Notes

Introduction

1. For French scholarship not available in English, translations are mine.
2. Unless otherwise specified, all translations from Latin and Ancient Greek are mine. I have used Lewis and Short's *A Latin Dictionary: Founded on Andrews' Edition of Freund's Latin Dictionary; Revised, Enlarged and in Great Part Rewritten* (1900), and Liddell and Scott's *A Greek-English Lexicon* (1966).
3. Following house style, Ancient Greek terms have been transliterated without diacritics.
4. For Italian scholarship not available in English, translations are mine.

Prologue

1. The debate is far more complex and involves the key concepts of 'image' (the issue of Christ as *the image of* God and of man as *in the image of* God) and 'similarity' (the man-God relationship of likeness echoing that between copy and prototype). For a thorough discussion of this debate in early Christianity, see Besançon (2000, 81–148), Ladner (1953) and Mondzain (2005).
2. For the iconophiles, too, there is no consubstantiality between the icon and the divine model. However, while iconophilia does not require identity of substance between image and prototype, iconoclasm demands consubstantiality as a necessary condition for any image.

Part I

Chapter 1

1. I have maintained the original French title throughout the book because of 'the unfortunate series of (mis)translations to which the film has been subjected' (Uroskie 2011, 23). The French *bave* can translate as 'slobber' or 'saliva', the latter being more appropriate for Isou's film. Thus, a possible translation for the title could be *Treatise on Saliva and Eternity*. However, the most widespread English translation of the film is *Treatise on Venom and Eternity*.
2. Following academic tradition for the spelling of 'chiseled' with one 'l'.
3. For an analysis of Kandinsky's and Malevich's art in terms of iconoclasm, see Besançon (2000, 330–73) and Wajcman (1998).
4. Because of the lack of translations of Mauthner's work on language, I base my overview on the following scholars commenting on it: Bredeck's *Metaphors of Knowledge: Language and Thought in Mauthner's Critique* (1992), Pisano's 'Misunderstanding Metaphors: Linguistic Scepticism in Mauthner's Philosophy' (2016), Weiler's *Mauthner's Critique of Language* (1970) and Weller's 'The Language Crisis: From Mallarmé to Mauthner' (2018).
5. While there is affinity between Mauthner and one of the most eminent philosophers of language, Ludwig Wittgenstein (Pisano 2016, 98–99; Weiler 1970, 299–306), I engage exclusively with the former, for his radical critique of language is closely tied to the literature of the unword to which Lettrist poetry belongs. In the *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus* (1968), Wittgenstein at once agrees with Mauthner's postulate and dismisses his method (4.0031). According to Wittgenstein, there exists a language capable of describing the world; that is, there is a relation between language and world (4.014) which allows for propositions to be a picture/image of reality (4.01) – something absent from Mauthner's radical language scepticism.
6. For a discussion of Mauthner's and von Hofmannsthal's perspectives as opposed to Wittgenstein's, see Nordmann's 'Thought Experiments' (2005).
7. For a thorough account of literary and philosophical approaches to language in the twentieth century, see Weller (2018).
8. For an in-depth account of the influence of Jewish mysticism on Lettrism, see also Sjöberg (2015).
9. Judaism displays some affinities with scepticism, as Mauthner himself had noticed (see Pisano 2016, 118–19), for God is ultimately unknowable, unnameable and unrepresentable.
10. For the present analysis, I have used the 1951 final version of *Traité* which contains figurative images in every chapter.

11. Although the protagonist is played by Isou and the commentary exposes his ideas on cinema, the voice-over associated with the character of Daniel is not Isou's, but that of Albert J. LeGros, which produces a further disassociation between what is seen – Isou – and what is heard – LeGros (see *Traité*'s opening credits).
12. It should be noted that the sadism of Isou's discrepant cinema differs from Aaron's (2007, 51–52) discussion of 1970s film theory's understanding of cinema as sadistic. In the latter, sadism stands for classical cinema's depriving the spectator of agency. Conversely, Isou's sadism consists of his desire to metaphorically and physically hurt spectators. More importantly, Isou's sadism implies an actively engaged spectator as opposed to the allegedly fixed, passive spectator of classical cinema.

Chapter 2

1. See Debord ([1961] 2006) and *Internationale situationniste* ([1969] 2006a; [1966] 2006c). For a detailed account of this invective, see also Dall'Asta and Grosoli (2011, 20–27).
2. For instance, the monochromatic screen can have a diegetic function (Ugenti 2013, 75–76) or a conventional punctuation function, signalling a passage of time primarily in the form of the fade to black (Burch 1981, 57; Venzi 2013, 62).
3. I use silence in the meaning of deliberately devoid of voices, noises, or music; nevertheless, there are still 'involuntary' sounds such as the projector's.
4. For an analysis of *Hurlements*' eliciting of an iconoclastic mental cancelling of images, see Cooper (2019, 135–40).
5. The term cinema, short for the French *cinématographe*, comes from the Ancient Greek words of *kinēma*/*κίνημα*, which means movement, and *grafō*/*γράφω*, which translates (among other possible meanings) as 'I write'. Additionally, the term *kinēma* derives from the stem of the verb *kineō*/*κινέω*, which means 'I move', and the suffix *–ma*/*–μα* which designates the result of the action of the verb, thus translating as that which has moved. Therefore, cinema etymologically translates as writing of that which has moved.
6. I address as mimetic the film movement which mimics our most habitual perception of movement.
7. For a discussion of the SI's critique of urbanism, see Plant (1992, 56–61).
8. 'In love the separate does still remain, but as something united and no longer as something separate; life [in the subject] senses life [in the object]' (Hegel [1798] 1971, 305).

Chapter 3

1. Unless otherwise specified, the translations from Bene are mine. I have tried to render at best his ideas, which he often expressed through invented neologisms and aural re-/dis-sonances.
2. There are inconsistencies with the numbering of the English translations of Eckhart's German sermons; see McGinn's Foreword to *The Complete Mystical Works of Meister Eckhart* (2009). I have used Walshe's numbering.
3. For a critical appraisal of Derrida's argument on Western logocentrism as phonocentric, see Cavarero (2005, 213–41), Dolar (2006, 36–43) and Kane (2014, 186–93).
4. For a further account of Bene's exoticism/eroticism, see Simsolo ([1973] 2011, 119–20).

Chapter 4

1. There are several models of faith which do not necessarily entail belief; see Bishop (2016).
2. The issue of belief and cinema has been developed by several scholars using different approaches. For a discussion of cinematic belief as a way to recover a belief in the phenomenal world, see, for instance, Bazin (1967, 9–16), Deleuze (1997a), Rushton (2011, 42–78), Cavell (1979) and Sinnerbrink (2012). For an argument on cinematic belief as emotion, see Sorfa (2017).
3. For further accounts of images as relational entities, see Mondzain (2019).
4. While Godard and most scholars identify the shots of the concentration camps in this fragment as filmed in Auschwitz and Ravensbrük, Witt (2013, 132) sustains that they were filmed in Dachau instead.
5. For a thorough discussion of *Histoire(s)* and the representation of the Shoah, see Saxton (2004; 2008).
6. The discourse on a possible redemptive power of film images resonates with Kracauer's (1960) argument on cinema's power to reveal aspects of physical reality that otherwise would go unnoticed. However, while in Kracauer's theory cinema can redeem reality by mechanically reproducing it – namely, by indexically bearing the traces of the recorded reality – in Godard's *Histoire(s)* cinema's revelatory capacity derives from the possibility of establishing new relationships between diverse images which coexist in a single frame. That is, Kracauer's trust in cinema's ability to mimetically reproduce phenomenal referents as a way to redeem the otherwise concealed reality is put to the test by Godard's multiple images.
7. Godard's images of and claims on Christianity in *Histoire(s)* are close to some arguments of mysticism (especially that of Meister Eckhart) and apophatic theology.

For instance, while Godard in *Histoire(s)* is claiming for an audio-visual representation of the Shoah, he nonetheless preserves its void through incomplete, stratified film images.

Part II

Chapter 5

1. Levinas delineates the difference between 'like' and 'same'. While to be like implies an identification coming from outside, because 'like' needs a second term of comparison, to be the same is instead an identification coming from within. Levinas (1969) affirms that 'the identity of the individual does not consist in being like to itself, and in letting itself be identified *from the outside* by a finger that points to it; it consists in being the *same* – in being oneself, in identifying oneself from within' (289).
2. In Aaron's discussion there is a distinction between ethics and morality, wherein the former involves issues of responsibility and requires a reflective response, while the latter refers to a socially coded emotional response aimed at reassuring the spectator rather than unsettling their moral beliefs.
3. Mondzain (2013; 2017; 2019) elaborates on the constitutive relational character of the image as *eikōn*, building on its etymological meaning and ancient and medieval philosophy's interpretations. While my understanding of iconoclasm in an artistic context diverges from Mondzain's, I nevertheless share her definition of the *eikōn* as relational.
4. For further accounts of noise as interruption, disturbance and transgression, see Attali (1985) and Hegarty (2008; 2020).

Chapter 6

1. Jarman's term for moralistic heteronormative society.
2. For a further account of *Blue*'s imaginative potential, see Cooper (2019, 76–87).
3. For an account of the queer potential of film sound-track, see Buhler (2013); for a discussion of sonic practices for a queering of the sound-track, see Davis (2008) and Suárez (2017).

Chapter 7

1. The more frequent use of colour in cinema is that of which Arnheim (1958, 154–60) and Münsterberg (1916, 146–48) were critical, for a mimetic use of colour

threatens cinema's art status by reducing the distance between the film image and its phenomenal referent.

2. While the monochromatic images in *Three Colours: Blue* are black, I sustain Venzi's (2006, 129) claim that, in this film, black acquires the symbolic value of an intensified blue. Pastoureau (2009), too, points out the closeness between black and blue, arguing that 'for a long time, blue, an unobtrusive and unpopular color, remained a sort of "sub-black" in the West or a black of a particular kind. Thus, the histories of these two colors can hardly be separated' (12).
3. While a fade signals the passage from an image to a blank screen, thereby implying a stark interruption of figuration, a dissolve indicates the gradual transition from one shot to another. As Bordwell (1985) explains, 'visually, the dissolve is simply a variant of the fade – a fade-out overlapped with a fade-in – but it is a fade during which the screen is never blank' (46). In this film, dissolves are used only for Agnes's flashbacks to partially deprive her character of the violence proper to the fades to red.

Chapter 8

1. For example, Cesare Lombroso's ([1876] 2006) study on the correlation between physiognomy and criminology, where he identifies criminal types based on their bodily, especially facial, appearance.
2. While the relationship involving the referent, its cinematic image and the photogenic aspect remains ambiguous in Delluc and Epstein, in the Russian formalists' appropriation of the term, *photogénie* is developed in a more defined manner. *Photogénie* becomes a quality entirely given by the film medium through the stylistic manipulations of the phenomenal referent, which is not photogenic in itself (Eikhenbaum [1927] 1982, 5–31; Tynyanov [1927] 1982, 32–54). Conversely, in Delluc and Epstein, cinematic devices can only accentuate the photogenic aspect, which remains distinctive of certain objects and subjects.
3. Interestingly, there is a historical association with Holy Mary and the colour blue in religious painting, which has been variably interpreted; see for instance, Gage (2009, 129–30) and Murray, Murray and Devonshire Jones (2014, 65).