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## [Introduction to] Archaeologies of Vision: Foucault and Nietzsche on Seeing and Saying

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# **Archaeologies of Vision**

Foucault and Nietzsche on Seeing and Saying

GARY SHAPIRO

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## Introduction

### The Abyss of Vision

#### **1** Iconoclasm and Indoctrination: The Taliban and the Teletubbies

Is there evidence of something new in the economy of the senses, in the distribution of thinking and seeing, something that would justify talk of a “visual” or “pictorial turn” in culture and so in the studies that attempt to make sense of it?<sup>5</sup> The term *evidence* itself of course refers us back to the *video*, the “I see”; the Anglo-American legal tradition is one in which visual evidence, supplied by an eyewitness, takes a certain precedence over other forms of supporting argument and information. The evidence should be before our eyes. Such evidence would seem to arise from rather different sources, ranging from the most mundane to the rather theoretical (as in *theoria*, originally an eye-witnessing). First there is the increasing deployment of visualization at every level in the daily life of our mediatized world. By *visualization* I intend to suggest the proliferation of techniques of picturing, showing, reproducing, and displaying the actual, the artificial, and the fan-

tastic. Traditional literacy, based on printed texts, is being displaced or demoted by a culture of the screen, which may be cinematic, video, or computer-based. Newspaper editorials express dismay at the increased use of films in university classes ostensibly devoted to literature and at the rise of media studies, often focused on popular figures, such as courses on Madonna and Princess Diana. Precocious children, who once learned to read before their peers, now find themselves at the computer screen, manipulating an array of images sometimes accompanied by text; stories that were once children's classics, first read aloud and then accessible through the young reader's own efforts, are now encountered originally through video versions, which the younger generation may very well assume to be the definitive ones, bearing the same relation to the text as a contemporary film does to its "novelization." This is indeed, and increasingly, a society of the spectacle, a spectacle that infiltrates and insinuates itself at the most unconscious levels of habit and practice and which is at work in what Plato called *paideia* (the education of youth).

I want to consider two rather extreme attitudes toward the image, which might be taken to stand for a spectrum of contemporary ways of responding to and shaping the world of the eye. There seems to be no escaping the politics of vision. Questions of the censorship or control of images in film, TV, and the Internet are everywhere. As I write, in March 2001, there are reports of a major iconoclastic movement in Afghanistan. The Taliban movement, which has developed out of a lengthy and complex conflict in that country, has destroyed a set of remarkable ancient Buddhist statues; almost all commentators greet the news with righteous indignation.<sup>6</sup> The Taliban claims that after completing the operation, it will also subject the country's museums to an iconological cleansing, eliminating all "idols." The endangered objects are defended sometimes as works of art, sometimes as elements of a cultural or religious heritage. A set of questions could be raised about the issue of whether these are indeed works of art or objects of aesthetic experience—categories introduced in the West only since the eighteenth century. These would be deeply Foucauldian questions, and I trust that the following text will show the value of Foucault's thought for considering such issues. This is, of course, hardly the first instance of massive and official iconoclasm. It is only recently, though, that the images of this process, or at least of the works being annihilated—as in the destruction of Stalinist monuments in the former Soviet Union—have become instantly visible around the world. Except perhaps in Afghanistan, where the Taliban also prohibits television. One characteristic of what I will call a visual regime lies in what it allows

to be seen, by whom, and under what circumstances. But it is also a question of a more general structuring of the visible: not just display or prohibition, but what goes without saying, not what is seen but the arrangement that renders certain ways of seeing obvious while it excludes others. We become aware of the violent practices of the Taliban on television, in print, and on the Internet, where images of the statues appear in their former condition, prior to the attacks. It is not difficult to feel outrage about the reduction of these magnificent works to rubble and to feel superior to those who are carrying out the process of annihilation. It is equally easy to forget that western Europe has seen its own share of iconoclasm and that attempts to defend the Buddhas on the grounds that they are works of art relies on a concept of art that was invented only in the eighteenth century; that concept was devised around the time when the museum became a significant cultural institution, which was seen as the natural site for visually interesting objects that had previously been thought of under a host of different categories. The thinkers who developed the foundations of art history, like G. W. F. Hegel, saw the museum as the obvious venue for art; those who were the witting or unwitting heirs of this movement, like Nietzsche, absorbed the culture of the museum and its commitment to preservation. It was left for later thinkers, like André Malraux and Foucault, to begin to theorize that institution and to understand the ways in which its practices of framing, display, inclusion, and exclusion contributed both to our implicit conception of what art is and to the making of art itself. But this is to run ahead of the story. Let us recall that before the era of art and the rise of the museum, the questions associated with iconoclasm were much more pressing. In a recent work of great erudition and philosophical insight, *Likeness and Presence: A History of the Image before the Age of Art*, the art historian Hans Belting reminds us that there is an “age of art,” with its own temporal and geographical limits.<sup>7</sup> Before that time, the predecessor of what we call art was the religious image; there was no “art history” but rather a lively theological debate about the powers of images. For images were thought of, in the Orthodox and Byzantine tradition, as being endowed with the power of the divine beings and saints that they were thought to embody. These images were icons, not representations. The iconoclastic conflict that emerged with the Protestant Reformation was anticipated by earlier disputes in which images were denounced and sometimes attacked on the grounds that an illusory power had been claimed for them and that respect for the image was inconsistent with genuine piety. The reformers could draw on the prohibition of idols—a difficult and elastic concept—in the Hebrew Bible, a strictly monotheistic source

whose use by the reformers is closely related to the Taliban's reference to the Qur'an to justify their own iconoclasm.<sup>8</sup> If we can begin to understand how iconoclasm could seem like a live cultural option rather than an immediate sign of wild fanaticism, we are on our way to thinking in terms of what, adapting a notion of Foucault's, I will call an archaeology of the visual. That is, we will realize that such terms as *image* and *art* mark distinctive eras with their own sets of expectations and practices regarding what we see and how it is displayed and valued. If the practices of the Taliban are holdovers from before the age of art, how are we to describe our own institutions and attitudes, which, in a time of almost limitless reproduction and the mixing of previously disparate high and low forms, can be thought of as a society of the spectacle or the simulacrum, in any case a time after the age of art?<sup>9</sup> While I address these questions only somewhat indirectly here, by exploring Foucault's response to artists like René Magritte and Andy Warhol, I also explore the project of a visual archaeology implicit in his work; that project ought to be able to help us think about the contemporary scene.

That contemporary scene is omnipresent, at least in the media of the West, and it is one in which we are fervently acculturating the youngest generation. Consider for a moment the spectacle of one- to two-year-old infants, still on the verge of the linguistic but being acculturated and given their earliest lessons in the symbolic by watching the Teletubbies. We might take this to be the pacific and gentle antithesis of iconoclastic violence; but while this may be true of the content of their video pastoral, there is something disturbing in the program's insidious project of insinuating the normality of the contemporary cult of the image. The Teletubbies are terminally cute, infantile figures, toddling about in a world of pleasant green fields and in a fully automated and mediatized house designed for their amusement. Like their implied audience, they are just on the verge of speech, communicating in an all-too-charming lisp. The children who watch them learn a first lesson simply by being glued to the television screen, which presents itself as a source of information and instruction. They begin to absorb some of their basic verbal oppositions (near-far, big-little, high-low) by associating these with the hallucinatory simulacra on the screen. In 1982, a time that can seem like ancient history if we consider how few people had their own computer screens then, David Cronenberg made his prescient film *Videodrome* in which we witnessed the grotesque implosion of the real in a world where humans were transformed into video cyborgs, sprouting televisual screens in their abdomens. Now the Tele-

tubbies all happily possess their own screens in their tummies, and the narrative, such as it is, can dissolve from a scene in which all of the gang is gathered around, into the world that opens up through one of their internal videos. If there is a mirror stage, it may be subject to a cultural transformation in which the entry of the *in-fans* into language will now coincide with her seeing herself as not only open to the reflection of the unified image, but also as a site in which that image (or its image) becomes the locus of screens within screens. Each infant can think of herself as a *mise-en-abîme*. Nietzsche's Zarathustra, at one of the most critical hinges in his grappling with the thought of eternal recurrence, announces that "vision itself is seeing abysses." He says this in "On the Vision and the Riddle," where he is attempting to come to terms with the riddle of vision and the recurrence of the *Augenblick*, or the twinkling of the eye (see sec. 36, chap. 5, below). This is said as a challenge to that small band of courageous searchers and researchers who would follow Zarathustra in his most dangerous quest. Could it be that we are now effortlessly educating our young to see the abyss of vision in preparation for a world of videos within videos? A later Cronenberg film, *Existenz*, portrays a world of virtual reality games where the symbiosis of the human and the image-machine has reached a higher level than in *Videodrome*. Might we expect a sanitized version of this as part of the basic education of the children of those children who are now crossing the threshold of the imaginary and the symbolic by means of the Teletubbies? In Homer's *Iliad* there is a spectacular imaginative construction: Hephaestus forges a magnificent shield for the hero Achilles, a shield that shows moving images of all aspects of life—war and peace. For the ancients this impossible screen was possible only in imagination, and even then it was something that could have been created only by a god at the request of a goddess for her son. Now every two-year-old who watches the Teletubbies can look forward to the possibility of becoming a cyborg with a built-in screen much more versatile than that of Achilles. A program like *The Teletubbies* seems peaceful and wholesome compared to most of the fare on television, including even the cartoons, some of them violent, intended for slightly older children. The use of these images and this new culture of the image appears to be as distant as possible from the iconoclasm of the Taliban. Yet the habits of seeing and the technologically driven shifts in thought and practice represented by such programs (along with their spin-offs in toys and on the Internet) are likely to have consequences much more far-reaching than the destruction of Buddhist images.

## 2 Denigrating or Analyzing Vision?

How should we begin to think about the different visual regimes, old and new, that hold sway in such varied cultures? Might philosophy have something to say about such things? According to one fairly widespread view, we need to be on our guard against an overvaluation of the visual. It is said that ocularcentrism is an implicit, unthought undercurrent of the Western tradition, or at least of modernity, and that a truly critical philosophy would contribute to exposing its pitfalls and its insidious hegemony. It will become clear that I, following Nietzsche and Foucault, among others, have some serious reservations about this position; at the most basic level, these reservations have to do with what seems to be a failure to distinguish among different modalities and conceptions of vision, among different visual practices and visual regimes. In a time that takes the thought of difference so seriously, there is an anomaly in thinking of vision as always the same, always identical, and so opposing it to other forms of perception and sensibility, which, it is claimed, offer more finely nuanced, more engaged, more historically sensitive ways of engaging with things. But let me briefly rehearse some of the main lines of the philosophical critique of vision in the last century.

We have now become suspicious of the way in which this traditional hegemony of vision established itself so firmly in the West.<sup>10</sup> Vision, as Heidegger saw it, was complicit with the metaphysics of presence. Plato called vision “the noblest of the senses,” and the *eidos*, or idea, is in the first instance a visible shape. Even if the truth is ultimately beyond the visible, the best analogies that we can devise for talking about it come from the realm of images and shapes that we see: the cave, the sun, the line. Plato’s *Lehre von der Wahrheit*, then, was a doctrine about what could become present, wholly and fully there, and could hardly be divorced from that sense which, unlike touch, taste, smell, or even hearing, seemed to deliver up the object all at once. The light metaphysics of the medievals passes into the natural light to which Descartes appealed and into the *Wesensschau* of Husserlian phenomenology. There is perhaps a trace of this tradition even in Wittgenstein’s injunction “don’t think but look.” The critique of this tendency to assume a vision that makes everything present assumes a variety of forms. Heidegger’s response was to replace Cartesian vision with *Umsicht*, a knowing one’s way around that was largely implicit and that did not objectify beings in the mode of *Vorhandenheit*. Consistently with this, Heidegger much later insisted that what emerges into the light, what shines forth in the phenomenon, could do so only on



the ground of a more fundamental clearing, a *Lichtung* that is a lightening rather than a light.<sup>11</sup> Similar criticisms of ocularcentrism are to be found in the deeper strands of the pragmatic tradition, in John Dewey, George Herbert Mead, and more recently in Richard Rorty's attempt to dismantle the image of the mirror of nature.<sup>12</sup> From the perspective of psychoanalysis, Freud suggested that the priority of vision was a relatively late development in humans, one that had to do with the assumption of an erect posture that led to the abjection of smell and touch.<sup>13</sup> On this basis, some have argued that the advantage gained in the instrumental manipulation of the environment is at least matched by the alienation from our own bodies and their immediate circumstances attendant upon illusions of distance and objectivity. Erwin Straus gave some phenomenological content to such suggestions by showing the interdependence between the human posture and our form of the visual.<sup>14</sup> Luce Irigaray's trenchant critique of the masculine imaginary proceeds by her holding up a curved mirror, a speculum, to the fantasy of the all-seeing gaze; one might say that she undermines the fantasy of the phantasm itself. For this idea of a vision that seems to behold everything at once, a seeing that seems to take no risks, to be free of embodiment, and to pretend to a neutral position free of all desire—this vision has surely never existed and seems best explicable as a hypertrophy of a traditional masculine fantasy of distance, security, and self-possession. How appropriate that when the limits of this fantasy have been recognized in the main line of the tradition, such vision has been reserved for a paternalistic God rather than being the possession of men, although it was still thought to be a faculty that we could exercise insofar as we were made in God's image, which might just mean that we were created in the image of his imaging powers. "Now we see through a glass darkly, but then we shall see face to face." Even if human vision is deficient with respect to a higher standard, it is to be measured against that standard; it is telling that it is the *vision* of God to which mystics, theologians, and philosophers aspire, not to the touch or smell of God. Nietzsche attends to just such figures of vision in his dense and celebrated one-page history of philosophy, "How the True World Finally Became a Fable" (sec. 77).

All of this indicates that questions of aesthetics cannot be divorced from what has been thought of as first philosophy. Surely conceptions of *aisthesis* help to constitute our ideas of knowledge, thought, and reality. To imagine that they do not is to let them determine the most fundamental conceptual assumptions and operations while surrendering the possibility of critical vigilance. Accordingly, if there is a shift in the economy of sensibility, a revaluation of the visual, or a change

in how we conceive it, it is likely to have far-reaching consequences. Has there been such a shift? In his encyclopedic work *Downcast Eyes: The Denigration of Vision in Twentieth-Century French Thought*, Martin Jay argues that the tendency of this century, especially among the French, has been to depose vision from its former supremacy. Emblematic of this movement, for Jay, is Foucault's criticism of the medical gaze and of surveillance practices and devices such as Bentham's Panopticon. On this reading, the "empire of the gaze" is in the process of being overturned, then, in the spirit of Heidegger, the pragmatists, and Irigaray, as just sketched.

I want to suggest that we need to move beyond an overly schematic contrast between a malevolent ocularcentrism and a beneficent nonocular orientation. Even if we want to question the implicit and explicit claims made for vision by such thinkers as Plato, Descartes, and Husserl, even if we want to show that similar attitudes underlie dangerous orientations to the environment and to the "other"—for example, those of a different ethnicity, gender, or culture—we should proceed with some caution in identifying these with vision tout court. Consider Jay's argument that Foucault is an antivisual thinker. The claim is that, for Foucault, the Panopticon is the emblem not only of the carceral society, but also of the malignity of vision. Foucault discusses Jeremy Bentham's Panopticon in *Discipline and Punish*, where he takes it as an emblem of carceral society (secs. 62–64). The Panopticon is a device for total surveillance of the occupants of a disciplinary institution. Originally projected as a design for prisons, it is also applicable to schools, hospitals, factories, asylums, and any other sites where a high premium is attached to having an orderly population subject to constant inspection. Jeremy Bentham, the philosophical architect of the Panopticon, claimed that the great advantage of "this simple idea in architecture" was its efficiency not simply in providing a means of surveillance of the institution's inmates, but also in encouraging them to become their own guards, to practice a constant self-surveillance. The "simple idea" is to have a central structure around which cells are arranged in circular fashion, so that an observer in that center can see what is occurring in any single cell at any time. If the inspectors are hidden from the inmates (a maneuver to which Bentham devotes some ingenious attention), the latter must assume that they are constantly observed. Given the efficacy of rewards hoped for and punishments feared, the inmates will tend to become their own guards, anticipating a general surveillance. They become subject to a generalized ocular regime, an architectural realization of the archaic motif of the "evil eye" (sec. 34). This evil eye would be complicit with such suspect notions as the idea of

a pure, neutral vision, with the impossible divorce between theoretical subject and an objective world to be manipulated, and with the male gaze as the reduction of the feminine to salacious spectacle. Jay believes that Foucault identifies this apparatus with vision as such and that his attitude is typical of other French philosophers and theorists who have analogous criticisms of vision: "Among French intellectuals in the 1960s and 1970s, it was Michel Foucault who most explicitly interrogated the gaze of surveillance. . . . he provided a panoply of arguments against the hegemony of the eye which augmented and extended those already encountered in this narrative and others still to come. With [this] work, the ocularcentrism of those who praised 'the nobility of sight' was not so much rejected as reversed in value. Vision was still the privileged sense, but what that privilege produced in the modern world was damned as almost entirely pernicious."<sup>15</sup> It is certainly clear that Foucault sees Panoptical and carceral society as "almost entirely pernicious." However, even within the modern world, vision has other modes, some of which constitute forms of resistance to panopticism. Foucault designates a number of artists of the last two centuries as providing various alternatives to surveillance and visual homogenization: these include Manet, Kandinsky, Klee, Magritte, Warhol, Michals, and Fromanger. So it is not a question of denigrating vision; it is rather a question of being alert to the different visual practices, often quite conflicting, that operate in the same cultural space and sorting out their specific structures and effects. Foucault has no arguments against vision in general. He is an archaeologist of the visual who is alert to the differential character of various visual regimes and to the disparate and possibly conflicting visual practices of a single era. But it is thought-provoking that Jay and other critics see Foucault and other recent French thinkers—Derrida, Lacan, and others—as antivisual thinkers in a time that increasingly is thought of as highly visual. Jay's argument has been influential; a recent book on photography by Celia Lury, *Prosthetic Culture: Photography, Memory, and Identity*, which, while finding Foucault valuable as a theorist of power and history, repeats, citing Jay, that Foucault was unalterably critical of the visual mode.<sup>16</sup> In contrast, Gilles Deleuze, perhaps the most insightful commentator on Foucault, says that his friend's thought must be understood as having substituted a binary of visibility and discursivity for the nineteenth century's transcendental aesthetic of space and time (sec. 41). On this reading, Foucault would analyze practices, formations of power/knowledge, indeed all human activities, as having always a double aspect. Neither the visible nor the articulable (in contrast to a Kantian transcendental aesthetic) would be an eternal given; each mode would

be susceptible of a historical, or speaking more precisely for Foucault, an archaeological analysis, that would disclose its specific character in varying contexts. Vision would not be generally suspect or denigrated; rather, every situation would be open to visual analysis.

Later I will explore Foucault's conception of visibility in greater depth, mainly by means of attending to a number of his encounters with painting, architecture, and visual imagery. For now, I want to raise two sorts of questions about Jay's thesis, in order ultimately to explore the question of whether there is a "visual turn" in recent Continental philosophy that responds to and can perhaps help to clarify the increasing and changing role of spectacle and image in daily life. One question has to do with times and periodization; is the criticism or denigration of vision a relatively recent affair, one that reaches its height in the twentieth century? Second, with regard to some of the thinkers identified by Jay and others, do they indeed turn *away* from the visual, or should they be described, perhaps, as giving a *new turn* to the relation between thinking and seeing? To the first question, then. Here we can observe a certain ambivalence in the role accorded to the visual in what we might all too simply take to be a uniform tradition. Despite Plato's appeal to analogies of the sun, the cave, and the line, he is quite clear that the intellectual apprehension of the most fundamental things is not accomplished by the bodily sense of vision; vision is "noblest" because it bears the same relation to the other senses, which are inextricably tied to desire and fail to give us the whole whose presence we seek, that *nous/dianoia* does to all the senses, including vision. Similarly, it is clear that Descartes's natural light and Husserl's *Wesensschau* are meant as metaphors. That the metaphors are taken from the visual realm is significant, but again, these are metaphors; if pressed, their authors would no doubt distinguish rational or phenomenological intuition from everyday vision. When we turn to the philosophy of art and aesthetics, it becomes even clearer that there is no valorization of the visual as such that would then provide the ground for a later devaluation of sight. Consider Lessing's *Laocoön*, an attempt to delineate the "boundaries of painting and poetry." Lessing was troubled by what he saw as the tendency to confuse the plastic arts and poetry (the word *literature* had hardly been coined). Specifically, he was disturbed by the notion that painting might tell a story and that poetry might offer us descriptions of visual objects (including works of art). He argued that the two types of art are to be strictly distinguished in terms of their media: painting can show bodies that exist simultaneously in space, while poetry can tell of actions that unfold in time. It is therefore a serious mistake when the poet offers, say, lengthy descriptions of

flowers, or the painter undertakes to do more than depict the single most pregnant and meaningful moment of the subject he has chosen. The sculpted Laocoön, unlike his literary twin, fails to cry out (Lessing erroneously supposed) not because the expression of pain is inconsistent with the nobility of the classical soul, but because to show him at just that moment would be to allow an ugliness contrary to the principles of art. Similarly, Lessing has an answer to those who would point to the long descriptive passages in Homer, than whom there could be no more canonical poet; in almost every case, especially in regard to the famous account of the shield of Achilles, the critic points out that these descriptions are really integrated into the narrative. We hear about Achilles' uncanny shield because we see it being made by Hephaestus; it is part of the story, and indeed to describe the shield is to describe the stories enacted on it. (One might imagine that such a shield, acting as a screen for moving images, would be an object of great fascination, bewitching those enemies who stood in the hero's path. Perhaps we might trace the fantasies of abdominal television in *Videodrome* and the Teletubbies back to this source in the ancestor of all our art.) The main tendency of Lessing's argument is to suggest that the verbal has a far greater range than the visual, and in this respect his work exhibits a typical commitment of aesthetics.<sup>17</sup> In *The Truth in Painting*, Derrida points out that this commitment is underlined in the thought of Hegel and Heidegger.<sup>18</sup> Hegel's system of the arts unfolds as a movement from the most material to the most spiritual, from architecture to poetry; while painting is the first of the romantic arts, because it can be seen as sheer expanse and does not participate in the dynamics of gravity in the way that architecture and sculpture do, it is still inferior in imaginative power to music and especially poetry, which dispense with any tangible surface. Heidegger, despite his attempt to formulate an alternative to Hegel's teleology and idealism, still takes poetry to be the most significant of the arts, the one that is the key to all the others. Even Merleau-Ponty, who appears to argue for an irreducible art of the visual in texts like "Cézanne's Doubt" and "Eye and Mind," seems to adhere to the traditional priority of the linguistic in his essay "Indirect Language and the Voices of Silence" (secs. 46–48). So the subordination of the visual (and in some respects its denigration, to use Jay's term) seems to be well established in the economy of aesthetic theory.

Now I want to raise a second question, having to do with whether recent European thought embodies a turn away from the visual and whether it practices a variety of linguistic reductionism. We have heard this charge repeatedly, a charge frequently buttressed by the citation

of Derrida's "there is nothing outside the text" outside of its own context and with little attempt to distinguish the positions of different thinkers. We might be struck, however, by the sheer amount of attention that has been devoted to painting and the other arts of the visual by, for example, Foucault, Derrida, Lyotard, and Kristeva, all of whom devote books or major essays to painting. Foucault's *Les mots et les choses* opens with a celebrated discussion of Velazquez's *Las Meninas*; perhaps the only book of philosophy to begin with such an *ekphrasis*. Derrida offers a criticism of the parallel attempts at linguistic appropriation of a painting in his essay "Restitutions." His position constitutes a case for taking the visual more seriously as evidence, noting, for example, that what a celebrated art historian and a major philosopher identify as a pair of shoes looks more like an odd couple of two left shoes. Lyotard argues for the ineluctability of the dimension of sheer presence in the series of dialogues that constitute his book *Que peindre?* and Kristeva, in essays like "Motherhood according to Giovanni Bellini," suggests the ways in which painting functions at the level of the semiotic, on the verge of the symbolic or linguistic.<sup>19</sup>

### **3** Foucault as Illustrator: The Case of Frans Hals

If there has been something like a visual turn in the humanities or human sciences, it has not yet had much of an effect on the way that philosophical texts are read; more specifically, it does not seem to have altered, as it might, our approach to the history of philosophy. Such an alteration could involve reading the philosophers in the context of the visual culture of their time, critically examining their work as it touches on (or avoids) significant visual material, or even (as in the case of Bentham) as it involves the design of visual works. This is a kind of study that has scarcely been undertaken, although there exist a few indications of how it might proceed; these include, for example, studies of Plato and the art and geometry of his time, Deleuze's examination of Leibniz and the baroque, and surveys of Hegel's actual acquaintance with the museum culture of his time.<sup>20</sup> A large part of this book is devoted to examining Nietzsche and Foucault in the context of what they looked at and how they translated that looking into words. I attempt to read these thinkers diagonally, as Deleuze would say, attending to the visual materials that they discuss, whether glancingly or in greater depth, to their accounts of visuality, and to their deployment of visual figures in their own work or to their analysis of it in the work of others. It is, of course, Nietzsche and Foucault who have