

# ICONOMY, ICONOCLASH ≠ ECONOMICS

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It is one thing...to apprehend directly an image as image, and another thing to shape ideas regarding the nature of images in general.

Jean-Paul Sartre's remark, made in his *The Imagination* (1936), is used as a prefatory quotation by W.J.T. Mitchell in *Iconology: Image, Text, Ideology* (1986), his classic study of the nature of images and the differences between images and words.<sup>1</sup> Like everything else that Mitchell (and Sartre) says about these topics, this gesture is immediately relevant to the issues raised by the questionnaire. Indeed, the first two sentences of the questionnaire set up a relationship between images and imagery, or single images and the overall image flow, that is indeed "traditional," in fact, ancient, as a presumption, one that is so instinctive to thinking about images that it is almost everywhere taken as fundamental. It is also, as Sartre suggests, problematical.

Traditionally we think of images as relatively individualized or delimited phenomena that in one way or the other appear to the human mind and apparatus of perception. Currently, however, we are witnessing an intensification of what we might call the *networkedness* of the image along with a proliferation of machine imagery that operates independently of human perception and cognition.

A contemporary, information theory, "digital age" name for this relation between each image and every image is proposed: "networkedness." This is reinforced by triangulating the relation with the suggestion that machines communicating with each other, via a kind of imagery imperceptible to humans—and unthinkable by us—is widespread today. I will return to this suggestion in some concluding comments.

The paragraph ends by channelling Guy Debord in 1967 on spectacle societies:

Indeed, the global circulation of images and the workings of new media realities increasingly seem to mediate social relations and the social imaginary (accelerated during the pandemic where much social interaction has been referred to the interfaces of different real-time communication technologies), to the point that the social field is now largely constituted by the production and distribution of images.

This, too, is a conventional gesture, unavoidable given Debord's prescience about current reality. A return to Debord is, to me, as welcome as it is necessary, despite the fact that, within critical theory, his diagnosis has become an occluded orthodoxy, in much need of refreshment by a critical return—yes, a *détournement*.<sup>2</sup> Yet returning to Debord does not mean that we are obliged to stay within his analysis as if it were entirely adequate in the present situation. It is not, precisely because of its generality. (Accepting it in this manner is about as illuminating as saying that a mice plague consists of the simultaneous presence in a place of uncountable numbers of the same kind of mouse.) The last sentence of the questionnaire has the same problem: its generality drowns all of the important, more specific questions then asked in the next paragraph. They are saturated by spectacle's ubiquity and therefore risk remaining as questions to which it has already provided adequate (if egregious) answers. I will, however, suggest some (counter-spectacle) answers in the course of these reflections.

My response will be concerned less with the ontological character of specific or particular images—although I will consider some—more with the strengths and weaknesses of several theories that have been advanced (including some that I have proposed) to characterize the nature, structure, development, and histories of imagery, image flows, scopic regimes, vision, visibility, the visual field, and world picturing. (The questionnaire prefers “the contemporary image-space” for this general register.) We will come up constantly against the problem implicit in the opening lines of the questionnaire: what can analysis of particular images (the ontology of *an* image) tell us about imagery in general (the ontology of *the* image), and vice-versa? How can the connections between these registers be made apparent? Whether we have in mind visual images or encompass (as we should) mental and verbal imagery as well, I believe that these questions have as much political urgency today as they ever did.<sup>3</sup>

## HISTORICAL PROSPECT

Indigenous cultures are grounded in stories of world making that are replete with instances of the vividly visualized interplay between Originary Beings, animals, natural forces, humans, and things. These are not simple matchings, crudely imagined: they are complex exchanges between mimesis and alterity, between what can be shown and the othernesses that cannot.<sup>4</sup> In Western thought, the most famous account of the relationship between seeing and knowing is Plato's allegory of the cave, with its dramatic scenario of an enchained people convinced that reality is represented by figments that are, actually, firelit shadows cast on the walls of the cave by icons (*eidolon*) paraded behind them by unseen actors. A philosopher releases one person and leads him through a tunnel to the world outside, where sunlight reveals the Truth as abstract Ideas (*eidos*). Yet when he returns, bearing excited witness to his insights, he is punished by the people, who prefer to remain in their deceived condition. Socrates tells this story, which foretells his own fate. A similar circuitry, but in reverse, arose during the iconoclastic controversies of the Byzantine era, when a duplicitous doubling was introduced that cleverly overcame explicit prohibitions in the Old Testament against the worship of "craven idols." Nikephoros, the Patriarch of Constantinople from 806 to 815, argued that the *images* of the Holy Spirit, of God, of Christ, Mary, and other sacred beings were divine phenomena, invisible to mortals, while the *icon* of each sacred being that was visible to them in churches and elsewhere was of course an artifice, but it was licensed, as it were, by the holy images. Worship of the icon was in fact worship of the image and was, therefore, not idolatrous. Such worship structured ritual behavior in sacred spaces but was also central to practices of everyday life based on belief in Christ's teachings about living—it became an *economy*, in the basic Greek sense of a conscious, sustained way of organizing one's home life. Imprinting the image of Christ on the obverse side of coins circulating through an empire suggested that Christ's modelling of the most desired economy of self and others, that is, Christian morality, was the model to be adopted within the domain ruled by the emperor whose image appeared on the reverse.<sup>5</sup>

Each of these archetypal allegories about seeing and knowing turns on a dialectical double-troubling, specific to its situation, between particularity and generalization, transparency and opacity, vision and visibility, and revelation and duplicity. A general image economy evolved, continued during modern times,

and remains with us today, constantly renovating existent forms of insight and obscurity even as it generates new ones.

#### MAKING THE MODERN WORLD

In *Making the Modern: Industry, Art, and Design in America* (1993), I set out to answer several questions about the forms that modernity took in the early twentieth century, especially in the United States, one of its major engine rooms. Among them, these: “Why does a certain variety of modes of visualization seem to play such an important role?” and “What place do specialist discourses, such as modernism within the visual arts, have in the broader imagery of modernity?”<sup>6</sup> You will have already spotted that this pairing, and the pairings within each question, are instances of the doubling that concerns us in this essay. And that the autonomy of art in relation to a “broader” (everyday, commercial, governmental) domain of imagery is presumed—in, however, a relative way. Any “simple, deterministic equation between the Machine Age and Modernism” is denied. Instead, “an iconology of modernity” is charted, within which, I argued, all producers of imagery worked:

By the later 1920s the iconography of Modern America seems to coalesce into a limited, loose, but nonetheless flexible and effective ensemble of images. Its elements, so constantly repeated, varied, approximated, so rarely violated, are readily listed: (1) the industrial plant and manufacturing worker (for example, the River Rouge and the assembly-line worker); the agricultural site and the farm worker (the wheat silo and the sharecropper); (2) the vertical city and the crowd (almost always New York city and the Wall Street/Broadway crowd on the pavement); (3) the stylized product and the consumer (a burgeoning number of examples of great structural similarity).<sup>7</sup>

My gloss on these strands signalled my debt to Michel Foucault’s brilliant dynamiting of historicism and ideological determinism by his focus during the 1970s on the dispersive structures of the micropolitics of power.<sup>8</sup>

This ensemble figures—in its internal relationships, its productivity, its dominance over other structures—a ‘regime of sense’ of considerable power. It indicates the presence of a visual order which organizes seeing in a particular way,

despite the limited scope of its imagery and its structural fragility. It not only reproduces in visual terms what I argue is a new 'regime of truth' in the United States in the 1920s and 1930s—that is, a new corporations/New deal consensus—but it was an active, constructive constituent of this regime and of the social formation on which it, in turn, was based. It grew from being an iconography—a repetition of images—to become an iconology... That is, these images and couplets, in their accelerating repetitions and predictable diversifications, secured increasingly ordered patterns of reading from those consuming them, while at the same time modifying other modes, even displacing them, until the new regime of seeing became itself the norm.<sup>9</sup>

While I now think I overplayed the political coherence of the “new corporations/New Deal consensus,” I believe that the mapping of a visual imagery of modernity in the U.S. during those decades remains accurate. I traced the three major strands within this regime, beginning with the revisualization of manufacture as flow and assembly in the early Ford plants and culminating in the crowd-oriented spectacle of the New York World’s Fair of 1939/40. This society-wide movement from base to superstructure (until the latter infused the base) was, I argued, the dynamic within which image makers of all kinds worked. The vertical/horizontal coupling in each of the three iconotypes, itself embodying a top-down distribution of power, was lateralized, recruiting image producers of all kinds while also affording them new forms of relative autonomy. For example, professional artists became trend-setting actors within each strand: Charles Sheeler, Georgia O’Keeffe, and Rockwell Kent were employed to create up-market advertisements for major manufacturers—respectively, the Ford Motor Company, Dole Fruit Company, and *Vanity Fair*—and to do so in the style that they employed in their art. On the government side, nationwide New Deal projects such as the Farm Security Administration employed several leading photographers—among them Walker Evans, Margaret Bourke-White, and Dorothea Lange—to record the impacts of the Depression and official efforts to alleviate it, and to do so by bringing to bear their sensibilities as independent artists, including their commitments to a critical realism. In some places, revolutionary political perspectives pitched themselves against these powerful regimes: notably, the visitors to Detroit, Diego Rivera and Frida Kahlo. The third strand offered less resistance: the streamline aesthetics

evolved by self-styled “modernistic” industrial designers such as Raymond Loewy, Walter Dorwin Teague, and Norman Bel Geddes responded to a situation in which consumption was becoming itself a prevailing mode of production. John Vassos was one of the few who deployed streamlining critically. Each of the strands, along with their increasing interaction over time, helped to weave the shared sensibility that underscored the “regime of truth” then prevalent in US society. Each strand also contained those who struggled to establish a different “politics of truth.”<sup>10</sup> The third strand prefigured the next wave of consumerism, which grew from post-war recovery.

#### THE OCCLUSIONS OF SPECTACLE

By the late 1960s, Guy Debord was able to confidently pronounce that

The whole life of those societies in which modern conditions of production prevail presents itself as an immense accumulation of *spectacles*. All that once was directly lived has become mere representation.<sup>11</sup>

This axiom, the opening words of his tract *The Society of the Spectacle*, rewrites the famous opening lines of Karl Marx’s *Capital*: “The wealth of societies in which the capitalist system of production prevails presents itself as an immense accumulation of commodities.”<sup>12</sup> Debord’s first axiom launches a section of his text entitled “Separation Perfected,” the sentiment expressed in the second sentence: dwelling in the incessant, awe-inspiring exhibition of imagery that consumes all of us, we have been separated from our natural modes of being; we live, instead, in a world of misrepresentations, enormously attractive but essentially deceptive images whose array we do not control, which is managed against our interests. The section ends with his second axiom: “The Spectacle is *capital* accumulated to the point where it becomes image.”<sup>13</sup> The questionnaire does not mention capital(ism) but reaffirms the claim that the circulation of visual imagery has now become so pervasive that “the social field” needs to be understood as primarily shaped by the workings of images.

Jean Baudrillard took Debord’s analysis one step further, arguing that in postmodern societies “direct living” and “natural experience”—to which Debord still appealed as the basis for true community—had become impossible in a world consisting entirely of hyperreal representations, that is, simulacra (primarily visual

signs) of that which was once real.<sup>14</sup> These insights, while acute readings of the appearances and of the immediate experiences of contemporary life, mistake surface immediacy as the entirety of that life (having, of course, denied the distinction). The Gulf War did not take place: it was a media event. So, too, was 9/11. Insight into underlying causes is, by definition, blocked. Critique will always be absorbed, so it is pointless. Action for revolutionary change just feeds the monster. Capital is infinitely adaptable; humans are mired in mystification. Welcome to the desert of the unreal.

#### ARCHITECTURE IN THE ICONOMY

There were other ways of reading the role of imagery in events such as 9/11 and of parsing their political implications. In *The Architecture of Aftermath* (2006), I set out to chart some of them.<sup>15</sup> The targets on that day did not simply happen to be well-known buildings. The World Trade Center in New York and the Pentagon in Washington symbolized US economic and military power, while the likely targets of the third plane, the Capitol or the White House, symbolized the nation's governance. Images of these buildings had circulated in countless iterations throughout the world on multiple mediums, from official insignia through televised location shots, films, and tourist promotions to dollar bills. For much of the time, and in most circumstances, such symbolic connotations remain conventional and relatively benign, or, for those galled by the concentrated power which the symbols represent, untouchable. I recall, for example, while recovering from an illness in Athens during 2000, that the television reports on the Olympic Games began each afternoon and evening with an upbeat sequence that skipped, via schematic logos, from the original home of the Games, symbolized by the Parthenon, across Europe to the Eiffel Tower, followed by the London Bridge, over the Atlantic Ocean to the New York skyline and finally a long hop across the country and the Pacific Ocean to Sydney, where the Games were being held, evoked by an image of the Opera House. Universally recognized signs for cities, linked by a travelling torch, immediately suggested an international community of sports-loving nations. The imagery cemented itself in a full screen shot of the Olympic Games rings before becoming live to events in Sydney. An efficient and effective—in a word, economical—introduction to each broadcast.

A year or so earlier, I had discussed with Jacques Derrida his 1981 essay “Economimesis.”<sup>16</sup> Derrida was not concerned with outlining a controlled, circulatory system of representation, as the title of his essay might imply if read literally. The title is typical of his penchant for contracting or aggregating existing terms in order to name the operations of a hitherto unnoticed conjunction of forces. This practice prompted my simpler neologism for the image economy: “iconomy.” His essay is a penetrating study of how, in the *Third Critique*, Kant resolves the apparent contradiction between the pure creativity required by art that is freely made and freely appreciated and the demand that such creativity accord with the operations of nature itself. The economies of the various kinds of mercenary arts or the manual crafts—which would, projected forward in time, include the televised sequence I just described—were of little interest to him. These arts existed mainly to point a contrast to “free,” or fine arts. Derrida cites this key passage from the *Critique* [Section 45]:

In a product of the Fine-Arts, we must become conscious that it is art and not nature; but yet the purposiveness in its form must seem to be as free from all constraint of arbitrary rules as if it were a product of pure nature. On this freedom in the play of our cognitive faculties, which must at the same time be purposive, rests the pleasure which alone is universally communicable without the use of concepts.<sup>17</sup>

Highlighting the “as if” here, Derrida shows how Kant resolves the apparent contradiction:

*Mimesis* here is not the representation of one thing by another, the relation of resemblance or identification between two beings, the reproduction of a product of nature by a product of art. It is not the relation of two products but of two productions. And of two freedoms. ...The communicability of pure judgements of taste, the (universal, infinite, limitless) exchange between subjects who have free hands in the exercise or the appreciation of fine art, all that presupposes a commerce between the divine artist and the human one. And indeed this commerce is a *mimesis*, in the strict sense, a play, a mask, an identification with the other on stage, and not the imitation of an object by its copy. ‘True’ *mimesis* is between two producing subjects and not between two produced things. Implied by the whole third *Critique*, even though the explicit



theme, even less the word itself, never appears, this kind of *mimesis* inevitably entails the condemnation of imitation, which is always characterized as being servile.<sup>18</sup>

Both the televised announcement and these reflections might seem worlds away from the act of using icon-bearing airplanes (United, American) as weapons against the actually existing structures upon which those city-signifiers (“icons”) are based. Yet, however much Osama bin Laden may have had in mind the rhetorical and propaganda value of pursuing an updated version of the ancient practice of throwing one’s troops against the walls of the enemy’s citadels, the 9/11 attacks wreaked more than symbolic damage upon the U.S. economy, military, and government. Financial losses were huge, a chaotic response by the Bush Administration deflated the myth of the U.S. as a “hyperpower,” while inappropriate military overreach (“War on Terror”) led to failures on all fronts, not least twenty years of futile war in Afghanistan. In the years around 2000, Al Qaeda was producing not simply “media events” of the kind that had been generated for decades (by 1960, Daniel Boorstin was already labelling them “pseudo-events”<sup>19</sup>), it was conducting warfare, with icons as weapons. This was occurring within an image economy for which I proposed the name “iconomy.”<sup>20</sup> Insisting that we were dealing with much more than “the dense image manipulation that prevails in cultures predicated on conspicuous and incessant consumption,” I remarked that “If anyone required a demonstration of the immediate but also far-reaching significance of the realm of visual culture—in its distinctiveness but also entanglement with the politics, economics, and ecologies of everyday life—surely 9.11.01 was it.”<sup>21</sup> As the world media played out the scenario of a global clash of civilizations, it often became reduced to a battle between two stereotypical contestants, a *mimesis* enjoined by two masked but highly productive subjects: Osama bin Laden and George W. Bush. This shadow play was but one of its many resonances.

## VISUAL CULTURE

These resonances were subsequently explored by several others, including the pioneers of visual cultural studies, W.J.T. Mitchell and Nicholas Mirzoeff. Mitchell’s 2011 book *Cloning Terror: The War of Images from 9/11 to the Present* deploys a method of image analysis he names, expanding Panofsky’s more strictly art historical approach, “iconology.”

Images, from an iconological standpoint, are both verbal and visual entities, both metaphors and graphic symbols. They are, at one and the same time, concepts, objects, pictures, and symbolic forms. Some of them become operative forces in sociopolitical reality, attaining what is commonly known as ‘iconic’ status—widely recognizable, and provocative of powerful emotions. The figure of speech entailed in the phrase ‘The War on Terror’ was widely regarded as ‘the most potent weapon in the battle for public opinion’ waged by the Bush administration. The image of the Hooded Man of Abu Ghraib became a globally recognized icon ‘more dangerous to American interests than any weapon of mass destruction.’<sup>22</sup>

The War on Terror campaign modelled terrorism as the sociopolitical equivalent of a painful, deadly pandemic threatening to invade the body of the nation and all citizens within it. The Hooded Man image made explicit the fact that the US state was miming this terrorist figure in its torturing of supposed terrorists. These mirrorings, and several parallels in then new forms of communication, above all social media, led Mitchell to see cloning as the current “master metaphor or ‘metapicture’ of image-making itself.”<sup>23</sup> In his *Watching Babylon, The War in Iraq and Global Visual Culture* (2005), Mirzoeff develops a further set of similar readings, as does art historian Stephen F. Eisenman in his *The Abu Ghraib Effect* (2007).<sup>24</sup>

While image regimes were generating new metapictures (or “hypericons” as Mitchell elsewhere names them)—as they must, to stay alive as compelling responses to their situations—the affective power of images has been measurably increasing. The thinking about images by each of these scholars find parallels in the methods being developed by the *Bildwissenschaft* project in Germany, led by Horst Bredekamp, in arguing that this change is occurring and that its logics require definition.<sup>25</sup> Historical perspectives are common to all of these scholars, but they have been most extensively canvassed by Mirzoeff in his 2011 book *The Right to Look: A Counter-History of Visuality*.<sup>26</sup>

He takes a post-national perspective drawn from post-colonial critique, showing that modern ways of world picturing (“visuality”), like modernity itself, were grounded in exploitation and exercised through violence. He charts a succession of dominant imaging regimes, each of which was, in turn, contested by a different way of seeing the world. During the “Plantation Complex,” prevalent

from around 1660 to 1860, overseers controlled sequential processes of production and large numbers of workers primarily by means of onsite oversight—always, of course, backed up by exemplary punishment. Slavery in the Americas was enforced in the same way. In the second phase, the “Imperial Complex,” 1860 to 1945, European nations pursued their imperial ambitions, developing complex structures of visibility that ruled at home and abroad during times of constant warring between nations and between classes within them. Mirzoeff dubs the third phase the “Military-Industrial Complex,” following President Dwight D. Eisenhower’s warnings in his 1954 farewell address to the nation. If we add advertising, entertainment and newscasting to these forces, we recognize this regime as having prevailed from 1945 to its peak around 1989. Since then, its power has been augmented by what Mirzoeff calls “post-panoptic visibility,” that is, globalized systems of surveillance aimed at the gathering and management of information flows in order to secure the reign of neoliberalism, techno-capitalists, and, in several states, autocratic rulers.

Mirzoeff’s subtitle is “A Counterhistory of Visibility.” He posits a set of matching counter-visualities, that is, resistances to the dominant regimes that also took strong but distinct visual forms. He argues that the overseer’s visibility that prevailed during the plantation years was opposed by “revolutionary realism” in Europe, and, in Haiti especially, by what he calls “abolition realism.” Similarly, he suggests, various forms of indigenous countervisibility were developed to evade imperial visibility, and, when imperialism took on fascist dimensions during much of the mid- and later twentieth century, it was opposed by “antifascist neorealism.” If the military-industrial complex favored “aerial visualization,” it was countered by what Mirzoeff calls “decolonial neorealism.”

While Mirzoeff’s descriptions require more careful elaboration, and do not amount to an iconomics, they are a bold attempt at outlining the broad-scale dialectic of the visual regimes that structured modern iconomics and modern visibility more generally. These dominant regimes were not only colonialist, imperialist in orientation, they were also totalizing (or, at least hegemonic) in their ambitions, and predominantly masculinist, heteronormative, and racist in character.

In *Troubling Vision: Performance, Visibility, Blackness* (2011), Nicole F. Fleetwood demonstrates that, in the U.S. and elsewhere in the West, the presence of black subjects has always troubled prevailing regimes of visibility through the mere fact of their

presence as distinct from the white preference that they be “seen through,” remain in their place, and thus “invisible.”<sup>27</sup> This relation also troubles—to paraphrase her argument mildly—black subjects as they come to occupy social positions that attract attention, in, for example, politics, business, entertainment, sports, or the arts. Many who do so become living icons, exemplary exceptions from white perspectives, pioneers of potential change for the better from black perspectives. Some conform to the negative paradigm of hypervisibility (Michael Jackson’s self-whitening), many flout it by flaunting their blackness to deliberate excess (Malcolm X, Beyoncé, *Black Panther*), while others seek a middle path that emphasizes shared human experience (Oprah Winfrey, Barack Obama) or “non-iconic” ordinariness (Bill Cosby, Charles “Teenie” Harris). Still others, especially artists (Glen Ligon, Kerry James Marshall, Deana Johnson, Arthur Jafa), leave markers of the racism that they have overcome, or are overcoming, as “visible seams” in their productions. In every case, the “burden of representation” weighed, or continues to weigh, heavily. Fleetwood notes (in her italics) that “*seeing black is always a problem in a visual field that structures the troubling presence of blackness.*”<sup>28</sup> A powerful recent demonstration is the exhibition originally conceived by Okwui Enwezor, *Grief and Grievance: Art and Mourning in America*, presented at the New Museum, New York, in 2021.<sup>29</sup>

#### INSIDE THE IMAGE WARS

I share Mirzoeff’s belief that, today, the current dominant regime, that of globalized, extractive, “post-panoptic visuality,” is being countered by what he calls “planetary visualization”—that is, ways of seeing that bring together awareness of the vast scope and deep time of planetary processes (aka world picturing) with urgent action in the present in order to build small scale but worldwide coeval communality among humans, animals and things. This spirit inspires the intersectional protest movements, which announced themselves in the anti-globalization rallies in Seattle in 2000 and have surged, intermittently but insistently, since then. The interaction of this “activist imaginary” with larger image flows has been named “the image complex,” a “political field” constituted by images.<sup>30</sup> These densely networked images surged again in 2020, especially since the posting of the video of the murder of George Floyd on May 25. Led by the imagery of Black Lives Matter, they have erupted frequently since then, their variety proliferating—from yellow umbrellas in Hong Kong,

inflated rubber ducks in Thailand, to three fingered salutes from the *Game of Thrones* in Myanmar—their constancy increasing as people push back against oppressive regimes, both sides knowing that these are the end games.

Amidst the plethora of imagery that swarmed, during the summer of 2020, on all the mediums that carry the constant construction of the world's self-picturing, three constellations stood out from the usual business of depicting everyday life, selling commodities, enacting governmentality, and showing natural forces undergoing global warming. These were: graphic imagery of the coronavirus and its national and global spread, plus filming of its effects in hospitals, at testing sites, and on crowds, masked and not; the events staged by Donald J. Trump across a variety of mediums; and the cut-through impact of the cell phone video of a police officer kneeling on the neck of George Floyd as the latter died. The first announced information about the current and future state of the global pandemic. The second acted as the volatile epicentre of vast tracts of political and cultural agenda-setting, both in the United States and across its world-wide reach. The third brought to the boil a social struggle that is profoundly shifting relationships between the races, and those between citizens and police, in the US and elsewhere. The ways in which these three constellations of images interacted—and cut through the other memes jostling for attention in the image economy—continue to resonate and will have far-reaching implications for some time to come.<sup>31</sup> These constellations constituted warring image regimes, a system-wide iconoclasm, that are subtended by Mirzoeff's historical narrative of visualities and counter-visualities.

## ICONOMY

In today's globalized world, the most glaringly obvious fact about visual imagery is its quantitative increase. It is generated and reproduced in ever more varied ways on more and more platforms and is more widely disseminated than ever before. It is orthodoxy to claim that imagery, particularly visual imagery, was and continues to be a major driving force in the modernization of most societies, and that in most it has reached saturation point. As of October 28, 2020, Instagram users had uploaded 50 billion photographs, at a current rate of 995 each second. 500 hours of video are uploaded to YouTube each minute. Facebook users post 350 million photographs each day, at the rate of 4,000 per second, and there are 4 billion video viewings each day on the

platform. 4.5 billion photos and 1 billion videos are shared on WhatsApp. WeChat users send 205 million video messages each day. Across these sites, billions of people spend some hours each day on making, posting, and consuming images.<sup>32</sup> What was in the 1920s a first wave of image production and consumption, which became tidal by the 1960s, is now a constant tsunami. In his *The Supermarket of the Visible: Towards a General Economy of Images* (2019), Peter Szendy makes this his starting point for an analysis parallel to mine, one which also uses the concept of iconomy. Although his major focus is on film, he, too—in his case, following Marx of the *1844 Manuscripts*, Mondzian on image economies, and Deleuze on cinema—seeks to profile the largest economy, that is, the world. He asks a version of the same question we have been pursuing:

Is there a market of the visible that would precede, that would exceed, the commerce of images in the supposedly strict sense of the word? Is there a bigger market, an arche-economy, of images, in other words, a super- or hyper-market of visibility that would be the counterpart (the “reverse”) of the metacinema that for Deleuze is the world?<sup>33</sup>

That the internet, initially a communication system internal to the U.S. military, then offered as a free public good, as genuinely social media, has been thoroughly monetized is simply the most evident fact about its evolution. Yet while the numbers about social media usage are overwhelming, and the ever-expanding, apparently chaotic, tsunami of imagery being exchanged seems unstoppable, we should not be blinded to the new normalcy that is establishing itself inside the flow, against it, and alongside it—even as the flow rushes to fill every space, including those we can't see and those we might try to visualize. Its *horror vacui* voids every spatial metaphor we attempt to strike. Perhaps this, as much as the sheer impossibility of imagining the vast quantities of pictures now in circulation, accounts for the curious emptiness of those artworks that literally display its quantitative presence: Erik Kessel's *24 Hours in Photos* (2014), and even aspects of Thomas Hirschhorn's installation *Crystal of Resistance* in the Swiss Pavilion at the Venice Biennale in 2011.

But the Flood (Biblical metaphor) itself cannot resist analysis, least of all that which serves its inner normalcy by describing its rules of operation. The mistake is to take every instance as equally significant and potentially lasting, as if the world was a

constantly self-replenishing supermarket of things and images. The exclusionary violence driving the iconomy means that all but a few of its instant attractors prove themselves to be of any importance at all. In *The Rules of Contagion* (London: Profile Books, 2020), Adam Kucharski surveys studies of internet usage which consistently show that “content rarely goes far without broadcast events to amplify it.”<sup>34</sup> He shows that almost all postings are not read by anyone or anything but the network that moves them; most are read by only one other user, once or twice; those that become viral do so mostly because media outlets or well-known personalities have boosted them.<sup>35</sup> Such extraordinary wastage means that effectiveness, for politicians, advertisers, and “influencers,” depends less on the inherent interest and relevance of the story than on the constancy of their posting of stories that might precipitate “cascades.” It may be that Donald J. Trump’s unprecedented online presence owed as much to his indefatigable energy as a poster as to his long-term status as a celebrity and to the importance of his position as President of the United States. Similarly, online platforms must devote much of their design efforts to attracting users as often as possible (in the U.S., cell phones are opened on average 80 times each day) and keeping them online for as long as possible. Constant, small-scale, low level connections are the basis of their cash flow. Perhaps the true degradation of imagery these days is to be found here, especially when we recall Sartre’s premise that images are always a form of consciousness, initially unreflective but potentially richly reflective, to the point of being essential to individual and social freedom.<sup>36</sup>

Yet the video of the killing of George Floyd cut through the dazzling din of everyday emergency, standing out even among the regular stream of images of young black men brutalized by white police. It showed the deadly logic which underscored such imagery, which is usually glimpsed in short segments, if shown at all, or quickly scrolled past. It showed, too, the necropolitics of all policing in divided societies. It precipitated a world-wide outburst of protest, amplified by the organized display of Black Lives Matter and similar imagery. Its ramifications continue to resonate. One is that it brushed aside the sense—widespread, paradoxically, in artworlds—that visual imagery in general is becoming inevitably more enervated. The same recognition of the power of imagery is true for the spread of the COVID-19 iconotype and its associated visual messaging. These images may be about “bare life,” but they are not weak.<sup>37</sup> They remind us just how fragile a matter it is to live a full life, even to aspire to one. The imagery

of racial injustice and of the pandemic is not simulated. It is rooted in truth-telling about life and death. It leads us, or should lead us, despite being told that we live in a “post-truth” era, straight to acting in truth’s interest.<sup>38</sup>

The questionnaire is also concerned about the increasing integration of “operational images and machine vision” within the “contemporary image-space” (yet another phrase for the iconomy). Already in 2016, in their introduction to *The Contemporary Condition* book series, Geoff Cox and Jacob Lund emphasized the importance of investigating “the significant role of media and information technology in the production and reproduction of contemporaneity.”<sup>39</sup> They commended Benjamin Bratton’s argument that the many, seemingly various, contemporary computational technologies are less “so many different genres of machines, spinning out on their own,” but instead form a planetary-scale “accidental megastructure” consisting of several layers—user, interface, address, city, cloud, earth—with multiple connections between them, which he names *The Stack*.<sup>40</sup> This is an insightful image, a strong candidate for the most recent world picture. The last term, “earth,” is also the first, reminding us that this structure is located in the physical world with which its virtual workings always “blur.” Imagining the conditions for the Stack-to-come (the “Black Stack”), he poses these questions:

Our experiment—indeed everyone’s experiment for the coming decades—is tied to an ecologically ubiquitous computing, a gamble that in many ways underpins all others. The Stack-to-come should tilt the outcome of that impact towards a renewed modernity, but will it—in some configuration of *Clouds*, objects, tags, *Addresses*, *Interfaces*, sensors, algorithmic phyla—provide the lightness necessary to organize a restorative, subtractive, resilient modernity, or will its voracious energy appetite, toxic production footprint, and alienating visualization finally overwhelm all? ...Will planetary-scale pervasive computing prove to be, in some guise, the integral media of real reindustrialization, allowing for light but powerful interfaces of governance and exchange, or instead, the final, most unsustainable machine consuming the remaining resources into its subterranean pits?<sup>41</sup>

Towards the end of *The Stack*, Bratton raises but downplays the implication that these machines, whichever direction they may lean, might eventually become indifferent to the priorities of



their human masters. Gaia theorist James Lovelock has recently argued that, with innovation as the driving force of planetary evolution, and with computational machines now generating most innovation and most likely continuing to do so exponentially, the biosphere will promote cyborg interrelationships between machine and humans as a means of maintaining the balances that it requires to sustain itself (that is, to sustain the life of all of its elements in productive equilibrium).<sup>42</sup>

Visual images, imagery, imagining: what forms do each of these take in these circumstances? How will they change as the world changes?

## ICONOMICS

If we can envisage the flow of images as having become, in contemporary conditions, a self-managing, externally negotiating system—an economy of iconicity, an *iconomy*—and if we recognize that this iconomy operates in a real world as disposed to contestation as it is to construction—thus generating the creation and sustaining of powerful *image regimes* as well as repeated *iconoclashes* (not iconoclasm, the waging of campaigns to obliterate imagery as such, rather the conducting of campaigns between competing image regimes)—then how might we name all these relations as an area of research, analysis, and critique?<sup>43</sup> Several well-established disciplines actually undertake such work without naming it, except perhaps as topic, at most a subfield. Among the humanities: art history, cultural studies, museum studies, history. Among the sciences: studies of visual perception, psychology, sociology, media studies, communications, behavioural science, economics of culture. Assuming it be to a humanistic, social science—or, better, supplementing these, a post-human, deconstructive inquiry—some names have already been proposed. As we have seen already, names of the mode of inquiry mix with those for the object of study: “A science of seeing,” “Word and image studies,” “Visual culture,” “Visual Studies,” “Image science (*Bildwissenschaft*).” If the iconomy is, or has become, a pervasive economy, an internally dynamic but also embedded system that is fundamental to human (and perhaps animal) societies, to machinic communication, and to natural reproduction, then why not name its study according to its object: *Iconomics*.

“Iconomy” is obviously a play upon “economy,” itself drawn from the Greek word οἰκονόμος (literally, “household management”), a composite word derived from οἶκος (“house; household; home”)

and νέμω (“manage; distribute; to deal out; dispense”). Substituting εικῶν or εἰκὼν (“image”, “resemblance”) for οἶκος, while retaining νέμω, gives us a word for the image economy, an economy in which images have become capital, thus *iconomy*. “Iconomics,” obviously, echoes the well-established if always controversial (rarely dreary) discipline of economics.<sup>44</sup>

Of course, like every name, “iconomics” is already taken. Google searches of in print material most often turn up typed texts in which the “E” in the word “Economics” has been degraded, such that the machine misreads it as “I”. (An interesting indicator that machines talking to each other are, like humans doing the same thing, quite capable of generating and multiplying misunderstandings.) A 1996 publication, *World Wide Web Yellow Pages*, a directory of terms to be found on the Internet at that time—as a print publication now wildly anachronistic—lists a now redundant URL for a company named Iconomics that describes itself as “Your global illustration resource for graphics design via modem, mail, ftp, or floppy disc. Provides links to custom art, images, ordering, prices, and policy information.”<sup>45</sup> This is likely an early iteration of Iconomics Inc., a Toronto-based software development and design company that has, its website claims, been “dedicated to implementing Enterprise Performance Management (EPM), Business Intelligence (BI) and Data Warehousing (DW) solutions since 1995.”<sup>46</sup> In 2019, the name was adopted by The Iconomics, a Jakarta-based company offering a variety of business information and brand-management services, with this mission:

The Iconomics is established by professionals that have experience in integrated media. Our mission is to share business analysis and information to our readers. We want to take part in advancing the economy of Indonesia by delivering news and macro economy analytysys. We are the media platform that people need. We do share good news to our readers but we also share reliable business forecast. We are the alternative media that give information that readers actually need to know.<sup>47</sup>

As its descriptor “Leading Disruption Economy” suggests, and its web presence shows, this enterprise is a pure product of imported, adaptive globalization. It also exemplifies every danger that adopting, despite instant qualifications and caveats, the word “iconomics” for the kind of thinking we need to undertake might afford—not least, providing yet another professional service to

rampant neoliberal globalization. Obviously, I do not propose its adoption in this form, or in any form susceptible to such usage. Rather, I see it as a placeholder for a critical project around iconicity that may name itself differently—if and when it does.

Being caught within the image world of globalized neoliberalism and surveillance capitalism does not, however, mean submitting to its commodification and monetarization of all relations, including the exchanges of imagery we have been exploring. Of the three image regimes that warred during 2020 and 2021, the one driven by Donald J. Trump was thoroughly commodified, but the COVID-19 campaigns and reporting was only partly so (sales of vaccines), and the imagery of BLM and intersectional resistance coalesced around the recognition of difference and the coalition of differentiations that prefigure another social and economic order.

Due in large part to its proclivity toward overreach, but also as a result of such resistances, capitalism as we have known it has arrived at its zombie incarnations, ready to haunt a future that could be even worse than the world it has afforded to date.<sup>48</sup> As I have been insisting throughout, historical trajectories need to be traced, causes identified and operative structures exposed, as always when we wish to see our contemporaneity more clearly. This is what the projects discussed in this essay have been doing all along, and continue to do so, as the warring between those who embrace their planetary responsibility and those who reject it moves into its decisive phase.

#### PRINCIPLES OF ICONOMY

All of which leads to some tentative suggestions, in much need of development, urgently. We have seen, throughout this review of broad scale conceptions of images and imagery, icons and iconicity, some basic principles at work. A sketch...

The most obvious is the movement by which single images become singular, attracting the descriptor “iconic,” that is, invested with significance in ways analogous to the worship of a religious icon. Iconic images are those widely recognized as representing particular generalities: certain ideas, practices, places, peoples, events, processes, products, companies, historical periods, ways of life, nations, even entire categories of human experience.

In doing so, at the same time, they push aside other, similar imagery

that strives to represent the same or closely similar ideas, practices, places, peoples, events, etc.

The iconicity of particular images is established through initial incarnation but mostly through insistent repetition followed by variation within a relatively narrow range. Differentiation is abhorred, but it does not disappear. It is the constant ground of resistance to iconicity's tendency towards exclusion.

Iconic images, when they gather sufficient force to become central to an image regime, displace imagery of *other* places, peoples, events etc. that seek prominence in the visual field, the economy, the domain in which interests and forces of all kinds compete to be seen, to be heard within public discourse, to occupy the subjective imaginations of individuals and the imaginaries of societies.

This domain is mostly structured in ways that echo the dispositions of economic, social, political, and cultural power in any given society, in its region, and in the world geopolitical (dis)order. Disposition here includes top-down, bottom-up, lateral movements, floods, viruses, and ubiquitous micropowers.

Images flow through structures that have been developed, over centuries, to make them visible, to exhibit them, to attract attention to them. Festivals, carnivals, parades, theatres, public squares, meeting halls, shops, markets, trade fairs, expositions, museums, galleries, billboards, department stores, malls, cinemas, broadcast then cable television, screens of all kinds. The multiple exchanges across this ever-expanding but also always localized network operate as an exhibitionary iconomy.<sup>49</sup>

Specialist representational practices, such as the visual arts, have developed distinctive sets of platforms for the showing, assessment, interpretation and circulation of their products. These are the nodal points of artworlds, or visual arts exhibitionary complexes.<sup>50</sup>

Most imagery within capitalist societies is, like all other forms of exchange, commodified. Most imagery within authoritarian societies serves as propaganda for the ruling order. Most imagery within theocracies articulates the ruling narratives of faith and belief. Repetition and variation, again and again, over and over... haunted by a fear of differentiation, which also keeps reasserting itself.

Image regimes emerge, compete, some may achieve prominence, even predominance for a time, then they recede, not disappear but become residual, as others emerge to play through the same cycle. There is, however, nothing natural or regular or predictable about this: it is a matter of accumulated weight, of momentum, disrupted by contingency, always.

Against the grain, some modes of representation seek to reshape these hierarchies and counter-hierarchies into a plane of appearance that would approximate closer to a level playing field, using dispersive imagery to build diversity, concurrence and, at best, community.<sup>51</sup>

Within each of these tendencies, so many nuances, degrees and kinds of conformity, neutrality, dissensus.

World pictures, meta-geographies, mapping strategies...these have been surprisingly few: Indigenous Creation stories that register the actions of Ordinary Beings as an eternal recurrence in the environment as it is lived now; Babylonian cities surrounded by the rest of the world; ancient and early modern China as the Middle Kingdom; the Great Chain of Being in Medieval Europe; continents and oceans during the Age of Exploration; the centers and colonies of empires; Blue Earth; Google Earth; The Stack...

Meta-pictures, hypericons, are also few. The *tabula rasa*, Plato's cave, Aristotle's wax tablet, Locke's dark room, Marx's camera obscura, Freud's mystic writing pad, Sartre's keyhole, Wittgenstein's hieroglyphic, Derrida's pharmakon...

And then there are the several kinds of imagery mobilized by art...which stand to each and all of these principles in relations of surplus, exception, excess, occlusion, and obliquity.

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1. W.J.T. Mitchell, *Iconology: Image, Text, Ideology* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1986), 5. Mitchell is citing the edition of Sartre's *Imagination: A Psychological Critique* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1962), 3.
2. McKenzie Wark, *The Beach Beneath the Street: the Everyday Life and the Glorious Times of the Situationist International* (London: Verso, 2011).
3. On the necessity of keeping in focus the entire "family of images" while undertaking such analyses, see Mitchell, *Iconology*, 9-14. And on mental images see also Jean-Paul Sartre, *The Imaginary* [1940] (London and New York: Routledge, 2004). In this context, we are reminded that looking is an act of exchange with that which is looked at, or remembered, or thought about, during which images appear, less as entities that are seen, more as those that are sensed.
4. The classic study of this relation is Michael Taussig, *Mimesis and Alterity: A Particular History of the Senses* (London: Routledge, 1992). For an example of its operations in a particular setting, that of the Yolngu people of the Northern Territory of Australia, see Howard Morphy, *Ancestral Connections: Art and An Aboriginal System of Knowledge* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991).
5. These arguments are advanced by Marie-José Mondzian, *Image, Icon, Economy; The Byzantine Origins of the Contemporary Imaginary* [1996], trans. R. Franses (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2005).
6. Terry Smith, *Making the Modern: Industry, Art, and Design in America* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1993), 6.
7. Smith, *Making the Modern*, 7.
8. Announced in *Discipline and Punish, The Birth of the Prison* [1975], trans. A. Sheridan (New York: Vintage Books, 1977), the clearest statement can be found in "The political function of the intellectual" [1976] trans. C. Gordon, *Radical Philosophy*, no. 17 (Summer, 1977): 12-14. Art historians will recognize my debt to Erwin Panofsky, whose iconography to iconology method for interpreting Western art in the Renaissance tradition, charted in the introduction to his *Meaning in the Visual Arts* [1955] (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1982), I have socialized.
9. Smith, *Making the Modern*, 7-8.
10. Foucault, "The political function of the intellectual,"
11. Jacques Rancière's "partition of the sensible" and "aesthetic regimes" are glosses on Foucault's insights.
12. Guy Debord, *The Society of the Spectacle* [1967], trans. D. Nicholson-Smith (New York: Zone Books, 1994), 12.
13. Karl Marx, *Capital: A Critique of Political Economy*, vol. 1 [1867], trans. S. Moore and E. Aveling (Mineola, NY: Dover Publications: 2019), 41.
14. Debord, *The Society of the Spectacle*, 24.
15. Jean Baudrillard, *The System of Objects* [1968], trans. J. Benedict (London: Verso, 1996); *Simulacra and Simulation*, trans. S. Glaser (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1994); and *The Gulf War Did Not Take Place*, trans. P. Patton (Sydney: Power Publications, Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1995).
16. *The Architecture of Aftermath* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2006).
17. Jacques Derrida, "Economimesis," trans. R. Klein, *Diacritics*, vol. 11, no. 2 (Summer, 1981): 2-25.
18. Section 45, cited Derrida, "Economimesis," 9.
19. Derrida, "Economimesis," 9. The "divine artist" in this passage is, of course, Nature itself.
20. Daniel Boorstin, *The Image: A Guide to Pseudo-Events in America* [1962] (New York: Knopf Doubleday, 2012).
21. Smith, "After Effects – Architecture, Iconomy, Contemporaneity," the introduction to *The Architecture of Aftermath*, 1-16.
22. Smith, *The Architecture of Aftermath*, 2.
23. W.J.T. Mitchell, *Cloning Terror: The War of Images from 9/11 to the Present* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2011), xvii.
24. Mitchell, *Cloning Terror*, xiv.
25. Nicholas Mirzoeff, *Watching Babylon, The war in Iraq and global visual culture* (New York and London: Routledge, 2005); Stephen F. Eisenman, *The Abu Ghraib Effect* (London: Reaktion Books, 2007).
26. On hypericons, see Mitchell, *Iconology*, 6, and his *Picture Theory* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995), 49. On image affect, see W.J.T. Mitchell, *What Do Pictures Want? The Lives and Loves of Images* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2005). On the bildwissenschaft project, see Horst Bredekamp, *Image Acts: A Systematic Approach to Image Agency*, trans. E. Clegg (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2018).
27. Nicholas Mirzoeff, *The Right to Look: A Counterhistory of Visuality* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2011).
28. Nicole F. Fleetwood, *Troubling Vision: Performance, Visuality, Blackness* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2011).
29. Fleetwood, *Troubling Vision*, 4.
30. Okwui Enwezor, *Grief and Grievance: Art and Mourning in America* (London: Phaidon for The New Museum, New York, 2020).
31. Meg McLagan and Yates McKee, "Introduction," *Sensible Politics: The Visual Culture of Nongovernmental Politics* (New York: Zone Books, 2012), 8.
32. I develop this analysis in *The Image Wars 2020-2021: Contestation, Contagion, Concurrence*, forthcoming.
33. Data drawn from statistics sites, such as that of Omnicore for Facebook at <https://www.omnicoreagency.com/facebook-statistics/>, accessed May 26, 2021.
34. Peter Szendy, *The Supermarket of the Visible: Towards a General Economy of Images*, trans. J. Plug (New York: Fordham University Press, 2019), 8-9. See also his lecture at the European Graduate School, August 9, 2019, at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=d4vpruhRTIA>, accessed May 26, 2021, and *The Supermarket of Images*, eds. Emmanuel Alloa, Marta Ponza and Peter Szendy (Paris: Gallimard/Jeu de Paume, 2020).
35. Adam Kucharski, *The Rules of Contagion* (London: Profile Books, 2020), 208.
36. Kucharski, *The Rules of Contagion*, 181-2.
37. This is the main thrust of his *The Imaginary* [1940], see note 3.

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37. These paradoxes are illuminatingly explored by Hito Steyerl, "In defence of the poor image," *e-flux journal*, #19 (November 2009), at <https://www.e-flux.com/journal/10/61362/in-defense-of-the-poor-image/>, accessed May 26, 2021.
38. Terry Smith, "Truth in Transition: As the Decade Breaks," in *Fabricating Publics: The dissemination of culture in the post-truth era*, eds. Bill Balaskas and Carolina Rito (Liverpool: DATA browser series, Open Humanities Press, in partnership with Exhibition Research Lab, Liverpool John Moores University, 2021).
39. Geoff Cox & Jacob Lund, *The Contemporary Condition: Introductory Thoughts on Contemporaneity and Contemporary Art* (Berlin: Sternberg, 2016), 25. See also Yasmin Ibrahim, *Politics of Gaze: The Image Economy Online* (Abingdon, Oxon.: Routledge, 2020).
40. Benjamin H. Bratton, "The Black Stack," *e-flux journal*, no. 53 (March 2014), at <https://www.e-flux.com/journal/53/59883/the-black-stack/>, accessed May 26, 2021.
41. Benjamin Bratton, *The Stack: On Software and Sovereignty* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2015), 356.
42. James Lovelock (with Brian Appleyard), *Novacene: The Coming Age of Hyperintelligence* (London: Allen Lane, 2019).
43. On iconoclasm more specifically, see Bruno Latour, "What is Iconoclasm? Or Is There a World Beyond the Image Wars?" in *Iconoclasm: Beyond the Image Wars in Science, Religion and Art*, eds. Bruno Latour, Peter Weibel (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, for ZKM, Karlsruhe, 2002).
44. Another common Greek word, *omoíōma*, evokes less the sense of an icon, more that of a likeness that is an effigy, a simulation, a mockup of some kind. When it comes to the contemporary spectacle as defined for us by Debord, Baudrillard and many others, we might need, then, a word closer to *omoniomy*. If we wanted to evoke the constant foregrounding of the imagery of humanity within many image economies, we could use the spelling *homonomy*. This association requires more thought re the predominance of logos during the later C20th, but it resonates in the imagery of celebrities, which is clearly centered around particular individuals, even though they must behave like gods to maintain their presence.
45. *New Rider's Official World Wide Web Yellow Pages* (Indianapolis: New Riders Pub., 1996), 478.
46. See <http://www.theiconomics.com/company.html>, accessed May 26, 2021.
47. See <https://www.theiconomics.com/about-us/>, accessed May 26, 2021.
48. McKenzie Wark, *Capital is Dead. Is This Something Worse?* (London: Verso, 2019).
49. I discuss this in more detail, and in relation to Tony Bennett's concept of the modern "exhibitionary complex," in my EGS lecture of August 19, 2019, "Exhibitionary Times: Art against Spectacle," at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=d8mvqnMat3M>, accessed May 26, 2021. Benjamin's emphasis on "exhibitionary value" is an important step in the accumulation of theory about the image economy. See Walter Benjamin, "The Work of Art in the Age of Its Technological Reproducibility" (1936), trans. Edmund Jephcott and Harry Zohn, in *Selected Writings*, vol. 3 (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2002).
50. See Terry Smith, *Curating the Complex, The Open Strike* (Berlin: Sternberg Press; Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2021).
51. In "Defining Contemporaneity: Imagining Planetary," *Nordic Journal of Aesthetics*, vols. 49-50 (2015): 156-174, I set out a planomenal framework within which these principles should be understood as located.
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