The index and the uncanny


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Abstract

Book synopsis: This new collection of essays questions the old orthodoxies of the image as a formal object. The contributors take note of the new condition of the image and its intersection with time and suggest new ways of configuring the relationship between them. Ranging widely over philosophy, psychoanalysis, and literary studies, as well as art history and media studies, the essays include studies of photography—the idea of a still as bound to a structure of the past haunting the present; sculpture—for example, unpacking a famous piece such as the Laocoön into distinct layers of temporality; painting—for example, through an illuminating discussion of Manet, and a discussion of the merits of a Freudian understanding of blocked or repressed memory against the Prousian/Leibniz model of memory as a crystal image.

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frightening to us; allow it is hard to define precisely. The uncanny or the eerie is the species of frightening things that evoke something familiar. This understanding, however, seems at odds with both the normal use of the term and the linguistic roots of the uncanny, which are mostly related to foreign or alien things. Through detailed analysis of the German roots of the word, however, Freud believes he can show that the uncanny