<>B$ estimated as $A><B$, in metalepsis creates a double condition, $\phi/-\phi$, materialized commonly as chance or fate. Efficient cause’s remainder, $a$, combined with material cause’s resistance to causality to render _automata_ that use _tuchē_ as its medium.
the story in the story ...

The audience sees a fictional version of its own spectatorship, “from the side” (i.e. rotated 90° so that reception and production are simultaneously visible). This is also a travel through time, since any double violates the rule that “you can’t be in two places at the same time.” The story in the story’s concentric structure reveals the congruity between “nestedness” and the predicative field, which is a series of reversed predications that “nest” successive conditions within each other, like the Russian matryoshka doll.

Calculus Notation: A<>B contains itself, as A<...ab...>B, bringing about the uncanny effect of ϕ/-ϕ, an internal mirror, an “inside frame.”

time travel ...

The audience “interrupts” the mimetic sequence, identifying its own framing position with the “just before” at the opening of the film, story, or play. This co-implicates the close of the frame with a “just after,” making the diegetic frame a narrative order that embodies its own breakdown with any instance of metalepsis.

Calculus Notation: A<>B becomes the temporal “just before,” <, and “just after,” >. Any case of ϕ/-ϕ will also be an interruption of <...> as a temporal sequence.

contamination by dreams ...

The most commonly recognized form of insulation of the predication field from its framing elements is the exclusion of dreams from everyday reality. A coincidental correlation of a dream or a déjà vu experience breaks down the insulation that keeps the “automaton” of the dream from contaminating the seeming “free choice” of reality.

Calculus Notation: A<...>B becomes A<...ab...>B. The ‘ab’ always seems to be vertical, i.e. from an imagined demonic “below.”

the double ...

With the story in the story, the audience sees a fictional version of its own spectatorship, “from the side” (i.e. rotated 90° so that reception and production are simultaneously visible). This is also a travel through time, since any double violates the rule that “you can’t be in two places at the same time.” The double institutes a magic condition that can be carried out through either semblance magic (such as the Voodoo doll) or contagious magic (actions made on some object stolen from the subject). Thus, the double—as is the case for all forms of detached virtuality—engages and defines “contiguity” and “semblance” functions of the brain.

Calculus Notation: A<>B estimated as A><B, in metalepsis creates a double condition, ϕ/-ϕ, materialized commonly as twins/doubles.
Las Meninas

Some works of art qualify as “meta-works,” and often this is due to their use of metalepsis. Such is the case with Diego Velázquez’s famous Las Meninas, which problematically includes a self-portrait of the artist as well as a mirror at the back of the portrayed room originally located the Alcazar Palace. The mirror appears to reflect the King and Queen of Spain, who must have been standing in the doorway to this room at the time of the painting, which appears to be an “exact instant,” anticipating the technology of photography. Instead, the mirror actually reflects what is on the canvas whose back is turned to the present-day viewer. But, since Velázquez appears to be in the process of constructing a double portrait of the King and Queen, the reflection is “delayed.” A further delay — and a different kind of delay — is introduced by the fact that Velázquez technically must have been standing in precisely the same space, a “site of exception” par excellence.

Calculus Notation: The painting appears to be a case of A<...>B, with A as the King and Queen (and present-day viewer) and B the artist who “only paints what he sees.” This is complicated by the mirror, which works as both an inside frame, ><, and a radical anamorph converting every detail of how we imagine the painting was constructed, the sequentiality of the sequence/sorites of reversed predcitions by which the seen S, is converted to a painted image, P, S>P → P>S. Double inscription of S and P, S_p and P_s, yield an uncanny result, condensed by the mirror’s “delay” in reflecting the contemporary occupants of the doorway to the room: ϕ/¬ϕ.

The Ambassadors

Hans Holbein’s famous double portrait of two 16c. gentlemen, thought to be ambassadors, contains an anamorphic blur that, viewed from a 27° angle, is realized to be a skull. This angle completes another line drawn to the horizon from a crucifix at the upper left of the painting, and the resulting isosceles triangle involves the viewer who “finds” the skull, at the expense of casting the rest of the painting into an anamorphic blur, also in possession of the key to the overly precise date on the reverse of the canvas: April 11, 1533, 4 pm. Numerology points consistently to the dominance of 9. The 27° angle is 3x3x3, 1500 is three “eras” of 500 years each, 33 is 3x11, the legendary age of Christ at the time of crucifixion, and there are 9 “tiles” by which the painting constructs meaning.

Calculus Notation: The painting’s mimetic A<...>B is deconstructed by the over-precise date, which sets up the anamorphic reading of the portrait through a ϕ/¬ϕ uncanny inscription of fate (D) within the life (A) of the ambassadors: A_D. The inside frame, ><, is the anamorphic skull that appears as a 27° tilted blur, setting up one side of the isosceles triangle including the crucifix (A<>B as a murder of God), the horizon (the sun was exactly 27° above the horizon at 4 pm on April 11 in London in 1533 — the precise moment of the predicted Apocalypse), and the viewer, who must be located 27° below the horizon to view the skull, A<>B as Viewer<>Viewed.

Rear Window

In this famous 1954 film, Alfred Hitchcock used a single set constructed at Universal Studios. An action photographer with a broken leg (Jefferies) undergoes a convalescence in
his studio apartment set in New York City. His interior urban courtyard offers him entertaining views of neighbors, one of whom (Thorwald) seems to have murdered his wife. Jefferies also has a problem with the marriage idea; his girlfriend Lisa Freemont wants him to settle down, but that seems to him to be worse than his current immobility. Jefferies vindicates his carrier as a non-intrusive voyeur (residents display themselves, thanks to a heat-wave that forces them to open their curtains) as well as his relation to marriage as he investigates Thorwald as a “story in a story” (Thorwald’s apartment is “rotated” 90° in relation to Jefferies’). But, Jefferies’ invisibility as the POV character and Thorwald’s invisibility as a murderer are collapsed in the final scenes as Lisa breaks into Thorwald’s apartment to find the wedding ring of the absent/dead Anna Thorwald. Thorwald sees Lisa “signalize” to Jefferies, determines the location of Jefferies studio apartment, and runs around the block to kill him. Jefferies delays Thorwald’s advances by blinding him temporarily with flash-bulbs.

Calculus Notation: The A<...>B structure is a literal picture of the set as an urban courtyard. Jefferies (A) is diegetically outside even though in the film we can visit him and see inside his studio apartment. Thorwald, B, is outside thanks to his concealment of his wife’s murder. Thorwald is watched rather than watching, thanks to Jefferies’ invisibility and optical superiority: A>B. The tables are turned, B>A, however, when Thorwald discovers Jeff’s location. Anamorphosis occurs throughout the film, in the transformation of random happening into clues that “automate” Thorwald’s eventual capture.

Vertigo

Hitchcock’s 1957 film, Vertigo, was a box-office failure, but its structure, vis à vis reversed predication and detached virtuality, was exquisite. Was this failure pointing to the necessity to keep “topology” out of sight while its phenomena are allowed to develop suspense and surprise in the “projective” field of predication? The topology was possibly too much in evidence with the direct use of a double (Madeleine/Judy) to condition Scottie, the detective retired after a traumatic brush with death (cf. Jefferies convalescence after a similar trauma) to be the ideal witness in the trial declaring Madeleine’s death to be suicide. The film’s two distinct parts (1, Scottie’s deception; 2, Scottie’s discovery) are fundamentally a reversed predication: 1>2, 2>1. The predicking field in between this <>, <...>, is a series of events with double structures. First, Madeleine appears to be haunted by her great-grandmother, Carlotta Valdez. Second, Scottie finds Madeleine’s look-alike and tries to remake her to resemble his lost love. The >> of this <> occurs when Scottie finds the jewel Judy had been supplied by the evil industrialist/wife-killer (again, cf. Rear Window’s wife-killer, Thorwald), to impersonate the wife haunted by her ancestor. Because the jewel is a true anamorph, $\phi/\phi$, it implicates the original diegetic elements, 1 and 2, deception and discovery, as “master signifiers” that have, through extimation, become the inside frame. The “site of exception” appears almost literally, as the monastery where Madeleine, then Judy, meet their deaths. The stair-tower/belfry is filmed “anamorphically” to directly convey Scottie’s vertigo, and the film’s.

Calculus Notation: The deception involves Elster, the evil industrialist acquaintance, fooling Scottie: E>S. This is the first part of the film, involving Scottie’s deception, F
(for Fool). The second part, involving Scottie’s discovery, D. F>D in the first half, F>D in the second. The Fool plays the “ignorant master” — the master detective. The “slave” is the plot automated against him, invisible in Part 1. The evidence, D, lies outside the predicating field, making Scottie see only the illusions planned for him by Elster: E>D>F>S. But F>D, so a potential exception is created, ><, which later emerges as the jewel Judy saves from her “experience.”

**empirical science**

One standard procedure in the social sciences involves administering questionnaires to subjects with an eye to harvesting the responses statistically. Nothing could be further from the Lacanian approach to subjectivity, with its commitment to the “clinic” (observed evidence of neuroses, psychoses, and perversions) and the examination of psychoanalysis. The questionnaire does reveal, however, a curious confirming example of empiricism’s inherent “ideological” paradigm. The questioner allows the questioned subject “free choice” in selecting response, although in most questionnaires responses are subtly guided by wording and placement of questions. The questioner-scientist then “questions” the choices to show how, in fact, they are determined in ways unrealized by the conscious subject of interrogation. The calculus reveals the ideology implicit in this form of research, as well as the presuppositions it contains; but by consideration of the nature of exception, $\phi^-\phi$, it becomes possible to adjust the model to allow the exception a more prominent role (cf. the “pitch drop experiment”).

*Calculus Notation:* The researcher asks the subject, S, to respond voluntarily in relation to represented material: S>M. The researcher then regards the M as “data” for analysis M>D. The data lies outside the field of predications, just as the researcher declares him/herself objectively independent: R<…[S>M]…>D. The data is then “automated” to show hidden patterns. The researcher is reversely predicated by the data, D>R, that is, obliged to accept its automated messages. The challenge of this form of research lies in distinguishing “good noise” (anomalies that lead to paradigm adjustments) from “bad noise” (artifacts). These appear as anamorphic couplings: $\phi^-\phi$. Their placement within the predicating field constitutes a site of exception.

**acousmatics**

The case for the acousmatic voice is squarely central to the distinction between poetry and “ordinary speech” (if such exists). With the functionality commonly assigned as language’s chief purpose, problems are posed from the point of view of the correspondence theory of meaning, where words are seen to designate things, persons, conditions, etc. in the empirical world. Beginning from this assumption, all other functionalities are seen as peripheral and/or problematic. The calculus however reveals a key relationship bonding poetic “resonance” to the center of language as both performance and “content,” again recalling Lacan’s distinction between enunciation—as—act and the contents of speech, énoncé. The calculus recalls Saussure’s basic position *vis à vis* Plato’s famous dialog on language’s status as mimetic sound. The contrast of the indicative gesture and the mimetic gesture (Cassirer), as a “root condition” of human expression and thought, constitute the polar terms between which predication — the “chain of signifiers” Lacan characterized as
“sliding past” each other — miniaturizes and hold forever pregnant the poetic potentiality of not just sounds and words but failures, errors, omissions, and surpluses. Hence, poetry is to language what the unconscious is to thought.

*Calculus Notation:* The primary matheme for language is $M<\ldots>S$, where sound, $S$, is used to express meaning, $M$, and where sound is subordinated to that function: $M>S$. In poetry however the potential condition is that sound takes precedence over (at least conventional) meaning, $S>M$. With $M<>S$, the predicate field is opened up a series of reversed predications, where each representative sound is, in turn, the potential basis of a meaning as *sound*; that is, vocalization never loses its ability to signify more than what was intended in the “indicative” mode of representation. For $M$ and $S$ to enter into the predicate field as phenomenal elements, they must be materialized: $M \rightarrow \phi$ and $S \rightarrow -\phi$, the minus sign indicating that, in conventional speech, the role of sound is nominally suppressed. This condition is suspended when the frame of speech allows for the poetic functionality of sound, in which case $\phi/-\phi$ appears within the predicate field, with the *implicit designation* of centrality, void, and negation that makes it an inside frame capable of extimating the chain of signifiers/predicates.

**interrogating the gap**

This idea, hatched by pre-doctor Azita Ranjbar, focuses on the moment between the two positions of reversed predication. In this moment, the hinge focus silently and invisibly manages the switch between the obverse conditions that Lacan elaborated in his account of extimity. The gap, and its smooth functioning, presume a *prior knowledge* of the topology for which the two predications are both equal and simultaneous but not self-annihilating. This prior knowledge is renounced — unconsciously but also ideologically — and/or suppressed (from the point of view of production, as in the case of the magician who pulls off an illusion).

*Calculus Notation:* In the transition from $A>B$ to $B>A$, the gap can be indicated as $<|>$. This invites us to expand it as $<\ldots>$ and identify our “interrogation” with the sequenced materials ($A>B, B>C, C>D \ldots$) that internalize the reversed predication in a “causal chain.” To localize the interrogation, we focus on the $\phi/-\phi$ “anamorphic condition” where a point of view is implicated in the square-wave shift from appearance to disappearance — viz. the action of metalepsis.

**Freud: the game of fort/da**

Observing his grandchild playing after the departure of the mother, Freud realized that the child was thematizing the mother’s loss by throwing a spool from his crib and then retrieving it thanks to a string wound around its middle (*Beyond the Pleasure Principle*, 1920). The child’s expressions in throwing out the spool suggested that loss created a greater and more curious pleasure, a pleasure associated with repetition. Eric Santner notes that this is how the child learns to experience loss, and to identify with it subjectively — an identification that replays the cultural process of structuring the Symbolic not around pleasure but, rather, around the “death drive,” which is not a desire for death literally but, rather, the sum total of forces that resist death through construction of repetition cycles forcing continual encounters with the negative.
*Calculus Notation*: The cycle of metalepsis, by which the “external” bounding elements \(A<\ldots>B\) are inserted within the interior by means of the phallic/phenomenal \(\varphi/\neg\varphi\) can be graphically described as a gapped circle, always returning activity to a fixed, empty gap. This gap resists any attempt to fill it with contents, thus remaining open and fueling the next cycle of return.

**the military (crista?)**

Main text

*Calculus Notation*: text.

**jar in tennessee**

Main text

*Calculus Notation*: text.