

Release—(Non-)Origination—Concepts

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Thou Shall Not Create Unto Thyself Any Graven Image, although you know the task is to fill the empty page. From the bottom of your heart, pray to be released from image.

—Derek Jarman, *Blue*¹

In Derek Jarman's *Blue* (1993), a seventy-six-minute 35-mm film devoid of any visual image beyond a deep blue color projected onto a screen, the release prayed for by Jarman accomplishes nothing less than an alteration of the senses: in the context of this film, "to see" does not mean yielding to an index of a thing or an event that is understood as located in a cinematic beyond; rather, it means reorganizing our assumptions about perception and images.² As a film, that is, *Blue* releases us from certain assumptions *about* images—for example, from a narrative theory of the cinematic visual image and a selectional process of cinematic spectatorship. As a consequence, though, and by that same token, *Blue* renders the image otherwise by linking the blue color on the screen with the film's sound track, which includes music, recordings (or simulations) of environmental city sounds, and Jarman's reflections on his films and his own mortality (Jarman was to die of AIDS-related complications just a few months after finishing *Blue* and was already partly blind when he began what was to be his last film). By linking the indexicality of its aural register—the sense, that is, that we are listening to traces and recordings of voices and events that existed before and outside

the film—to its refusal of representation in its visual register, *Blue* engenders a new sense of the image, one that is not intended to represent something else, but instead binds seeing and hearing together in a different way, and as such requires the development of new forms of listening and seeing. In a film that gives nothing to see but blueness, the image materializes as a temporally complex entity that nears the blindness intrinsic to perception itself, and “seeing” becomes an encounter with an opacity that is specific to sight. The apparent visual poverty of Jarman’s film—a poverty that we might take as emblematic of a more widespread strategy in twentieth-century avant-garde film and visual works of art—is thus an attempt to pose two related questions: what *is* an image? And—perhaps more important—what *can* an image be?

These two questions have increasingly emerged as quite central in the last several decades, as it has become a commonplace to insist that “images” played a central role in twentieth-century culture and promise to play an even more powerful role in twenty-first century life and thought. And if one also believes, as Kaja Silverman has insisted, that visuality is our most significant and primary form of ethical engagement with the world, then the continued refinement of image-producing technologies such as photography and cinema, and their dissemination through multiple arenas of life, ranging from leisure activities to war and surveillance technologies, seems to justify claims that modern society is obsessed with and inscribed by spectacles and images.³

Yet Jarman’s film reminds us that our current obsession with images is often implicitly understood in terms of an ocularcentrism that is purported to define selves, networks of forces, ethical relationships, and their media within visual economies that conceptually indenture “life” to the image.⁴ Whether such arguments perform critical analyses of the hegemonic coercion of the society of the spectacle or aim to generate a redemptive “ethics of appearance,” their undercurrent regards the image as the visual key to an understanding of all forms of relationality with the world and with others. The recent rise to prominence of technologies of digitalization has offered possibilities of understanding the image beyond this premise of ocularcentrism, for digital images emphasize the extent to which the indexicality of photographic or cinematic images—the sense of an ontological link between a representation and the “real” objects or actions that it represents—can be produced through manipulation of algorithms. Yet insofar as analyses of the specificity of the digital image are often parsed through a

forensic lens that stresses the deception and *trompe l'oeil* that digitalization makes possible, these attempts to complicate indexicality and representation often end up reaffirming the premise of ocularcentrism rather than expanding the concept of the image.

As a consequence, and despite its apparent ubiquity, “the image” as a category of analysis remains remarkably resistant to theoretical understanding. While cultural critics, new media scholars, and sociologists have cataloged different kinds of images, described the various roles they play in culture, and noted the technological specificity of the media to which images appear to be linked, it is nevertheless often far from clear *what* precisely counts as an image in these studies, and how, or whether, one ought to distinguish images from related terms such as pictures and icons. And even with the multitude of recent attempts to grasp the specificity of the “digital image,” it generally remains unclear how this new world of digital high-tech virtual images relates to earlier modes of non-visual imagery (e.g., the images of poetry and literature).⁵ In order to stake out the specificity of the digital image, in other words, non-digital images are positioned as “simply” representations to which foundation the digital image then adds a supplement or excess.⁶ In this sense, the apparent fate of the image through various contemporary technologies seems to reflect a level of undecidability regarding its dissemination and structure.

Yet as Jacques Rancière has noted in *The Future of the Image*, to speak of a culture of images is to say nothing about what the image, as the center of such a culture, might be. In his own analysis, the very futurity of the concept does not depend upon making any essentializing claims; rather, his point is to foreground an understanding of the various representational regimes that have evoked the “image” as an epistemological, aesthetic, and ethical node of elaboration:

“Image” therefore refers to two different things. There is the simple relationship that produces the likeness of an original: not necessarily its faithful copy, but simply what suffices to stand for it. And there is the interplay of operations that produces what we call art: or precisely an alteration of resemblance.⁷

For Rancière, “image” stands for ever-shifting processes of inscription and articulation: the “sayable and the visible” refer to connections between sight and writing that mutually inform one another. The production of the image implies not that all images are artificially made, but rather that our capaci-

ties for image-making and image-receiving are underwritten by a technicity that relationally unbinds the phenomenological and cognitive subject (13).

By drawing together contributions from the most important contemporary critical theorists, *Releasing the Image: From Literature to New Media* addresses this need to rethink the unbound potentiality of the image. The collective effort of this volume is not oriented toward the illumination of a singular “essence” of all images, but rather toward an examination of the ways in which our epistemological, aesthetic, ethical, and disciplinary concerns might be refocused by considering the image as released from the logic of representationalism, and, in turn, how this release allows us to engage the topics of embodiment, agency, history, and technology differently. The essays included here take up this task by engaging a diversity of objects that range from Cézanne’s painting to new media technologies; historical periods that extend from the Romantic era to the present; and theoretical reference points that run from the work of Walter Benjamin and Maurice Merleau-Ponty to Gilles Deleuze and Henry Darger and Bill Viola. Despite this thematic, historical, and theoretical diversity, the authors included in this volume are guided by a common approach: they understand images as something other than simply representations, simulations, or copies of other things, and interpret them as aesthetic modes of manifestation that can be understood only with reference to both that which becomes visible in the image and that which is simultaneously rendered invisible.

For reasons that we discuss at greater length later, this approach to images owes much to phenomenology, which—through the work of Edmund Husserl, Martin Heidegger, Maurice Merleau-Ponty, and others—has developed tools for the investigation of both the representational and non-representational dimensions of the image. What results is a common conceptualizing of the image as that which contains the unseen in what is visible, the historical in what appears transitory, and the ethical in what seems neutral. This economy between appearance and disappearance, moreover, inscribes the image with a power that in some way resembles Marie-José Mondzain’s theorization of the relationship between the invisible (image) and the visible (icon) that structures the ways in which our lives are defined within a certain culture of the image.⁸ Yet while Mondzain’s argument remains to some extent dependent on a premise of visibility, we concentrate on the phenomenological feature of this economy, which specifically rethinks ocular appeals to the image by taking the *imperceptible* within all forms of sensory

perception to be fundamental to the image's materialization as something that is separable from indexicality.

Thus what is central to this approach is the notion that the image has indeed been released from representational and visual purposes. Relinquished or freed from a dependency on subjectivity, the image's aesthetic existence is produced in the absence of any consequential relationship to the spectator and generates a referentiality that is not so much enclosed or autonomous as it is internally complex, immaterial, and profoundly self-generative. It enacts a virtualization of experience that is not collapsed into the facticity of events themselves. Giorgio Agamben has noted that photography often records an excess beyond what it depicts, a gesture that releases the substance of the photograph from its everydayness, and imbues it with a revelatory potential. In this way, the image is eschatologically released in the sense that every moment (rather than the end of *all* moments) is now invested with a singularity to be grasped as readily as it disappears: "The photograph is always more than an image: it is the site of a gap, a sublime breach between the sensible and the intelligible, between copy and reality, between a memory and a hope."⁹

While intense contemporary interest in "new media" images serves, in a sense, as the point of departure for *Releasing the Image*, this volume also cultivates the belief that the question of the image must be approached through a more extended historical narrative. The question of where to begin such a historical narrative is of course vexed, for as Gottfried Boehm notes, "the image-question is almost as old as European-Mediterranean culture itself."¹⁰ Our volume, however, is guided by the proposition that a recognizably modern approach to the image begins in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. This is perhaps not an entirely surprising proposition, and it certainly echoes those critical narratives that locate in this same period the emergence of various projects and practices of coercion that seek to control the subject through an economy of visualization (and indeed, the apparent ocularcentrism of the Enlightenment is often taken as a sign of what Theodor Adorno and Max Horkheimer famously diagnosed as the period's totalitarian desire for mastery).¹¹ However, we suggest that the emergence in the eighteenth century of aesthetics as a discrete subject of philosophical reflection provoked a more complicated lineage of thought about images, one that emphasized both the sheer *avisuality* of the image and the extent to which images contribute to the subject's dispersal. As we will note in the following discussion, later phenomenological and post-phenomenological

approaches to the image have their roots in this alternative archive, one that produces “the image” as an interactive and sensual concept at the limits of sight and thought.

I. Aesthetics and the Romantic Image

The mid-eighteenth-century emergence of the term “aesthetics”—understood, in Alexander Gottlieb Baumgarten’s inaugural definition, as a “science of perception”—signaled an important shift in the way in which philosophers understood the role of images in both perception and the production of knowledge. Within classical, medieval, and Renaissance theories of knowledge, images were described as playing a mediating function within the mind: produced by the faculty of imagination, images linked sense perception with the faculty of reason.¹² The basic elements of this account were retained by many eighteenth-century philosophers: in Britain, for example, David Hume famously argued that ideas were simply “the faint images” of sensory impressions that were then employed “in thinking and reasoning,” while in Germany, Christian Wolff contended that both “sensations and imaginings are like images [*Bildern*], such as paintings and statues, in that each is a representation [*Vorstellung*] of composite entities: and for this reason representations of corporeal things are called images [*Bilder*].”¹³ From this perspective, mental images were understood as simply representations of the external world, and though they served the useful function of distancing the subject from the chaotic flux of pure sensation, they nevertheless also limited thought; as David Wellbery notes, for many Enlightenment thinkers, a “pure intellect” would “achiev[e] its representations entirely without sense images,” but because the “intellect of man is mixed,” humans had always to make do with “some degree of sense imagery.”¹⁴

While Baumgarten’s “science of perception” was developed upon the basis of this same set of Enlightenment assumptions about the relationship between images, representation, and thought, it nevertheless also pointed toward another way of approaching the link between images and thought.¹⁵ Rather than simply positing “mental images” in order to explain the operations of the mind, Baumgarten’s philosophical aesthetics highlighted the need for more nuanced accounts of the differences in the way in which different kinds of external images—for example, painted images as distinct from the “images” of poetry—presented themselves to sensation, perception, and consciousness. Gotthold Ephraim Lessing’s discussion of

the differences between forms of art was exemplary of this new interest in distinguishing between different kinds of images. According to Lessing, time-based arts, such as poetry, differed fundamentally from space-based “image-arts” (*bildenden Künste*) such as painting or sculpture, and this distinction was in large part a function of how each form of art mediated the givenness of reality.¹⁶ Lessing argued that painters and sculptors were limited to representing *one* moment, and thus had to choose that moment that would give “free rein to the imagination”—that is, a moment in which the “more we see, the more we [are] able to imagine.”¹⁷ As a consequence, Lessing contended, the painter or sculptor should not represent the climax of an emotion—for example, the actual scream that is the result of a painful action—for this would give the imagination no affordance beyond that which was represented. The poet, by contrast, did not need to “compress his picture [*Gemälde*] into a single moment,” but could instead describe actions extended over time (24), for the “succession of time is the province of the poet just as space is that of the painter” (91). Space-based image-arts and time-based poetry, in other words, produced phenomenally different kinds of images: a painting provided a spectator with an image that was to be taken in all at once, while poetry created a series of images that rose up before the reader or auditor.¹⁸

As Wellbery has noted, Lessing was fundamentally committed to an idealist understanding of the image: for Lessing, poetry was a “higher” art than painting precisely because it more fully freed a subject from the materiality of a medium than did painting.¹⁹ However, what we wish to stress here is Lessing’s emphasis on images as something “given” to perception that nevertheless provoked a sense of what was not present or given, but there only virtually (*virtute*).²⁰ Lessing’s approach to the tradition of *ut pictura poesis*, in other words, foregrounded a problem with the fundamental evidence of the image itself: does the image in fact push material perception beyond itself? And if so, does this not suggest that the image is never merely an adequation to reality, but rather a force that solicits an actualization of something virtual? As Wolfgang Ernst has surmised, the possibility that Lessing never saw the Laocoön sculpture also indicates a crucial methodological change in theoretical knowledge: by moving away from empirical description of the thing itself and toward processes of archival research that come to define their own internal logics of operational thought, Lessing can be read as evoking forms of contemplation that seek to transform an “omission” of data into a “strategy of complexity,” and that in turn confirm the virtuality

of the image as a more significant point of debate over the ostensible givenness of its material form.²¹

Immanuel Kant's approach to aesthetics in his *Critique of Judgment* (1790) presented a more fully Romantic version of the link between mental and external images. On the one hand, Kant too remained committed to a relatively traditional understanding of mental images, arguing in his *Critique of Pure Reason* (1781, 1787) that imagination served to create an image from the manifold of sensation.²² On the other hand, Kant's *Critique of Judgment* pursued a more phenomenological approach to the image, focusing on the ways in which art enabled experiences that revealed the virtual dimensions of the material object. The experience of beauty, for example, was for Kant dependent upon a *sense* of purposiveness that was not actually "given" in the object itself—that is, it depended upon a sense that could not be tied to a determinate (or determinable) quality of the object. The importance of the image, moreover, resurfaced even in what might seem to be its extreme negation, namely, Kant's valorization of the biblical commandment against making graven images (*Bildnisse*). Kant presented this commandment as an instance of the imagination's creative state of restraint:

The fear that, if we divest this representation of everything that can commend it to the senses, it will thereupon be attended only with a cold and lifeless approbation and not with any moving force or emotion, is wholly unwarranted . . . For when nothing any longer meets the eye of sense, and the unmistakable and ineffaceable idea of morality is left in possession of the field, there would be need rather of tempering the ardour of an unbounded imagination to prevent it rising to enthusiasm.²³

Kant's explicit argument was that the imagination's force is specifically managed by a moderation of sense that in turn enables a sobering morality to gain ground. Yet even here, Kant's apparent dulling of the imagination's "unbounded" capacities suggests that what is at stake is a return to the givenness of *neutralized* representation. Or, to put this another way, Kant valorized a phenomenality that was accepted in terms of those aspects of images that are discovered "*when* nothing any longer meets the eye of sense"—an avisuality endorsed by the ethical shape of Kant's definition of imaginative labor.²⁴

A similar emphasis on the excessive potential of the image is evident in the work of G. W. F. Hegel, who presented images as means by which

consciousness was able to distance itself from the immediacy of the external world. Recollection, for example, relied upon “images” (*Bilder*) that allowed the subject to free the content of sensible intuition from any particular time or place: I can recall an image of someone even when that person is dead because the image allows an element of the external world to be “liberated from its original immediacy and abstract singleness amongst other things, and received into the universality of the ego.”²⁵ Following the example of his Enlightenment predecessors, Hegel equated images (*Bilder*) with “mental pictures” (*Vorstellungen*) and argued that insofar as both referred their reality to something else (namely, that of which they were the image or picture), they prevented a full grasp of that experience of groundlessness that was, in his estimation, essential to thinking.²⁶ Critics of philosophy, Hegel famously contended in the *Logic*, were often those who “longed for mental pictures [*Vorstellungen*]” in place of thought; who felt the need “to have before them as a mental picture that which is in the mind as a thought or notion [*Gedanke und Begriff*].”²⁷

Yet even as Hegel seemed to present images as simply a limited psychological means that was in the end overcome, his emphasis on both an Ur-subject (*Geist*) and the importance for the image of the experience of temporality helped to establish a path of post-Kantian explorations of the image’s disengagement from psychological concerns, as well as its capacity to disrupt normative subject-object relations. For example, in a passage from *The Phenomenology of Spirit* in which Hegel remarked on the relationship between husband and wife as “one in which one consciousness immediately recognizes itself in another,” he added the following:

Because this self-recognition is a natural and not an ethical one, it is only a representation, an image of Spirit, not actually Spirit itself [*ist es nur die Vorstellung und das Bild des Geistes, nicht der wirkliche Geist selbst*]. A representation or image, however, has its actual existence in something other than itself. This relationship therefore has its actual existence not in itself but in the child—an “other,” whose coming into existence is the relationship, and is also that in which the relationship itself gradually passes away; and this alternation of successive generations has its enduring basis in the nation.²⁸

Although “image” here appears all too quickly, Hegel’s usage is significant. The heteronormative married couple figures for a “natural”—that is, essential—recognition that inadequately figures Spirit because it does not require the kind of dialectical process of purposive reconfiguration that ethical life

compels. In this sense, the image of the married couple as a complete unit is “other than itself” because it is singularly non-interpretative: its recognition cannot be brought into an awareness that speculatively lies “outside” the couple’s self-referentiality. It is only brought to generative thought through the figure of the child who both confirms the ethics of the couple as well as introduces the futurity of “successive generations” as it is witness to the couple’s death.²⁹ Hegel’s figuration of the married couple as an image rather than the actuality of Spirit depends upon the child to underwrite the couple’s life, but it is not hard to read in this passage a saturating fear that the couple is only *Bild*—an astonishing negativity that threatens to reduce husband/wife to an imagistic emptiness that precludes dialectical thought and social fulfillment. To think of the couple as only image is to consider them as childless, non-generative, and utterly negated.

II. *Images of Modernity*

The Romantic philosophical engagements with the image that we have outlined previously were all developed within cultural contexts dominated by print culture, and more specifically, a print culture in which the mechanical reproduction of text and visual images was often understood as a “means” for transmitting thoughts from one individual to another.³⁰ Friedrich Kittler has emphasized that this dominance of print in the Romantic era encouraged psychological and hermeneutic interpretations of images: that is, images, whether painted on a canvas or described within a book of poetry, were frequently understood as having their origin within the imagination of one individual and their telos in their virtual reconstitution within the imagination of other individuals.³¹ As we have noted, authors such as Lessing, Kant, and Hegel also pointed beyond such psychological and hermeneutic understandings of images, theorizing the latter as vexing junctures of presence and absence, productive crossings of death and life, and as fundamentally bound up with what would later be called “time-consciousness.” However, further exploration of these a-representational dimensions of the image was significantly facilitated by the emergence in the mid- and late nineteenth century of both inscription media technologies, such as photography, cinema, and phonography, and instruments designed to facilitate experimental psychophysical research, such as mnemometers, kymographs, and tachyscopes.³² Both sets of technologies challenged the premise that images either simply represented otherwise self-sufficient thoughts or served

solely as means for resuscitating an original spirit or intention. Insofar as they employed the active mediation of “automatic” chemical and mechanical inscription and storage processes, media technologies such as photography produced images that seemed in some sense to produce themselves. If such self-production seemed to enable representational indexicality—that is, a fidelity to the source of representation—that exceeded that of earlier media, it by the same token emphasized the extent to which these new images necessarily operated beyond the thoughts and intentions of authors, at least as the latter had been traditionally conceived (a paradox that Peter Geimer explores in greater detail in his contribution to this volume).³³ Moreover, the specific way in which film produced the appearance of motion—projection of a series of still images at speeds sufficient to ensure that retinal retention produced the illusion of motion—complicated the question of the location of the image: were “images” located in the celluloid strip that passed through the projector, on the screen that the spectator viewed, or within the brain of the spectator? Laboratory devices such as mnemoneters and tachyscopes, for their part, made apparent the variety of mental processes that occurred below the threshold of conscious attention and perception, suggesting that if indeed consciousness depended upon “mental images,” many of these latter remained forever unconscious and outside any central coordinating cognitive location or process.³⁴

This matrix of new media and experimental technologies encouraged two quite different attempts to rethink the nature of images. Experimental and philosophical psychologists such as Francis Galton, Wilhelm Wundt, William James, and E. B. Titchner responded to this challenge by simply multiplying kinds of mental images, distinguishing between visual mental images, auditory mental images, motor mental images, and so on. Of more importance to this volume, however, were three responses that each attempted a much more fundamental rethinking of the image: Henri Bergson’s process philosophy; Edmund Husserl’s development of the philosophical method of phenomenology; and Walter Benjamin’s reflections on the relationships among technology, images, and history.

We can understand both Bergson’s process philosophy and Husserlian phenomenology as two different strategies for banishing the “psychologism” of the concept of mental images from philosophy.³⁵ Rather than distinguishing between external and mental images and then further subdividing the latter into different kinds, Bergson proposed to treat all things—that is, each entity in the world of matter—as an “image” or aggregate of images. “It is a mistake

to reduce matter to the perception we have of it," Bergson wrote in *Matter and Memory* (1896), but it is "a mistake also to make of it a thing able to produce in us perceptions, but in itself of another nature than they"; as a consequence, we should treat matter—including that collection of matter that makes up a human being—as "an aggregate of 'images.'"³⁶ However, images differed, Bergson contended, with respect to their capacity to introduce "delays" between action and reaction: a rock-image, for example, is acted upon, and reacts to other, images immediately, while the human brain-image is able to introduce a delay between being acted upon and reacting (30). Bergson argued that this theory of the image overcame the weaknesses of both realism and idealism. Though he acknowledged that his philosophy was in fact dualistic insofar as it posited "the reality of spirit and the reality of matter," his concept of the image was intended "to lessen greatly, if not overcome, the theoretical difficulties which have always beset dualism." Bergson contended that his approach was simply an explication of the commonsense understanding of both matter and the image. It seems more accurate to say, though, that his identification of matter and image introduces to both a vertiginous movement that has served as a resource for several key twentieth-century rethinking of more limited senses of the image, including Gilles Deleuze's theory of cinematic images and Mark Hansen's "new philosophy for new media."³⁷

Emerging at the same time as Bergson's new theory of the image, Edmund Husserl's phenomenological method also sought to rid philosophy of the representational concept of images. Husserl's new science of phenomena was explicitly designed to do away with the "psychologism" of accounts of consciousness and perception that purported to explain these latter via the postulate of mental images; instead, Husserl argued, philosophy ought to analyze how the phenomena of perception and consciousness actually present themselves.³⁸ We "must not substitute the consciousness of a sign or an image for a perception," argued Husserl, but we should instead focus rigorously on what is "given" to consciousness.³⁹ The concept of mental images, Husserl suggested, was in fact simply a set of assumptions, or prejudgments, about the nature of consciousness, and it consequently prevented real analyses of its structures of consciousness. To make progress as a science, phenomenology had to root out any hidden residues of commitment to the premises of mental images (and thus, Jean-Paul Sartre later claimed that even Husserl occasionally had fallen under the spell of seeking to explain aspects of consciousness by means of mental images).⁴⁰

Yet the phenomenological suspicion of the concept of mental images

produced, as an unexpected consequence, a method capable of extraordinarily nuanced analyses of the ways in which external images—for example, paintings, icons, and other forms of art—presented themselves to consciousness and perception. Maurice Merleau-Ponty’s “embodied” phenomenology, for example, began with Husserlian premises but developed into a method especially attuned to the perceptual nuances of external images, and Merleau-Ponty’s discussions of painting (and, to a lesser extent, film) have remained central for subsequent analyses of the relationship between media, images, and an embodied subject.⁴¹ Particularly important about Merleau-Ponty’s approach to phenomenology was his interest in what Husserl had described as the “natural”—that is, pre-phenomenological—attitude, that way of being-in-the-world in which things are both “given” to us but we are at the same time “given to” things. From this perspective, the images of painting and film (as well as other media) have an especial significance, for they produce something akin to, though not precisely the same as, the “phenomenological reduction,” or *epoché*, that is central to phenomenology. Focusing on the case of Cézanne, for example, Merleau-Ponty contended that

[w]e live in the midst of man-made objects, among tools, in houses, streets, cities, and most of the time we see them only through the human actions which put them to use. We become used to thinking that all of this exists necessarily and unshakably. Cézanne’s painting suspends these habits of thought and reveals the base of inhuman nature upon which man has installed himself.⁴²

The specific objects that Cézanne painted—the representational dimension of the painting—should not be subordinated to the presentational dimension of his images for which phenomenology was able to provide a language: that is, the capacity of these images to reveal the dynamics of emergence and disappearance and presence and absence that define and enable our perception of the world.

A more Heideggerian version of phenomenology also served as a vector, especially in France, for drawing new concepts from Hegel’s approach to the image.⁴³ In his essay “The Two Versions of the Imaginary,” for example, Maurice Blanchot considered the way in which the cadaver and image become the same, in a sense, precisely because the “image needs the neutrality and the fading of the world; it wants everything to return to the indifferent deep where nothing is affirmed; it tends toward the intimacy of what still subsists in the void”: