

ANNIHILATING AN ANACYCLIC

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The Fundamental Theorem of the Universal Palindrome Machine

Like everything else (except space-time, sentience, and energy), letter-unit palindromes more than one word long are susceptible of being broken down into their component elements. This is accomplished in accordance with an invariable rule. Let us take as our analysandum A MAN A PLAN A CANAL PANAMA.

First, we examine the words that begin and end the palindrome and choose the longer. This is PANAMA. We next examine its reversal, A MAN A P, note where spaces occur, and introduce slashes at the equivalent points in PANAMA. Carrying this word off to a list (call it List 1) where it is noted, we reverse it and write the reversal opposite, in List 2. So:

1. P/A/NAM/A

2. A/MAN/A/P

Returning to the example palindrome, we strike out all letters to the right of the first slash in P/A/NAM/A. We then remove an equal number of letters from the opposite end. We are thus left with the torso PLAN A CANAL P.

We proceed as before, selecting the longest word, processing it, and conveying it to the two lists, leaving LAN A CANAL. These words are in turn dismembered and stricken from the palindrome. Annihilation (or, if you prefer, analysis) is complete. Our two lists contain the palindromic elements or atoms

1.
 P/A/NAM/A
 P/LAN
 C/A/NAL

2.
 A/MAN/A/P
 NAL/P
 LAN/A/C

which may be more elegantly displayed in the form

A/MAN/A/P	P/A/NAM/A
P/LAN	NAL/P
LAN/A/C-----C/A/NAL	

I call the palindromic atom a "chunk". This term is Janus-faced, for it describes both a word and its reversal, so the PANAMA example is made up of three chunks.