



Graziella

The Corrected Edition

~~Alphonse de Lamartine~~

Jalal Toufic



Graziella

Toufic, Jalal.

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Forthcoming Books

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Author's Note to the Corrected Edition

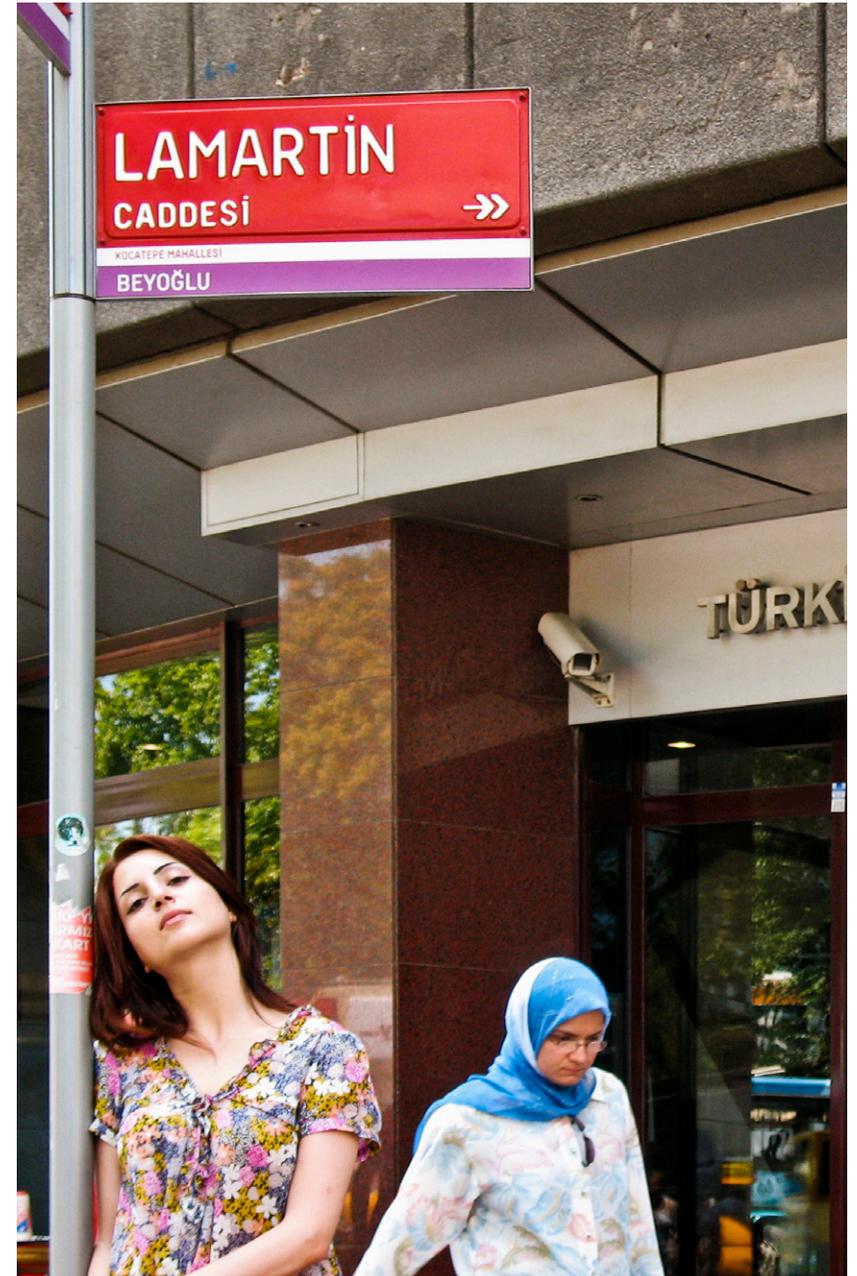
Gustave Flaubert: “Why are you wasting your time rereading *Graziella* when one has so many things to reread? That’s an inexcusable distraction” (*Lettres de Flaubert (1830-1880)*, édition Conard, 1926-1930; édition électronique par Danielle Girard et Yvan Leclerc, <http://flaubert.univ-rouen.fr/correspondance/>; my translation). From November 2009 onwards, one should answer Flaubert’s question thus: I am rereading *Graziella*—without having read it in the first place! (Flaubert noted the following in a letter to Louise Colet, April 24, 1852: “Let’s chat a little about *Graziella*. It is a mediocre work, even though it is the best thing Lamartine has done in prose”—because Jalal Toufic has rewritten it, *corrected it* (should the last two words be pronounced in the manner Grady utters “I corrected them” in Kubrick’s *The Shining*?). Moreover, if one has not already done so, one should then reread Toufic’s *Undying Love, or Love Dies*—if before doing this, one reads or rereads the revised edition of Toufic’s *Diſtracted*, for example pages 54-58, that’s an excusable, for untimely—in the Nietzschean sense—distraction.

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Books by Jalal Toufic

- *Undeserving Lebanon* (Forthcoming Books, 2007; available for download as a PDF file at <http://www.jalaltoufic.com/downloads.htm>)
- ‘*Āshūrā*’: *This Blood Spilled in My Veins* (Forthcoming Books, 2005)
- *Two or Three Things I’m Dying to Tell You* (Post-Apollo, 2005)
- *Undying Love, or Love Dies* (Post-Apollo, 2002)
- *Forthcoming* (Atelos, 2000)
- *Over-Sensitivity* (2nd ed., Forthcoming Books, 2009; available for download as a PDF file at <http://www.jalaltoufic.com/downloads.htm>)
- *(Vampires): An Uneasy Essay on the Undead in Film* (revised and expanded edition, Post-Apollo, 2003)
- *Diſtracted* (2nd edition, Tuumba, 2003)





My first gift to her was Lamartine's book *Graziella*. When she came across me a few days later, she asked me: "Have you read it?" "No! I bought it for you because you're the first person I've met who has this dainty name! *Graziella*: Italian, pet form of *grazia*, 'grace.' Have you read the book?" "Yes, the very day you gave it to me."

I would like when doing a search in a library catalogue or on the internet that her name be linked first to mine rather than to *Lamartine*—hence, in part, this book, which will make it so.

"When I was eighteen, my family entrusted me to the care of one of my relatives who was called by business matters to Tuscany ... My figure, my youth, my enthusiasm, my isolation in the midst of an unknown country had interested one of my travel companions during the journey from Florence to Rome. He became attached to me with a sudden friendship. He was a handsome young man almost my age.... [He] showered me with consideration and kindness. I responded to his advances with the abandon and naivety characteristic of my age. We had not yet arrived in Rome, and already the handsome traveler and I were inseparable.... In the inns, my new friend was my interpreter; at table, he served me first; in the carriage, he made room for me next to him; and if I slept, I was certain that my head will have his shoulder as a pillow."¹ Thus begins Lamartine's *Graziella*. Because of the book's title and because it begins in the first person and because of such lines as "He was a handsome young man almost my

age.... I responded to his advances with the abandon and naivety characteristic of my age,” it first seems that it is Graziella who is the narrator. It is only by the sixth paragraph that the narrator, if not young Lamartine, refers to *himself* as: “*le jeune étranger*” (the young [male] stranger). Is there in the book itself a justification for or repercussion of this introductory misidentification? No,² there is no justification for or repercussion of the misidentification in the book itself, as would be the case for example had Graziella suffered from psychosis, a condition in which one may “mistake” oneself for others (at the onset of his psychosis, of his dying before dying, Nietzsche wrote in a letter: “Every name in history is I ... This autumn, as lightly clad as possible, I twice attended my funeral, first as Count Robilant [no, he is my son, insofar as I am Carlo Alberto, my nature below], but I was Antonelli myself³); so, it is legitimate to view the misidentification as symptomatic of the book’s relation to its referential outside: the historical woman that Lamartine described was not called Graziella. From the “Alphonse de Lamartine” entry in *Encyclopaedia Universalis*: “... many relationships, one of which, when he was twenty one years old, at Naples, with an employee of the tobacco factory, this Antoniella, whom, thirty years later, he will disguise as a “*corailleuse*” (an employee of a coral factory), and baptize Graziella (she had left him a memory tainted with regret) ...” About his eponymous protagonist, I will therefore assert: “That is not Graziella”—the real Graziella is my Graziella. I’ve done second editions of my first three books, *Diſtracted*, (*Vampires*): *An Uneasy Essay on the Undead in Film*, and *Over-Sensitivity*, and here I am starting a “revision” of Lamartine’s book *Graziella*!⁴

I believe it is legitimate to establish a correlation, indeed an equation between the number of concepts a thinker constructs or is able to construct and the loves he or she has or is capable of having in his or her life. Heidegger writes in *What Is Called Thinking?*: “Every thinker thinks one only thought.... And for the thinker the difficulty is to hold fast to this one only thought as the one and only thing that he must think ...”⁵; in which case, and based on the aforementioned equality, he had only one love (Hannah Arendt?). Gilles Deleuze: “There are two kinds of philosopher, if you accept the definition by which philosophy is the activity consisting of creating concepts.... There are those who engage in a very sober creation of concepts ... Descartes: That’s the type of philosopher with a very sober concept-creation.... We could assign to him five or six concepts; it’s an enormous feat to have invented six concepts, but it’s a very sober creation. And then there are exasperated philosophers.... One witnesses a mad creation of concepts. The typical example is Leibniz.”⁶ I therefore would not be surprised to learn that Leibniz managed to *love* numerous women. Graziella sometimes asks me how many previous loves I had; I have never answered her. But I believe she can deduce if not the number of loves I’ve actually had, then the number of the loves I was capable of having from the number of concepts I have already created (the “Author’s Note” to the second edition of my book *Diſtracted* lists five—before the “etc.”⁷).

Graziella: “Was Jennifer beautiful?” “Yes. She was a *sleeping beauty*. I prefer you: an insomniac beauty.”



While it is possible to love more than one woman, it is impossible to love two women with the same name. This is because love implies that the lover would at least try to resurrect the beloved when the latter dies, which requires that the latter have an exclusive (first) name (the family name does not seem to matter: “Lazarus come out ...”). One loves only one Graziella, one Amy, one Minh-ha, one Jennifer. In the USA, 1 in 107 females is called *Jennifer* (name popularity rank: 6); 1 in 221 females is called *Amy* (name popularity rank: 32); and 1 in 50000 females is called *Minh* (name popularity rank: 2713). When a lovely young woman named Jennifer asked me: “Why is it you don’t love me?” I answered her reservedly: “It is because I’ve already loved (a) Jennifer. I can love you only in my dreams, where you may, through the dream work, appear under another name (or else for those intervals during which I forget your name—and your ‘name’s woe’ [see Freud’s *The Psychopathology of Everyday Life*, particularly ‘The Forgetting of Proper Names,’ and my *Undying Love, or Love Dies*]). You can at most be a dream woman for me.”

In Shakespeare’s *Romeo and Juliet*, Romeo loved a woman before Juliet: Rosaline, a Capulet and Juliet’s cousin. What about Juliet? Didn’t she love a youth before Romeo? Was she, thirteen years old, too young for that? No, as her mother indicates while trying to convince her to marry County Paris: “Well, think of marriage now; younger than you / Here in Verona, ladies of esteem, / Are made already mothers—by my count— / I was your mother much upon these years / That you are now a maid...” (1.3.71-75; cf. County Paris’ response to her father’s objection that his daughter is not yet

ripe to be a bride: “Younger than she are happy mothers made” [1.2.12]).⁸ If not too young, was Juliet too chaste to have a lover before Romeo? No, as he arrives at Capulet’s festivities, masked Romeo refuses his friends’ inducement to dance, saying: “A torch for me. Let wantons light of heart / Tickle the senseless rushes with their heels ...” (1.4.33-34). One of those who will dance and tickle the senseless rushes with their heels is Juliet, which would make her a wanton light of heart. Taking into account her nurse’s “Now by my maidenhead at twelve year old, / I bade her come. What lamb, what ladybird, / God forbid! ...” (1.3.2-4), I would assume that her first amorous relationship took place when she was twelve. What was her first beloved’s name? After learning that the name of the masked man with whom she danced at her father’s party is Romeo, and while standing on the balcony, she exclaims: “O Romeo, Romeo! wherefore art thou Romeo? / Deny thy father and refuse thy name; / Or, if thou wilt not, be but sworn my love, / And I’ll no longer be a Capulet.” The alternative she proposes is oddly asymmetrical: if he is unwilling to deny his father and refuse his name, but is sworn her love, she does not propose to deny her first name but only to no longer be a Capulet (indeed she will shortly do just that, no longer be a Capulet, by marrying Romeo, albeit in secret, thus becoming a Montague). Why does she wish him to lose not only his family name—such a wish is understandable since his family is in a blood feud with her family—but also his first name? It is because her first beloved’s name was ... *Romeo!* Juliet’s “O Romeo, Romeo!”⁹ is thus not simply a recurrent invocation, but betrays and intimates the existence in her amorous life of two Romeos. Were I to do an adaptation of Shakespeare’s

play, which already has several titles—*Romeo and Juliet*, *The Tragedy of Romeo and Juliet*, *The Most Lamentable and Excellent Tragedy of Romeo and Juliet*—I would title it: *Romeo, Romeo and Juliet*. To Juliet's oddly asymmetrical proposal, the hidden Romeo wonders in an aside: "Shall I hear more, or shall I speak at this?" Does he suspect the existence of another, previous Romeo with whom Juliet had an amorous relation, and so waits to discern which of the two Romeos, himself or his homonym, Juliet is invoking? Earlier in the play, suspecting that Benvolio was sent by his father to find him, Romeo told this friend: "Tut, I have lost myself, I am not here; / This is not Romeo, he's some other where" (1.1.193-194). Romeo's answer can be considered an evasive reply to not disclose his whereabouts to his father as well as indicative of the state of the one who, in love (with Rosaline), has lost his bearings, but it also, symptomatically, implies the existence of another Romeo some other where in the city of Verona. (When, in Hitchcock's *Vertigo*, Scottie asks the entranced Judy who, unbeknownst to him, is impersonating Madeleine, "Where are you now?" I can well imagine her answering him: "Tut, I have lost myself, I am not here; / This is not Madeleine, she's some other where.") Is it then deviant that the letter Friar Laurence sends to Romeo with Friar John should not reach its addressee when there are two Romeos? How did Juliet behave with the first Romeo? Precisely as she describes how women usually behave during courtship: afraid that he would think that she is too quickly won, she frowned and was perverse and said to him, "Nay," and had the coying to be strange. So he wooed, until she ended up asking him: "Dost thou love me?" He said "Ay" and swore—by the ('inconstant) moon. She took his

word, but he proved false (2.1.138-149). This first Romeo, as one can deduce from the initial apprehension of Juliet on sending her nurse to ask about her masked dance partner's name, was married in secret and Juliet discovered too late his treachery: "Go, ask his name. If he be married, / My grave is like to be my wedding-bed" (1.4.247-248). It is against the background of her first experience that Juliet implores Romeo, the second Romeo: "... O gentle Romeo, / If thou dost love, pronounce it faithfully" (2.1.136-137). What happens in the case of Paris, who wants to wed someone, Juliet, who unbeknownst to him is already married in secret, was prefigured in the case of Juliet with the first Romeo. Would that secret wife of the first Romeo be no other than Rosaline? Even if this is not the case, I envision that Rosaline was also wooed by the first Romeo and responded to the advances of the second Romeo by rigorously refusing to love someone with the first name of her previous lover. How can others—with the exception of Juliet's nurse, who later exclaims, "O Romeo, Romeo, / Whoever would have thought it Romeo?" (3.2.41-42), Friar Laurence and the second Romeo (the same three who know about Juliet's secret marriage to the latter)—not have known about her infatuation with, if not love for this other, previous Romeo? But then, with the exception of her nurse, do the other members of her household know about her relationship, indeed marriage to the second Romeo? No, Juliet and Romeo's relationship and indeed their wedding happen in secret and remains a secret until the final moments of the play. Juliet: "O Romeo, Romeo ... refuse thy name ... / 'Tis but thy name that is my enemy; / Thou art thyself, thou not a Montague. / What's Montague? It is nor hand nor foot, / Nor

arm nor face, nor any other part / Belonging to a man. / O be some other name! / What's in a name? That which we call a rose / By any other name would smell as sweet" (2.1.81-87). If there is one person who ought not to feel indifferent regarding the name it is Juliet, since she loved twice a Romeo! "Romeo, doff thy name, / And for thy name, which is no part of thee / Take all myself" (2.1.90-92). Romeo: "I take thee at thy word: / Call me but love, and I'll be new baptized; / Henceforth I never will be Romeo" (2.1.92-94). When shortly Juliet asks him, "What man art thou that, thus bescreened in night, / So stumblest on my counsel?" (2.1.95-96), Romeo responds: "By a name / I know not how to tell thee who I am ..." (2.1.96-98). There is a double entendre to the latter words: by a name he is incapable of telling her who he is because he has just sworn to her, "Henceforth I never will be Romeo," and because he has the same name as her previous lover, so that the name would not by itself differentiate the two Romeos—hence he's not later too resistant to doff his *seemingly* useless name. When Juliet calls him, "O gentle Romeo," we can consider *gentle* as an epithet distinguishing this Romeo from the other, unfaithful one, who was married (in secret) to another girl. Similarly, Mercutio's conjuration of his melancholic friend, who apprehends himself as dead ("She [Rosaline] hath forsworn to love, and in that vow / Do I live dead, that live to tell it now" [1.1.219-220]), "I conjure thee ... / ... / That in thy likeness thou appear to us" (2.1.7-22), has a double entendre even if it is not spoken with a double tongue. The first meaning implies that Mercutio is unaware that in any conjuration of the dead (Mercutio: "Romeo! Humours! Madman! Passion! Lover! / ... / He heareth

not, he stirreth not, he moveth not; / The ape is dead") performed neither by Jesus Christ, "the resurrection and the life" (John 11:25), nor through his name and agency, there is a grave risk that it is another, albeit in one's likeness, that will come forth from the realm of doubles and doubling. The second meaning implies that Mercutio is trying to avert that his conjuration of Romeo make appear not his friend Romeo but the other living Romeo. While in the case of Romeo, his love of Juliet is love at first sight, in the case of Juliet, who sees him neither during their first encounter since he is then "covered with an antic face" (1.4.169), nor, initially, during their unexpected second meeting at her balcony since he is then "bescreened in night," it is *love at first name*. While it is gratifying to call the beloved, hearing one's name uttered by the beloved lover, with that singular inflection with which he or she pronounces it, is so much more enlivening that when the lover recurrently calls the name of the beloved, it is as if he or she is implicitly yielding to the latter's craving to hear his or her name repeatedly uttered by the lover. What makes the lover not yield fully and therefore inordinately to his or her gratification in repeatedly uttering the beloved's name and to the craving of the beloved to hear it repeatedly pronounced by the lover is that every time the latter calls the name of the beloved in the Christian era, it is as if he or she is practicing resurrecting him or her. I propose to understand by *first name* not only the proper name as distinct from the family name, but also, set against the hypothetical backdrop of a love relationship in which the lover intends to resurrect the beloved, the name of the beloved, who cannot but be the first beloved with this name (the first Romeo, the first Graziella, etc.), and thus whose

name is a first (*and last*) name. Therefore I recommend using *first name* or *Christian name* in the context of love and the expectation that the lover would try to resurrect the beloved (“Lazarus, come out!” [John 11:43]), at least in the Christian era ushered by “the Resurrection and the Life”; and using *forename* or *prename* in the context of the *sous-entendu* interpellation a mortal, who undergoes over-turns, addresses to himself or herself in the mirror: “Is it at all surprising that a film with the epithet *a picture shot in the back* should raise the question of naming: ... ‘What if I have called the flower by another name?’ ‘Suppose we call it “image” but the real word is “reality”’ (Godard’s *King Lear*, 1987). Already at the time of *Prénom Carmen*, 1983, Godard was proposing that ‘the cinema should show things before they receive a name, so that they can be given a name, or that we can give in to the business of naming them,’ and advancing that ‘the real title of the film [*Prénom Carmen*] could be *Before the Name*. Before Language, in other words, *Before Language (Children Playing Carmen)*.’¹⁰ It is much more difficult to reach this condition for humans than for flowers or plays. Since a name is presupposed by the mirror image’s 180°-turn response that makes it face a human, the human has a name even if he or she has never been given a first name by his or her parents or parent surrogates.... Before the first name is not the absence of a name, but rather the prename, which is the condition of possibility of the first name. Reaching the condition prior to any name requires that one get to a time that precedes interpellation or that instances its undoing: to an infant around a year old, or to someone undergoing the psychotic experience of the over-turn of the mirror image—the transitory madness of *King Lear* at the

bewildering turn of events would have provided an occasion for such a scene. The parenthesis of the alternate title for *Prénom Carmen* prepares one for the first eventuality; the epithet of *King Lear*, for the second.”¹¹ Isn’t it dangerous to be nameless (Romeo: “Henceforth I never will be Romeo” [2.1.94]; “By a name / I know not how to tell thee who I am ...” [2.1.96-98]; Juliet: “... Art thou not Romeo and a Montague?” “Neither, fair saint, if either thee dislike” [2.1.104])? Isn’t it dangerous to belittle and downplay the name, as Juliet does: “O Romeo, Romeo ... refuse thy name ... / ’Tis but thy name that is my enemy; / Thou art thyself, thou not a Montague. / What’s Montague? It is nor hand nor foot, / Nor arm nor face, nor any other part / Belonging to a man” (2.1.76-85)? Why didn’t she, who was resuscitated, “resurrected,” so much as consider resurrecting him? Was it in part that she had downplayed the name and therefore could no longer resurrect the dead? If he maintains his name, the name of another, she cannot resurrect *him*, but if he doesn’t, she cannot conjure and resurrect the nameless. In the tomb, looking at dead Romeo, Juliet really encounters what it is to be nameless, thus ostensibly unavailable for resurrection: “merely” hand, foot, arm, face, and other part-objects (since he had not asked her to doff her first name and she had never volunteered to do so but at most indicated her willingness to relinquish her family name, why didn’t Romeo, even without reading the explanatory letter of the friar, respond to his servant, Balthasar, who had just brought him the following news from Verona concerning Juliet, “Her body sleeps in Capel’s monument, / And her immortal part with angels lives. / I saw her laid low in her kindred’s vault” [5.1.18-20], with, “She *has fallen asleep; but*

I am going there to wake [her] up” [John 11:11], then call the dead Juliet—to life?) In the absence of the beloved’s name and therefore of one of the ostensible conditions of resurrection (“Lazarus, come out!” [John 11:43]), the lover has to bury the beloved. What is the condition for that—at least according to Jesus Christ?

Graziella, who cannot imagine surviving me, who is nineteen years older than she is, often lovingly exclaims: “*Tu’burni!*” (May you bury me one day). Do we not feel that our beloved has not fulfilled some promise when we hear that he or she died before us? Since we dread the task of resurrecting, is there not in every love the implicit request of the following promise: promise me not to die before me? Love calls for resurrecting the beloved were he or she to die other than from old age, or else, in case he or she does not believe in resurrection or has become nameless, treats him or her as someone who will die later than the lover. If she does not believe in resurrection or feels unable to perform it regarding me, then by loving me Graziella would be already sacrificing to me nineteen years of her life (though imminent developments in medicine and genetics, with their “promise” of an indefinite life extension, may be changing this problematic). Could princess Elisabeta have told her husband, Count Dracul, in Francis Ford Coppola’s *Bram Stoker’s Dracula* (1992), “May you bury me one day”? On returning home after winning a victory for Christendom over the Ottomans, Count Dracul discovers that his beloved wife had committed suicide on being misled into believing that he was killed in the battle. In response to the Christian clergy’s refusal to give her proper burial rites, he turns into a vampire. Is his gesture sacrilegious, as the bishop protests? I consider it Christian: now

that he has turned into a dead person (as he later confesses to Mina), he can bury her, his own dead: “But Jesus told him, ‘Follow me, and let the dead bury their own dead’” (Matthew 8:22; cf. Luke 9:60). It is because the dead Lucy is buried by the living that she becomes a revenant and haunts the living; contrariwise, it is because Dracul, who had already turned into a vampire, buries his wife that she no longer returns.¹² *May you bury me one day*, especially when said by a Christian, means “die (before dying) with me,” for it is the dead who can bury the dead. Every time a self-proclaimed Christian, including a clergyman, buries someone, he or she is committing something very unchristian, since by doing so he or she is implying that he or she is dead, therefore someone who does not believe in the Resurrection and the Life. Given that Christ is “the Resurrection and the Life,” is it at all surprising that he did not bury anyone? No;¹³ what is unsettling is that the Church has performed *this most unchristian of rites* and institutionalized it. Could the German lover of *Hiroshima mon amour* have told his beloved French young woman in Nevers: “May you bury me one day”? In this film in which at no point are we provided with the first names of the lovers, when someone fired on the German lover from a garden in the final days of the German occupation of France, he did not ask her to resurrect him and she had the following deathly retroaction: “I stayed near his body all that day and then all the next night.... Little by little he grew cold beneath me.... the moment of his death actually escaped me, because ... even at that very moment, and even afterward, yes, even afterward, I can say that I couldn’t feel the slightest difference between this dead body and mine. All I could find between this body and mine were

obvious similarities ...”¹⁴ I would like to think that while she could forgive them their killing of her beloved—after all he was a member of an occupation army—she could not forgive these so-called Christians that they did not let her, who died before dying on his dying then dead body, bury her own dead, stole this act from her and did it themselves. A decade later, she asks her new, Japanese lover: “You were here, at Hiroshima?” “No, of course I wasn’t!” “That’s true! How stupid of me!” Was this question simply stupid or was it symptomatic of her unconscious expectation that he be dead, like she herself was over the dead body of her German lover in Nevers? Had she, who had come to Hiroshima to act in a film on peace, and who had once loved a soldier from the army occupying her country, ever played in a film or theater adaptation of *Romeo and Juliet*? Friar Laurence advises Juliet, whom he had already secretly wed to Romeo, to consent to her father’s forceful request to marry County Paris but to, on the night preceding the appointed day, “this distilling liquor drink thou off; / When presently through all thy veins shall run / A cold and drowsy humour, for no pulse / Shall keep his native progress, but surcease. / No warmth, no breath shall testify thou livest; / The roses in thy lips and cheeks shall fade / To wanny ashes, thy eyes’ windows fall / Like death when he shuts up the day of life. / Each part, deprived of supple government, / Shall stiff and stark and cold appear like death; / And in this borrowed likeness of shrunk death / Thou shalt continue two-and-forty hours, / And then awake as from a pleasant sleep. / Now, when the bridegroom in the morning comes / To rouse thee from thy bed, there art thou dead. / Then, as the manner of our country is, / In thy best robes, uncovered on the bier / Thou shalt be borne

to that same ancient vault / Where all the kindred of the Capulets lie. / In the meantime, against thou shalt awake, / Shall Romeo by my letters know our drift; / And hither shall he come, and he and I / Will watch thy waking, and that very night / Shall Romeo bear thee hence to Mantua” (4.1.94-117). What would have happened had Romeo reached Juliet *after* she awakened from her deathlike coma? She would have eloped with him to Mantua. Would this have been because Romeo had been banished from Verona after killing Tybald as well as to get away from her family’s demand that she be part of its feud with his family? It is also because she had been in close proximity to the dead, indeed was herself quasi dead “in a vault, an ancient receptacle, / Where for this many hundred years the bones / Of all my buried ancestors are packed; / Where bloody Tybalt, yet but green in earth, / Lies fest’ring in his shroud; where, as they say, / At some hours in the night spirits resort” (4.3.38-43), and “With worms” as her “chambermaids” (5.3.109). And in *Hiroshima mon amour*, is the young woman banished to the basement away from her family and the other inhabitants of Nevers solely because of the disgrace she caused her family by loving a German during the occupation of France by Germany? No, it is also because of the taboo upon contact with the dead, which she transgressed.¹⁵ Let us imagine that Romeo, who loved Rosaline with an unrequited love but then forgot her and her name on encountering Juliet (“I have forgot that name and that name’s woe” [2.2.46]), was nonetheless completely faithful to Juliet, that he had lain on her body until, like the female protagonist of Resnais/*Duras’ Hiroshima mon amour*, he could no longer feel any difference between his ostensibly living body and her “dead” body.

Then, as Juliet starts to awaken slowly but spasmodically, Romeo, still unable to distinguish between her body and his, feels again (that his body is alive). Wouldn't he thus have allowed her to resurrect him without a name? Wouldn't they have thus invented a way to "resurrect" the nameless? When Juliet wakes up from her deathlike sleep, from her state of "living corpse, closed in a dead man's tomb" (5.2.29), how come she is not under the sway of *the malady of death*¹⁶?¹⁷ How come on kissing Romeo, who had just committed suicide on mistaking her for dead, she does not feel, if not exclaim: "I couldn't feel the slightest difference between this dead body and mine. All I could find between this body and mine were obvious similarities?"¹⁸ (The great artwork about the indistinguishability of life and death induced by love is not Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet* but Resnais and Duras' *Hiroshima mon amour*.) On discovering that Romeo had mortally poisoned himself, Juliet, who had died (before dying), instead of burying Romeo stabs herself and falls on his body and dies, leaving it to others, who have not died before dying, to bury, improperly, her own dead. A Juliet whose love for Romeo was stronger, more intense would have lain on him and, like the protagonist of *Hiroshima mon amour*, no longer able to differentiate between her body and his dead body, would not have thought of committing suicide (Romeo's father, who announces in response to the suicide of the two lovers, "... I will ray her statue in pure gold, / That whiles Verona by that name is known, / There shall no figure at such rate be set, / As that of true and faithful Juliet" [5.3.299-302], reveals himself to be still unheeding that, having already "died" and been buried, Juliet's actual death is a second death, the second

death, which precludes the sort of survival through posthumous renown).¹⁹ What is lamentable in *The Most Excellent and Lamentable Tragedy of Romeo and Juliet* is that it misses the opportunity to make us understand by Juliet's nurse's "women grow by men" (1.3.97) not only that a woman grows with child conceived with a man, but also that she does so by no longer being able to differentiate between her body and that of her beloved; and that notwithstanding that the condition of possibility of the appropriate burial according to Jesus Christ was attained by Juliet, who died before dying, the burial, her burial of Romeo, was missed. An adaptation in which the outstanding burial of Romeo by Juliet is performed would be—setting aside other factors—if not the most excellent adaptation of Shakespeare's play then a most excellent adaptation of it—one that would change it from *The Most Excellent and Lamentable Tragedy of Romeo and Juliet* into if not *Romeo, Romeo and Juliet* then *Romeo and Juliet*.

God certainly knows what others hide ("Lo! nothing in the earth or in the heavens is hidden from Allāh" [Qur'ān 3:5; cf. Qur'ān 3:29 and Qur'ān 14:38]), but Iblīs' immeasurable love reveals to Him what is hidden in Him, God, the hidden treasure: "I was a Hidden Treasure and loved to be known. Therefore I created the Creation that I might be known" (*a ḥadīth qudsī*).²⁰ What is usually said about God in negative theology, that He is beyond existence, that we can say about him neither that He exists nor that He does not exist, should (also) be applied to the *hidden treasure*. God is jealous of that excess—of nothing—that Iblīs sensed lovingly. It is part of the infinite conceit of many humans to think that God

sacrificed His Son for them, out of pity and love for them; and to think that they may end up in hell (among humans, who are in part the debased result of Iblīs’ attempt to forget, only saints and great mystics, for example al-Ḥallāj, are worthy of hell, understood as the unbearable suffering caused by the withdrawal of God’s love from Iblīs: “Then go thou forth from hence, for lo! thou art outcast” [Qur’ān 7:18]). God sacrificed His Son for the love of Iblīs, primarily His greatest lover; secondarily, and as a result of Iblīs’ attempt to become oblivious of his forced separation from his only Beloved, God, through the demiurgical creation of so many base worlds and states of being, the enemy (“and the enemy who sows them is the devil” [Matthew 13:39]): “You have heard that it was said, ‘Love your neighbor²¹ and hate your enemy.’ But I tell you: Love your enemies ... If you love those who love you, what reward will you get? Are not even the tax collectors doing that?” (Matthew 5:43-46).

With the exception of some Sufis and other mystics,²² I haven’t come across one author who has written a book from the perspective of the beloved!—not even an inspired writer or thinker, and yet what is an inspired writer or thinker but one who does not necessarily love writing or thinking, but is loved by them? Roland Barthes does not address this condition as a possible position of enunciation and discourse in his symptomatically titled book *A Lover’s Discourse: Fragments*. Given that Graziella loves me, will I write a book titled *A Beloved’s Creation: Much Ado about The Hidden Treasure* that would be an attempt to creatively know what hidden treasure she senses in me? Having written eight books (*Forthcoming* [2000];

Undying Love, or Love Dies [2002]; *‘Āshūrā’: This Blood Spilled in My Veins* [Forthcoming Books, 2005] ...), a treasure, albeit a forthcoming one (except for a small group of poets [Lyn Hejinian ...], writers [Doug Rice ...], artists [Richard Foreman, Lynn Marie Kirby, Walid Raad ...], musicians [Diamanda Galás, Larry Ochs, John Zorn ...], and video makers [Roy Samaha ...]?)—rather than a hidden one—it is somewhat impoverishing to be loved, to change from (being implicated in) a treasure to a hidden treasure—one that cannot exist expect through creation by the beloved (see *Undying Love, or Love Dies*)—or the lover?

Graziella: “Today I felt eccentric regarding my body: I felt that it belonged more to you than to me!”

She sent me the following in several messages by SMS on 12 April 2004: “I *miss* you, I *mess* you, I *muss* you ... Maybe I don’t know how to spell it, but you certainly teach me how to feel it. I don’t understand how it is that in Hitchcock’s *39 Steps* the woman tries so hard to extricate her hand from the handcuffs tying her to the man. I imagine that once she falls in love with him she would look back with nostalgia and longing on that episode and demand that they get manacled again.”

Graziella is willing to give me the mad promise, “Till death do us part,”²³ that is, the promise to follow me into the labyrinthine realm of death, with its over-turns, where we will be parted.

A Lovers' Discourse on a Mutual Cinematic Love Object

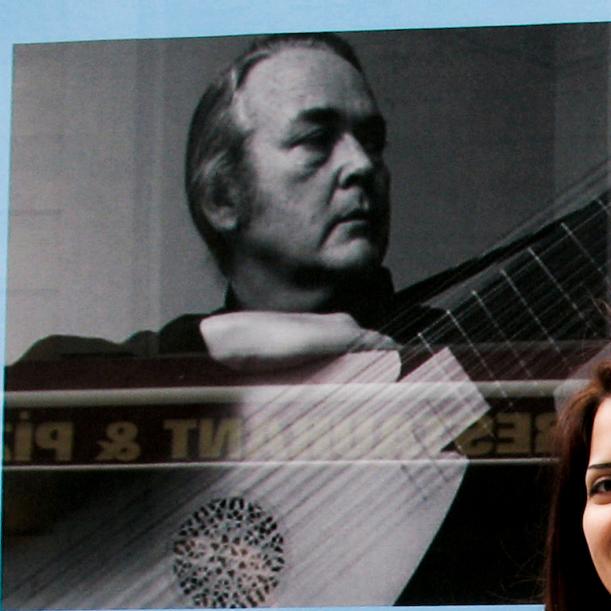
—Graziella Rizkallah: In your seminar on Tarkovsky at Holy Spirit University—Kaslik, Lebanon, you mentioned that he is among the rarefied group of filmmakers who made you stop trying to make films. Why was that?

—Jalal Toufic: I thought that cinema had to do with the Imaginal World, the autonomous world (in relation to humans) where “spirits are embodied and bodies are spiritualized,” and I was unable to make images that belonged to that realm and/or provided access to it, so very quickly I stopped trying to make films. What we see in the credits sequence of *Noštalgia* as well as in the codas of that film and of *Solaris* are images from the Imaginal World, an imagination that is independent of the subject (*khayāl munfašil*), that has an objective existence outside his mind and with which he may or may not manage to get connected. In *Solaris*, we encounter initially exemplars of *khayāl muttašil* (contiguous or dependent imagination), the recurrent projections, by the sentient ocean Solaris, of cosmonaut Kris Kelvin’s dead wife Hari, so an imagination attached to the person, one that therefore cannot be separated from him without losing any existence—indeed, when he leaves the second embodiment of Hari in his room to go to a meeting with a fellow cosmonaut, she, unable to continue in existence independently of him, “dies” while trying to bore the metallic door to reach him. It is after he resigns himself to the sacrifice of the one who is a contiguous imagination that he reaches, at the end of *Solaris*, an independent imagination: his father and the house surrounded by a stretch of landscape. These

Tarkovskian images are not in the Russia that is an area of Earth, but in a Russia of the Imaginal World; the latter is not in him, as *his* imagination, but he IS in it. The real nostalgia is not for this passing world but for a world where things are not transient, for the Imaginal World. So many of the images in Tarkovsky’s films that are mistaken for memories, for example the credits sequence of *Noštalgia*, are not occurrences that happened in the historical world, but are rather their corresponding events in the Imaginal World. Indeed we witness in them a characteristic of the Imaginal world: the simultaneous presence of the same person at two different locations. The cosmonaut Snaut declares in Tarkovski’s *Solaris*: “We want to extend the Earth to the utmost frontiers of the cosmos. We don’t know what to do with other worlds. We don’t need other worlds.” I would say that from a Tarkovskian perspective, we don’t need other worlds but we need the Imaginal World corresponding to this world; indeed the great Tarkovskian trip is not toward other worlds, but toward the Imaginal World. I recommend as an Arabic release title for *Solaris*: *Hūrqaalyā*.²⁴

—Graziella Rizkallah: I have written in my MA thesis (*Tarkovski : La cathédrale-monde, le monde-cerveau, et l’(e)au-delà (de la maison?)*), drawing on Deleuze’s writing on Kubrick, that the great Tarkovskian journey, at least in *Solaris*, is an exploration of the brain.²⁵ Since I have just mentioned another filmmaker, Kubrick, let me ask you who were the other filmmakers who made you stop attempting to make films?

—Jalal Toufic: Among the other filmmakers are Sokurov (his *Whispering Pages*—but not *Confessions*), Bokerowski (*The*



21 Mart
Cuma > **WORKSHOP &
KONFERANS**

ROBERT BARTO

Saat: 15.00
Etkinlik ücretsizdir.

VE İNTERNET

Etkinlik ücretsizdir.

22 Mart
Cumartesi >
WORKSHOP & KONSER

PAOLO PANDOLFO

Saat: 15.00
Etkinlik ücretsizdir.

PAOLO PANDOLFO, viola da gamba

Saat: 20.00
Tam: 10 YTL Öğrenci: 5 YTL

31 Mart
Pazartesi > **SE
KONFERAN**

KAYITSIZ / UNRECORDED Jalal Toufic

Saat: 18.30
Etkinlik ücretsizdir.



Akbank Sanat
>Yeni Kuşak **Tiyatro**

Şeylerin Şekli

Yazar	>Neil LaBute
Çeviren / Yöneten	>Mehmet Ergen
Dekor / Kostüm	>Neil Irish
Işık	>Yakup Çartık
Oyuncular	>Esra Bezen Bilgin >Betül Çobanoğlu >Bartu Küçükçağlayan >Deniz Celiloğlu

5>12>19>26 Mart Çarşamba Saat: 17.00 / 20.00
7 Mart Cuma Saat: 17.00 / 20.00
Tam: 12 YTL Öğrenci: 6 YTL

Angel), Paradjanov (his *Sayat Nova*—but not *Hakob Hovnatanyan* [1967]: *Sayat Nova* is not a rendition, a recreation of the life of the Armenian troubadour but a medium of access to the Imaginal World, showing his Life in the Imaginal World, while *Hakob Hovnatanyan* is a poetic film around the art of the Armenian painter).

— Graziella Rizkallah: What has made you resume making films or videos?

— Jalal Toufic: Blanchot writes in *The Space of Literature*: “It is perhaps striking that from the moment the work ... becomes literature, the writer increasingly feels the need to maintain a relation to himself.... The journal is not essentially confessional.... It is a memorial. What must the writer remember? Himself: who he is when he isn’t writing ... when he is alive and true, not dying and bereft of truth. But the tool he uses in order to recollect himself is, strangely, the very element of forgetfulness: writing.” I feel that I, as a writer and thinker, returned to videotaping initially as a way to have an audiovisual journal, given that I was quickly very clear about the unfeasibility of trying to have writing play the double role of literature/stylish thought and journal in the sense in which Blanchot understands the latter: “The truth of the journal lies not in the interesting, literary remarks to be found there, but in the insignificant details which attach it to daily reality.... Here, whoever speaks retains his name and speaks in this name, and the dates he notes down belong in a shared time where what happens really happens. The journal—this book which is apparently altogether solitary—is often written out of fear and anguish at the solitude

which comes to the writer on account of the work.”²⁶ But with time videotaping no longer played the role of journal for me, but turned into something equivalent to writing, so that I had to find something else that could in turn play the function of the journal. Photography played then for a while that function—until I began treating my taking photographs as an artistic practice: ‘*Āshūrā*’: *This Blood Spilled in My Veins* (Forthcoming Books, 2005). If I could let go easily of these different media in the function of the journal, it was because, all along, teaching has been playing this role efficiently for me.

— Graziella Rizkallah: You have written on Tarkovsky in several of your books, mainly from the perspective of your concept of radical closure. But, since you have also dealt with the issue of the promise in your book *Undying Love, or Love Dies* (2002) and the essay “‘*Āshūrā*’; or, Torturous Memory as a Condition of Possibility of an Unconditional Promise” in ‘*Āshūrā*’: *This Blood Spilled in My Veins* (Forthcoming Books, 2005), as well as in your video ‘*Āshūrā*’: *This Blood Spilled in My Veins* (2002), I am very interested in your take on Tarkovsky’s *The Sacrifice* as a film dealing with a promise.

— Jalal Toufic: In *The Sacrifice*, right up to the imminent threat of a nuclear conflagration, Alexander, who was once an actor, continues to wallow in not being mad, repeating the words (“words, words, words” [Shakespeare’s *Hamlet* 2.2.195]) of someone assuming “a strange or odd” bearing and putting on “an antic disposition,” and accused by others of being mad, Prince Hamlet. In order to stop wallowing in “words, words, words,” one has to

give them in the strongest sense, i.e., to promise. This is how Hamlet could have overcome his “words, words, words.” If we consider the program of Carmelo Bene according to Deleuze (“One Manifesto Less”),²⁷ then it would be felicitous to dedicate to Carmelo Bene an adaptation of Shakespeare’s play in which for the interval between Hamlet’s giving the Ghost his word to remember him (“Now to my word; / It is ‘Adieu, adieu, remember me.’ / I have sworn’t” [1.5.111-113]) and to (promptly) avenge his treacherous murder (“Haste, haste me to know it, that I, with wings as swift / As meditation or the thoughts of love, / May sweep to my revenge” [1.5.29-31]), and the actual carrying out of this revenge—“the rest is silence” (5.2.311)—for him:²⁸ this would provide a space for other characters to develop, more specifically to have more lines of dialogue and more soliloquies. Indeed, one of these would then comment to Horatio about the persistently silent Hamlet: “I / knew him, Horatio, a fellow of infinite jest, of most excellent fancy . . .” Adding in an aside while looking at Hamlet: “Where be your gibes now,²⁹ / your gambols, your songs,³⁰ your flashes of merriment . . .?” (5.1.175-182). But Hamlet does not stop speaking, even to his mother after she dies—unfortunately, not to resurrect her—and, while dying, about himself, seemingly posthumously (“I am dead, Horatio [“I am dead” would here merely mean: I am dying, I am mortally poisoned]. Wretched Queen, adieu! / . . . / Had I but time—as this fell sergeant Death / Is strict in his arrest—O, I could tell you— / But let it be. Horatio, I am dead” [5.2.286-291]), and moreover even prophesizes and supports the election of Fortinbras, the Norwegian crown prince, as the new king of Denmark (“But I do prophesy the election lights / On Fortinbras:

he has *my dying voice*” [5.2.308-309, *my italics*]). I deduce from the circumstance that he keeps talking even after he tells the ghost of his father that he’ll avenge his treacherous murder that he has not genuinely given his word to the ghost, and therefore that by killing king Claudius, he is not avenging his father, but both his mother, who inadvertently drank the poison destined for Hamlet, and himself. Indeed, how different would the last scene have been had the ghost of Hamlet’s father not appeared to him and revealed to him that he was treacherously poisoned by his brother Claudius? It would not have been different at all. Hamlet would have revolted against what was to him the “most horrible!”: that “the royal bed of Denmark be / A couch for luxury and damned incest.” Failing to pacify Hamlet’s revolt, Claudius would have ended up deciding to get him killed in an underhanded way. To this effect he would have arranged for him to engage in a duel with Laertes, poisoned his rapier and mixed poison in his wine cup to his. When Gertrud would have mistakenly drunk from the poisoned cup and died and Hamlet would have been wounded by the poisoned rapier, Hamlet would have taken revenge with two acts that “hold, as ‘twere, the mirror up to” the two murderous acts: he would have stabbed Claudius with the sword with which he was poisoned and he would have finished him off with the same poisoned drink and administered through the same orifice as with queen Gertrud. “Here, thou incestuous, murd’rous, damnèd Dane, / Drink off this potion.³¹ (*He forces Claudius to drink*).³² Is thy union here? / Follow my mother.” (*Claudius dies*) (5.2.277-79). The Second Quarto (1604-5) has “Heare” instead of “Here” (1.2.278). The *Heare* is the felicitous word here: it is a lapsus indicating an anamnestic association and

its related impetus on Hamlet's part—one that he promptly represses in his subsequent behavior. By substituting the “Heare” with “Here,” the First Folio (1623) represses this repression, making it all the easier for the vast majority of readers and spectators to believe that Hamlet avenged his father after all. Were I to do a new adaptation of *Hamlet* (my first adaptation was “Gertrude: or Love Dies” in my book *Forthcoming* [2000]), one where Hamlet is not a rascal (2.2.555) and a villain (2.2.560), as in Shakespeare's play, but a *noble heart* (5.2.312),³³ I would have the insistent, driven ghost of Hamlet's father appear after Hamlet says to Claudius, “Here, thou incestuous, murd'rous, damnèd Dane, / Drink off this potion,” and forces him to drink, and tell the mortally poisoned Hamlet: “Adieu, adieu, Hamlet,” adding, from another spot,³⁴ “Remember me” (1.5.91)—his closing words to Hamlet on their first encounter. “Pale as his shirt, his knees knocking each other, / And with a look so piteous in purport / As if he had been loosèd out of hell / To speak of horrors” (2.1.79-85), the uncharacteristically persistently silent Lord Hamlet then *pours poison in the King's ears*.³⁵ Having fulfilled his promise by remembering and avenging his father, Hamlet can then legitimately reclaim speech. Giving one's word, which implies thenceforth maintaining one's silence until one fulfills one's promise, this basic and general manner of countering “words, words, words,” opens the space for two derivative manners of countering or transfiguring “words, words, words.” Having given his word and fulfilled his promise, the noble Hamlet of my adaptation asks the Word (“In the beginning was the Word” [John 1:1]), through whom “things were made” (John 1:3), for the word so he “May give his

saying deed” (1.3.27), i.e., so that his words would achieve a performative function, and, while standing next to her corpse, he says to his mother: “Adieu,” i.e., I commend you to God³⁶—if *adieu* cannot always mean a *final, definitive farewell*, it is that the God to which a Christian is commended is the Resurrection and the Life; indeed to earnest Christians, *adieu* should almost always mean: *au revoir*, most likely in three or four days. I imagine that the last word Mary, who had poured perfume on the Lord and wiped his feet with her hair, and Martha told their sick brother Lazarus was (the Aramaic equivalent of) *Adieu*, and that that was the first instance of the use of that term. Indeed, in response to Hamlet's “Wretched Queen, adieu!” the Queen is resurrected so that she, “Cut off even in the blossoms of her sin, / Unhouseled, disappointed, unaneled, / No reckoning made, but sent to her account / With all her imperfections on her head” (my paraphrase of the words of the ghost of Hamlet's treacherously poisoned father, 1.5.76-79), can have the possibility of praying for absolution. Then Hamlet, who had earlier exclaimed, “O that this too too solid flesh would melt / Thaw and resolve itself into a dew” (1.2.129-130), utters the unutterable locution: “I am dead.” Emitted as they are by a sovereign individual, these words, “I am dead,” no longer have a subservient function in relation to reality but rather receive a sympathetic response in the real. Indeed the mutes and audience encounter at this point what is certainly more horrible than a skull (that of Yorick) and the few worms in it, and what is even more horrible than that “the royal bed of Denmark be / A couch for luxury and damned incest,” indeed what is “most horrible”: “Amid ejaculations of ‘dead! dead!’ absolutely *bursting* from the tongue

and not from the lips of the sufferer [Hamlet had asked his good friends who had seen the ghost: “And still your fingers on your lips, I pray”—clearly, he was unaware that that is not enough for one not to talk], his whole frame at once—within the space of a single minute, or even less [Hamlet, to a gravedigger: “How long will a man lie i’th’earth ere he rot?” “I’faith, if he be not rotten before he die ... / ... / ... he will last you some eight year or nine year” (5.1.155-159)], shrunk—crumbled—absolutely *rotted* away beneath my hands.... before that whole company, there lay a nearly liquid mass of loathsome—of detestable putridity³⁷.³⁸ What effect would this produce on the witnesses? It would harrow up their souls, freeze their blood, make their “eyes, like stars, start from their spheres,” their “knotted and combined locks ... part / And each particular hair ... stand on end, / Like quills upon the fretful porpentine” (1.5.16-20). To go back to Tarkovsky’s *The Sacrifice*: it is redundant to promise (or to include as part of one’s promise), “I’ll become dumb, I’ll never speak to anyone,” as Alexander does: a vow of silence is implied literally in the idiomatic expression *to give one’s word*, which is usually taken as a figurative way of saying *to promise*. Since to promise is to give one’s word, the one who promises can no longer have his or her word(s) to use it to justify the act he or she promised to perform or to refrain from doing, which is why a promise can only be made by someone who is supramoral.

— Graziella Rizkallah: Nietzsche would certainly agree that “a promise can only be made by someone who is supramoral”: “If we place ourselves ... where society and the morality of custom

at last reveal *what* they have simply been the means to, then we discover that the ripest fruit is the *sovereign individual*, like only to himself, liberated again from morality of customs, autonomous and supramoral (for “autonomous” and “moral” are mutually exclusive), in short, the man who has his own independent, protracted will and the *right to make promises ...*³⁹ This applies to Alexander, who, notwithstanding that he is married, sleeps with one of his servant girls, Maria. Moreover, and as an exemplification of what you wrote in ‘*Āshūrā*’: *This Blood Spilled in My Veins* (2005), “The basic and ultimate promise is to wait for the messiah, who, truly sovereign, supramoral, will initially break the Law, including the ‘laws’ of nature⁴⁰ (indeed his miraculous coming notwithstanding his death or millennial occultation is often announced by supernatural events ‘such as the rise of the sun from the west, and the occurrence of the solar and lunar eclipses in the middle and the end of the month of Ramadan, respectively, against the natural order of such phenomena’⁴¹), then altogether abolish the Law, which applies only to the unredeemed world, establishing redemption, thus allowing me, his initiate, to be resurrected into a lawless world,” by levitating with Maria during their embrace, Alexander not only transgresses the morality of mores, but even breaks natural laws.

— Jalal Toufic: “Some people brought to him [Jesus] a man who was deaf and could hardly talk, and they begged him to place his hand on the man. After he took him aside from the crowd, Jesus put his fingers into the man’s ears. Then he spit and touched the man’s tongue. He looked up to heaven and with a deep sigh said to him, ‘Ephphatha!’ (which means, ‘Be opened!’). At this,

the man's ears were opened, his tongue was loosened and he began to speak plainly. Jesus commanded them not to tell anyone" (Mark 7:32-36). Talking is so strange to the one who promises⁴² (the impossible),⁴³ indeed who is the Promise,⁴⁴ the long-awaited messiah, that he enjoins the one whom he has just healed from muteness not to tell others about the miracle he has just performed, to remain silent. Did the healed mute end up not only believing in the Promise, but also giving his word, thus becoming mute again? Once one has promised, once one has given one's word(s), one will be able to talk again, for example to justify oneself, only with the words of another, the Holy Spirit—or an equivalent of the Christian Holy Spirit, for example the Qur'ānic Jesus Christ, "a spirit from Him [God]" (Qur'ān 4:171): "Whenever you are arrested and brought to trial, do not worry beforehand about what to say. Just say whatever is *given* you at the time, for it is not you speaking, but the Holy Spirit" (Mark 13:11, my italics); "Then she [Mary] brought him [Jesus, son of Mary] to her own folk, carrying him. They said: O Mary! Thou hast come with an amazing thing. O sister of Aaron! Thy father was not a wicked man nor was thy mother a harlot. Then she pointed to him. They said: How can we talk to one who is in the cradle, a young boy? He spake: Lo! I am the slave of Allah. He hath given me the Scripture and hath appointed me a Prophet ..." (Qur'ān 19:27-30, trans. Pickthal). When we encounter someone who has started on a vow of silence, it is legitimate to expect that he has promised something—even if he or she is not yet conscious of it. Due to this connection of (the vow of) silence to the promise, someone who is mute, especially in a temporary manner, for example Alexander's child in Tarkovsky's

The Sacrifice, who had just undergone a minor operation on his vocal cords and has been forbidden to talk by his doctors; *Andrei Rublev's* eponymous protagonist after he kills a Tartar in defense of a woman during a massacre in a church that's being sacked; and the Elisabet of Bergman's *Persona*, appears to have promised: the child promised to water the barren tree; Elisabet promised *nothing* (toward the end of the film, in the hospital, she is prompted by Alma to repeat after her: "Nothing!"); and Andrei Rublev promised to paint the church. If the mute, for example Stalker's mute girl in *Stalker*, gives the impression of having extra powers (cf. Chion's *The Voice in Cinema*), it is, at least in the case of the one who *gives* his word, in part because the latter is beyond laws and because increasingly one can promise only the impossible: "While before, one would sometimes promise something that seemed feasible, then, on discovering that new advances in science predict with complete accuracy that it cannot happen, nonetheless decide to maintain one's promise 'even "in the face of fate"' (Nietzsche); more and more frequently, since we can predict far more accurately, and because it is pointless and irrelevant to promise what is predicted by science to be bound to happen, we will promise outright the impossible, i.e., every promise will be implicitly a promise of a miracle."⁴⁵ Johannes' promise in Dreyer's *Ordet* to the daughter of Inger, his brother's wife, to resurrect her mother is an exemplary promise, since he fails miserably in his first attempt to resurrect her (when he is delusional and mistakes himself for Jesus Christ), thus underlining that resurrecting her is an impossibility, that he had promised the impossible, and then he redoes it successfully, accomplishing the impossible in the name

of Jesus Christ: “Hear me, thou who art dead.... Inger, in the name of Jesus Christ, I bid thee arise!” And between his giving his word and the miracle, the fulfillment of the promise, of the impossible promise, there’s a vow of silence on his part that is implemented first through his disappearance from his family house, and then through enunciating through and using the words of another, the Holy Spirit.⁴⁶ Since the paradigmatic promise is the messianic one, I would expect to encounter a vow of silence especially in this case. And indeed, whereas in Twelver Shi‘ism, during the Lesser Occultation, the twelfth imām still “talked” with his followers through the intermediary of his four successive representatives/deputies, reportedly, shortly before the death of Abū al-Ḥasan ‘Alī b. Muḥammad al-Samarī (d. AH 329/940-41), the last of his representatives, the latter received a note from the imām saying: “In the name of God. O ‘Alī b. Muḥammad al-Samarī ... do not appoint anyone in your place, since the complete occultation has taken place.”⁴⁷

— Graziella Rizkallah: As you did in your video ‘*Āshūrā*’: *This Blood Spilled in My Veins* (2002), I think that it is fitting with regards to Alexander, for whom the eventuality of an imminent nuclear conflagration is too big (“This is the ultimate war, a horrible thing. And after it, there will be no victors and no vanquished, no cities or towns, grass or trees, water in the wells, or birds in the sky”), to draw on the section from *L’Abécédaire de Gilles Deleuze* (with Claire Parnet, directed by Pierre-André Boutang, 1996) where Deleuze talks about the relation of the lament to joy: “And then he laments.... This means: ‘It’s too big for me.’ There you

are, that’s the lament: ‘What’s happening to me is too big for me.’ ... It’s not sadness at all.... So every morning I really mean to say, ‘What’s happening to me is too big for me,’ because that’s joy. In a certain way, it’s joy in the pure state, but one has to have the prudence to hide this because there are people who don’t like it very much that people are joyous. It’s necessary thus to hide it in a kind of lament ...”

— Jalal Toufic: Yes, one finds a confirmation of the view, drawing on the Deleuzian definition of the lament, that Alexander’s response to the credible announcement of an imminent threat of world destruction is a joyful one in the birthday telegraph he receives the morning of the announcement and which ends with: “God grant you joy ...”

— Graziella Rizkallah: The prayer by which he gives a promise no longer to talk should itself have been a form of silence since as you write in *Two or Three Things I’m Dying to Tell You*, 2005: “Prayer is not some discourse of supplication, but the suspension of the interior monologue, so that it is God Who talks and acts: ‘I am his hearing with which he hears, his seeing with which he sees, his hand with which he strikes, and his foot with which he walks.’ One of the most beautiful prayers in Islam is ‘Ḥallāj’s’ *Anā al-Ḥaqq* (I am the Real [i.e., God]). Prayer is addressed to God, but by God.”

— Jalal Toufic: That’s true. But *The Sacrifice* presents an occasion to pursue another problematic regarding prayer. Soon after hearing the announcement, Alexander prays: “Lord! Deliver us in this terrible time. Don’t let my children die, nor my friends nor my wife nor Victor, nor all those who love Thee and believe in Thee, nor all



those who do not believe in Thee ... Because this is the ultimate war, a horrible thing. And after it, there will be no victors and no vanquished, no cities or towns, grass or trees, water in the wells, or birds in the sky. I will give Thee all I have. I'll give up my family, whom I love; I'll destroy my home; I will give up Little Man. I'll be mute, and never speak another word to anyone. I will relinquish everything that binds me to life, if only Thou dost restore everything as it was before—as it was this morning and yesterday.”⁴⁸ How different is the behavior of the Biblical Abraham! “Then Abraham approached him (the LORD) and said: ‘Will you sweep away the righteous with the wicked? What if there are fifty righteous people in the city? ...’ The LORD said, ‘If I find fifty righteous people in the city of Sodom, I will spare the whole place for their sake.’ Then Abraham spoke up again: ‘Now that I have been so bold as to speak to the Lord, though I am nothing but dust and ashes, what if the number of the righteous is five less than fifty? Will you destroy the whole city because of five people?’ ‘If I find forty-five there,’ he said, ‘I will not destroy it.’ Once again he spoke to him, ‘What if only forty are found there?’ He said, ‘For the sake of forty, I will not do it.’ Then he said, ‘May the Lord not be angry, but let me speak. What if only thirty can be found there?’ He answered, ‘I will not do it if I find thirty there.’ Abraham said, ‘Now that I have been so bold as to speak to the Lord, what if only twenty can be found there?’ He said, ‘For the sake of twenty, I will not destroy it.’ Then he said, ‘May the Lord not be angry, but let me speak just once more. What if only ten can be found there?’ He answered, ‘For the sake of ten, I will not destroy it.’ When the LORD had finished speaking with Abraham, he left, and Abraham returned

home” (Genesis 18:23-33). Abraham’s pleas imply that there are others, even if just ten, who, like him, are praying for Sodom (the righteous pray, be it in the manner of the suspension of the interior monologue), and therefore that the fate of Sodom depends on others beside him: Lot ... At the beginning of *The Sacrifice*, after delivering to Alexander a telegram wishing him a happy anniversary, the postman, Otto, says to him: “You shouldn’t be waiting like that.... One shouldn’t be waiting for something.” “... Who says I’m waiting for anything?” “We are all waiting for something.” It soon turns out that Alexander too is indeed waiting. On hearing the sound of low-flying airplanes and seeing the prime minister announcing on TV, “... There is a similar base in our country; it has four [nuclear] warheads and in all probability this will decide everything, and in the most tragic manner ...”, and then the screen flash and die, Alexander mutters: “My whole life has been one long wait, for this.” What is Alexander waiting for? Is he waiting to believe that the fate of the world depends on him alone?⁴⁹ But if such a belief is psychotic, is he then waiting to become mad? Every time someone feels that he or she (alone) has to save the world, he or she will encounter an indiscernability of reality and hallucination (when Otto tells Alexander after the announcement of the imminent threat of the destruction of the world: “Don’t you want all this to be over and done with?” Alexander answers, “For what to be done with?”—as if he is unaware of any such threat!) and he or she will appear delirious, for the end of the world is a recurrent motif in the delirium and hallucinations encountered in schizophrenia, and psychosis in general.⁵⁰ Given that we witness the same kind of madness on the part of the protagonist of Terry Gilliam’s *Twelve*

Monkeys (1995), that of thinking that the fate of the world depends on him alone, it is not surprising but appropriate that the time traveler who comes back to save the world is placed in a mental hospital at the beginning of the film. Indeed Alexander and the time traveler of *Twelve Monkeys* are madder and show more hubris than schizophrenics, for while the former believe that the world's fate depends on them alone, the schizophrenic doesn't: who more than the schizophrenic understands that certain tasks are too big for him or her and have to be assumed by many, indeed by all the names of history: "I am Prado, I am also Prado's father. I venture to say that I am also Lesseps.... I am also Chambige ... every name in history is I"⁵¹ (the schizophrenic incarnates what Kant asks of the aesthetic judgment: a *Sensus Communis*). One has to sacrifice the hubris that consists in taking oneself for the one on whom the continued existence of the world or its fate depends,⁵² for what about those who are sitting in meditation or even those who sat in meditation before one was born? Dōgen: "When even for a moment you express the buddha's seal in the three actions by sitting upright in samādhi ... all beings in the ten directions, and the six realms, including the three lower realms, at once obtain pure body and mind ... all things realize correct awakening Thus in the past, future, and present of the limitless universe this zazen carries on the buddha's teaching endlessly.... Know that even if all buddhas of the ten directions, as innumerable as the sands of the Ganges, exert their strength and with the buddhas' wisdom try to measure the merit of one person's zazen, they will not be able to fully comprehend it" ("On the Endeavor of the Way [*Bendō-Wa*]"⁵³; through this zazen, even those mad people who believe that the fate

of the world and its continued existence depend on them *alone* at once obtain pure body and mind. Moreover, what about the doxology of every creature in the Heavens and on the Earth with regards to God ("Everything in the Heavens and on the Earth glorifies God [Qur'ān 62:1; cf. Qur'ān 64:1]? Unlike Abraham, Alexander assumes in his prayers that there are no others who are praying, or who can pray to God to save the world. Given that his outlook is not a messianic one (in such an outlook, it is legitimate for the righteous to assume that no one beside him or her is praying to God or can pray to God, since a generation that's wholly sinful [according to a Talmudic saying, the son of David would appear only in a generation that was "either wholly sinful or wholly righteous"⁵⁴] and an earth filled with injustice and oppression [according to a Twelver Shi'ite tradition, the Mahdī is going to "fill the earth with justice and equity, as it had formerly been filled with injustice and oppression"] are the birth pangs of the coming of the messiah), and given that death and dreams and madness are realms/states one accesses alone, he is praying either from a posthumous position, as one who is dead but does not know it yet, has not registered it yet; or else as the lone survivor, from beyond the end of the world, so that his prayer is really not so much to save the world as a request for time travel to the past, to the period prior to the destruction of the world: "I will relinquish everything that binds me to life, if only Thou dost restore everything as it was before—as it was this morning and yesterday"—with the caveat that the ostensible singular survivor of a world destruction cannot but be a mad person (in which case it is no longer clear whether there was actually a cataclysm that destroyed the rest of the world, or whether

such a cataclysm was merely a hallucination of the madman). Why might the world destruction have not been averted despite his prayer? Earlier that day, the postman Otto, repeating the last words of the birthday telegraph he handed to Alexander, “God grant you joy ...”, asks the latter: “Say, how are your relations with God?” “Nonexistent, I’m afraid.” “It could be worse.” And indeed his relations with God become worse once Alexander, shortly after his prayer, yields to the sinister temptation of Otto: “There’s still one last chance! ... One last hope! ... Maria can do it!”—a hope in another than the Trinity (The Ṣūfī Abū ‘Abdillāh al-Qurashī: “Trust is abandoning every refuge except God”)! “You must go to Maria at once! ... One of your servant girls ... She lives in a farm ... behind the church—it’s closed now!” “Who?” “I am not talking about a ‘who.’ I mean the church” “What’s the church got to do with it?” Yes, what has the church, indeed God to do with asking a married man to sleep with his servant girl and to expect the salvation of the world from that rather from God alone following one’s prayer to Him?! “In any case, you must go to Maria!” “But why?” “Don’t you want all this to be over and done with?” “For what to be done with?” “Everything! The whole lot!” “God, Otto!” “You must go to Maria and lie with her ... And if you only wish for one thing at that moment, that all this (what is *all this*? The world or the imminent danger to the world?) will be over, then it will be! ... She has very special qualities. I’ve gathered evidence: she’s a witch! ... Is there any other way out? There is no other alternative. None whatsoever!” Alexander listens to Otto, who finds Leonardo da Vinci in general, but more specifically (a reproduction of) his *Adoration of the Magi*, in which the magi who traveled to Bethlehem pay homage to the

infant Jesus, sinister and who had given him an interpretation of Nietzsche’s eternal recurrence as the return of the same. Shouldn’t this bad interpretation have made Alexander wary of this person? Unfortunately, Alexander quickly loses hope in the Savior, both by placing his hope instead in Maria, and by hopelessly considering suicide, taking with him on his visit to Maria a revolver with which he subsequently blackmails her by placing its barrel against his head, imploring her: “Save me! ... Save us, Maria!” The world, which was heading towards destruction, was not spared either because there’s no God or because Alexander did not prove to be able to pray (flipping through a book of high quality reproductions of icons, he had remarked: “It’s unbelievable! Like a prayer”—indeed what is more unbelievable than a prayer!—“And all this has been lost. We can’t even pray any longer”), to have been taught to pray even by the utmost misery. Viewed from this perspective, the (black and white) images of panicked and disoriented people running in an apocalyptic landscape in *The Sacrifice*, which appear after Alexander’s sexual encounter with Maria, are not to be viewed as dream or hallucinatory images but as what actually happens historically within the diegesis.⁵⁵ The promise had to be fulfilled, “in the face of accidents, even ‘in the face of fate’” (Nietzsche: “the sovereign individual ... is bound to honor his peers, the strong and reliable [those with the *right* to make promises]—that is, all those who promise like sovereigns, reluctantly, rarely, slowly ... who give their word as something that can be relied on because they know themselves strong enough to maintain it in the face of accidents, even ‘in the face of fate’”)⁵⁶—here the accident is Alexander’s realization that his sacrifice will not change the fate of

the world. We sacrifice to what may have always been nothing (have gods or a God ever existed?), or may no longer exist (Nietzsche, around whose concept of eternal recurrence Tarkovsky's *The Sacrifice* begins, is not only the thinker of eternal recurrence but also of the death of God, of the mad[man's] proclamation: "God is Dead" [*The Gay Science*]); and we sacrifice for possibly nothing: the nuclear war may have been averted without our sacrifice, the rain may have fallen and consequently the harvest may have been plentiful without our sacrifice, the world may have continued without our sacrifice; but we sacrifice something very real. Like so many other Tarkovskian characters, for example the cosmonaut Kris and his father in *Solaris*, and the Russian poet Gorchakov in *Noštalgia*, Alexander is extremely attached to his house: "Have I told you how your mother and I found this place? We came here on a trip ... We had no map with us; we forgot to bring one. Besides we'd run out of petrol. We stopped somewhere near here, then we kept going on foot... we were lost. Then it started raining: a cold, ugly drizzle ... We came to that bend over there, by that dry, old pine tree, and just then, the sun came out. It stopped raining ... The light was dazzling! Suddenly I was sad that I—I mean that we—didn't live there, in that house under the pines, so close to the sea.... I knew that if I lived there, I'd be happy until I died." Alexander's sacrifice is of both the belief that the world's fate depends on him alone and of the house he could otherwise have regained in the coda, as Gorchakov does in the coda of *Noštalgia* and as the cosmonaut Kris does in the coda of *Solaris*, the former sitting in front of his Russian house now within the arches and between the columns of the ruins of an ancient cathedral

in Italy, and the latter kneeling in front of his father at the door of the parental house now within the extraterrestrial sentient Ocean Solaris—from this perspective *The Sacrifice* (1986) is a radical departure from Tarkovsky's previous films. Instead of the regained Imaginal house in the coda, in *The Sacrifice* the second house is not within a cathedral or the extraterrestrial sentient ocean Solaris, but just the miniature *mundane* copy his child constructed in nature with the help of Otto as a birthday present to his father. *The Sacrifice* is truly a Nietzschean film not so much because of its protagonist's invocation and discussion of Nietzsche's concept of eternal recurrence, but because it sticks to this world, does not invoke another (see Nietzsche's critique of the illusion of the other world in)—religious discourse is a discourse of an implicit coda, one that would happen in the other world, or else in the Imaginal World. Alexander gives up the world twice: by no longer believing that the (fate of the) world depends on him alone (in this sense he sacrificed madness, or at least this madness lurking in almost all humans: that the fate of the world depends on each one of them alone. In this moment of worldly madness, namely the imminent threat of a nuclear conflagration, what he can offer is rationality, namely to sacrifice the lurking (mad) belief he and virtually all others have that the fate of the world depends on him (did John F. Kennedy and Nikita Khrushchev end up doing something of the sort at the time of the Cuban missile crisis, sacrifice the belief that the fate of the world depends on them [alone]?)(Alexander sacrifices what the mad protagonist of *Noštalgia* still believes to be the case: that the fate of the world depends on him—in this he is like the Johannes of Dreyer's *Ordet*. That is also what the Johannes of Dreyer's *Ordet*

has to sacrifice). It is because the protagonist of *Twelve Monkeys* does not go beyond this belief that he is stuck in the repetition compulsion. Ironically, it is when Alexander fully sacrifices the crazy belief that the continued existence of the world depends on him and on him alone that he is placed in a mental hospital); and by losing intentionally all that mattered to him the most, that on account of which the world mattered, had value at all: his child, his house ...

— Graziella Rizkallah: I think I'll title this interview: "The Sacrifice of the Promise."⁵⁷

— Jalal Toufic: In my book *Two or Three Things I'm Dying to Tell You*, I already raised the question whether we should no longer promise, especially a messianic, millenarian promise, given that the price of inculcating memory in humans as a condition for them to promise is exorbitant; I hope it will be clear from this interview that the sacrifice of the promise being addressed here should not be taken in the sense of sacrificing the promise but only in the sense that sacrifice is implicated in every promise, since by promising, one gives one's word, one can no longer use one's word(s) (to justify oneself and one's promise), and because sacrifice was one of the (anthropological) conditions of possibility for the human animal to be able to promise: "To breed an animal *with the right to make promises*—is not this the paradoxical task that nature has set itself in the case of man? How can one create a memory for the human animal? How can one impress something upon this partly obtuse, partly flighty mind, attuned only to the passing moment, in such a way that it will stay there? ... 'If something is to stay in memory

it must be burned in: only that which never ceases to *hurt* stays in the memory'—this is a main clause of the oldest (unhappily also the most enduring) psychology on earth.... Man could never do without blood, torture, and sacrifices when he felt the need to create a memory for himself; the most dreadful sacrifices and pledges (sacrifices of the first-born among them), the most repulsive mutilations (castration, for example), the cruelest rites of all the religious cults (and all religions are at the deepest level systems of cruelties)—all this has its origin in the instinct that realized that pain is the most powerful aid to mnemonics" (Nietzsche, *On the Genealogy of Morals*).

— Graziella Rizkallah: Any final words?

— Jalal Toufic: I love you.



Endnotes

1. My translation. The one English translation of Lamartine's *Graziella* that I am aware of, James B. Runnion's (*Graziella: A Story of Italian Love*), reprinted by Kessinger Publishing in 2004, omits this section altogether!
2. I would have forgiven such a renaming in a Hitchcock film, since in his universe it is frequently the case that his main characters love and/or are loved by the (troubled) right man or woman *in all but name!* In *Spellbound* (1945), Dr. Constance Petersen quickly becomes enamored of the new director of the Green Manors mental asylum, Dr. Edwardes, a famous psychiatrist. However, it soon turns out that the man of whom she is enamored is in fact a mentally disturbed amnesiac impersonating Dr. Edwardes. In *Vertigo* (1958), Judy Barton of Kansas would not have met in San Francisco and fallen in love with detective John (Scottie) Ferguson had she not impersonated Madeleine Elster, whom Scottie was assigned to shadow by her husband. In *North by Northwest* (1959), Roger O. Thornhill, an advertising executive, is mistaken by an espionage ring for George Kaplan (a fictive agent created by the US Central Intelligence Agency), thus ending up meeting the CIA agent Eve Kendall then becoming enamored of her. The eponymous heroine of *Marnie* (1964) has the occasion to meet her lover and future husband under the names of Marion Holland, Mary Taylor, Miss Nicholson, and Marnie/Margaret Edgar.
3. From Friedrich Nietzsche's 5 January 1889 letter to Jacob Burckhardt, in *Selected Letters of Friedrich Nietzsche*, trans. Christopher Middleton (Indianapolis, Indiana: Hackett Publishing Company, 1996), 347-348.
4. I advise against giving fictional films, literary books, artworks and plays proper names for titles (Hitchcock's *Marnie*, etc.), for the following two reasons. It makes the substitution of titles between works much more difficult, and yet it is sometimes the case within the oeuvre of a filmmaker/writer/artist/playwright that a title that seems to be an indifferent or even incongruous one when it comes to the work to which it is assigned exoterically is a felicitous title for another of the works of the filmmaker/writer/artist/playwright and reveals esoteric facets of the latter: for instance, unlike *Romeo and Juliet*, which is an incongruous title for a play whose two protagonists

repeatedly speak about the erasure of their names, more specifically in which the girl asks her beloved, “Refuse thy name,” *The Two Gentlemen from Verona* is a felicitous title for the Shakespeare play in which a Veronese girl loves consecutively two Romeos from her city, and in which the second of these exclaims: “By a name / I know not how to tell thee who I am ...” Second, the name in the title may be that of someone I love or loved, in which case I would desire it to be linked with my name rather than with that of the famous author or filmmaker.

5. Martin Heidegger, *What Is Called Thinking?*, trans. J. Glenn Gray (New York: Harper & Row, 1968), 50.
6. Gilles Deleuze, Leibniz seminar, University of Paris VIII in Vincennes, 15 April 1980, trans. Charles J. Stivale, <http://www.webdeleuze.com/php/texte.php?cle=50&groupe=Leibniz&langue=2>
7. Does the use of the “etc.” merely indicate that I did not feel the need to specify additional concepts I created (I have been repeatedly referred to in introductions to public lectures as a prolific writer—I am not a prolific writer but a prolific thinker)? Or does it, in an untimely manner, already eclipse a possible qualification of the equivalence I am making in this later book between the number of concepts a thinker constructs or is able to construct and the loves he or she has or is capable of having in his or her life? Does that etc. imply that I had by then or was capable of having at most five loves and therefore the list of concepts I had created had to be discontinued at five?
8. Given Japanese culture’s fascination with female teens, I consider that the most fitting foreign cinematic adaptation of Shakespeare’s *Romeo and Juliet* would be a Japanese film whose actors are truly of the age of the characters in the play. In such a film, Juliet would be played by a thirteen-year-old actress (how old is Romeo? It is revealing that Romeo refers to Paris as a boy and a youth, while referring to himself as a man [“Good gentle youth, tempt not a desperate man; ... / I beseech thee, youth ...” and “Wilt thou provoke me? then have at thee, boy!”])—even Olivia Hussey, the Juliet of Zeffirelli’s cinematic adaptation of *Romeo and Juliet* (1968), was too old for the role: 15.
9. In addition to Juliet, both her nurse and Benvolio exclaim, “O Romeo, Romeo ...” (nurse: “O Romeo, Romeo, / Whoever would have thought it Romeo?” [3.2.41-42]; Benvolio: “O Romeo, Romeo, brave Mercutio is dead” [3.1.116])—both must have been aware of the existence of the other Romeo. Neither Romeo nor anyone else

among the play’s characters exclaims, “O Juliet, Juliet ...”

10. *Jean-Luc Godard: Interviews*, ed. David Sterritt (Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 1998), 129-130. There is an oscillation on Godard’s part regarding the goal of reaching this pre-name condition: whether to have the opportunity of naming anew, or to dispense altogether with the name: in *King Lear*, the character played by Godard asserts, “I am not interested in names,” and then, over a shot of a so-called flower, asks: “Do I need a name to see thy beauty?” No. Do I need a name to resurrect that so-called flower? No; no name is invoked during the resurrection of that so-called flower, its petals re-attached to it in backward motion. I also do not need a name to resurrect even a so-and-so animal. “Who are they who need a name to exist?” One needs a name to resurrect the one who has one, a mortal: “Lazarus, come out!” (John 11:43); “Arise ... thou shalt not perish. Thou hast been called by name. Thou hast been resurrected” (*Egyptian Book of the Dead*). Had Godard’s film tried to resurrect neither a flower nor a theater play, but a human, then the inadequacy of this dismissal of the name would have become manifest to its director.
11. See “On Names: Letter to Lyn Hejinian,” in Jalal Toufic, *Forthcoming* (Berkeley, CA: Atelos, 2000), more specifically page 188.
12. Anomalously, from the perspective of the Church as well as of superstitious beliefs of that period, someone who was inhumed without proper “Christian” burial would haunt as a vampire or ghost.
13. Who buried Jesus Christ? He was buried by those who were dead because they did not believe in him who is “the Resurrection and the Life.” In that sense Jesus had a proper burial. But from another perspective, because he was not buried by those who died (before dying), by Lazarus for example, he returned (briefly before the Second Coming)—this indicating that his burial was not a proper one. But at the most essential level, he should not have been buried at all since he, who is “the resurrection and the life,” was not truly dead. “Pretend to weep, my friends, since poets only pretend to die,” says Cocteau in his film *The Testament of Orpheus* (1960). How pretentious can some poet be at times! Notwithstanding Cocteau’s assertion, it is not poets, but *the resurrection and the life*, Jesus Christ, who could have said to the mourners around his body, “Pretend to weep, since Jesus Christ, the resurrection and the life, only pretends

to die.” Derivatively, it is not poets, but Lazarus who sometime after his resurrection pretended to die (Kierkegaard: “‘This sickness is not unto death’ [John 11:4]. But still Lazarus died.... Lazarus ... was dead, and this sickness is not unto death.... What good would it have done Lazarus to be awoken from the dead if in the end he must die anyway? What good would it have done Lazarus if He did not exist, He who is the resurrection and the life for every person who believes in Him? No, it is not because Lazarus was awoken from the dead; that is not why we can say this sickness is not unto death. It is because He exists; that is why this sickness is not unto death,” *The Sickness unto Death*, trans. Alastair Hannay [London: Penguin, 1989], 3-4).

14. *Hiroshima mon amour*, text by Marguerite Duras for the film by Alain Resnais; trans. Richard Seaver; picture editor: Robert Hughes (New York: Grove Press, 1961), 64-65.
15. “The taboo upon the dead is—if I may revert to the simile of infection—especially virulent among most primitive peoples. It is manifested, in the first instance, in the consequences that follow contact with the dead ... Among the Maoris anyone who had handled a corpse or taken any part in its burial was in the highest degree unclean and was almost cut off from intercourse with his fellow-men, or, as we might put it, was boycotted. He could not enter any house, or come into contact with any person or thing without infecting them ...” Sigmund Freud, *Totem and Taboo: Some Points of Agreement between the Mental Lives of Savages and Neurotics*, authorized translation by James Strachey (New York: Norton, 1950), 51.
16. The title of a Marguerite Duras book.
17. As she awakens from her coma, the thirteen-year-old Juliet is a Poesque character. Indeed, I can well envision a cinematic adaptation of Shakespeare’s *Romeo and Juliet* in which, having committed suicide, Juliet is withheld proper burial rites, with the result that she is condemned to haunt. Centuries later, on 16 May 1836, a thirteen-year-old girl with Juliet’s identical features but with the name of Virginia Clemm marries a twenty-six-year-old writer by the name of Edgar Allan Poe, who goes on to write such “immortal” tales as *Morella* (which was first published on 18 September 1838), and *Ligeia*.
18. “So the LORD God caused the man to fall into a deep sleep; and while he was sleeping, he took one of the man’s ribs and closed up the place with flesh. Then the LORD God made a woman from the

rib he had taken out of the man, and he brought her to the man. The man said, ‘This is now bone of my bones / and flesh of my flesh ...’ For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and they will become one flesh” (Genesis 2:21-24). When asked by some Pharisees whether it is lawful for a man to divorce his wife for any reason, Jesus replied by repeating Genesis 2:24 (Matthew 19:5). So in Duras’ *Hiroshima mon amour*, what the French young female lover accomplishes when she lies on her dying German beloved is their marriage: “I was lying on top of him ... yes ... the moment of his death actually escaped me, because ... even at that very moment, and even afterward, yes, even afterward, I can say that I couldn’t feel the slightest difference between this dead body and mine.” It is thus felicitous that in the notes of Duras’ script we read: “*Nevers. In a ‘hut’ at night. The ‘marriage’ at Nevers.*”

19. If many schizophrenics do not commit suicide despite the unbearable suffering and terror they undergo, it is because they believe they are already dead.
20. Read my book *Undying Love, or Love Dies* (Sausalito, CA: The Post-Apollo Press, 2002).
21. Lev. 19:18.
22. Who is actually the author of some of the love poems attributed to al-Ḥallāj and addressed to the Beloved, God? The utterance *Anā al-Ḥaqq* (I am the True Reality [God]) attributed also to al-Ḥallāj by some of his listeners reveals that these love poems are actually God’s. This is the case whenever the Sufi reaches the state described in the following *ḥadīth qudsī*: “My servant draws near to Me through nothing I love more than that which I have made obligatory for him. My servant never ceases drawing near to Me through supererogatory works until I love him. Then, when I love him, I am his hearing through which he hears, his sight through which he sees, his hand through which he grasps, and his foot through which he walks.” In the love poems of a Sufi who has reached such a condition, it is actually the Beloved, God, who through the lover, the Sufi, is hearing and seeing the Beloved, and declaiming his love for the Beloved.
23. My book *Undying Love, or Love Dies* moves between the two paradigmatic promises: the mad promise I gave to the woman of whom I had become enamored and wished to marry, “Till death do us part,” and the messianic promise (which in the case of Twelver Shi’ites and Jews has by now shown itself to be a millennial one):

Till the resurrection and the life do us join (again)—in the redeemed world, that is, in a world in which there is no death, that is, in which we are no longer mortal, dead while alive, therefore a world in which the other, aforementioned exemplary promise is never said.

24. See Henry Corbin, *Spiritual Body and Celestial Earth: from Mazdean Iran to Shi'ite Iran*, translated from the French by Nancy Pearson. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1989.
25. Gilles Deleuze: “Kubrick is renewing the theme of the initiatory journey because every journey in the world is an exploration of the brain,” *Cinema 2: The Time-Image*, trans. Hugh Tomlinson and Robert Galeta (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1986), 206.
26. Maurice Blanchot, *The Space of Literature*, translated, with an introduction, by Ann Smock (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1982), 28-29.
27. *The Deleuze Reader*, edited with an introduction by Constantin V. Boundas (New York: Columbia University Press, 1993), 204-205: Carmelo Bene “does not call his play on Hamlet one more *Hamlet* but, like Laforgue, ‘one less *Hamlet*.’ He does not proceed by addition, but by subtraction, by amputation.... for example, [in *Romeo and Juliet*] he amputates Romeo, he neutralizes Romeo in the original play.... If you amputate Romeo, you will witness an astonishing development, that of Mercutio, who was no more than a potentiality in Shakespeare’s play.”
28. Hamlet should know, from his encounter with the ghost of his father, who speaks to him, that *the rest is silence* does not necessarily apply to the posthumous state—it does apply though to the state between genuinely giving one’s word and fulfilling one’s promise.
29. Indeed Hamlet in Shakespeare’s play is full of gibes.
30. Laertes’ advice to his sister Ophelia regarding Hamlet: “Then weigh what loss your honour may sustain / If with too credent ear you list his songs” (1.3.29-30).
31. In his filmic adaptation of *Hamlet*, Laurence Olivier betrays a grave error of judgment by having the queen eye the drink suspiciously and then drink from it, as it were to save her son, and yet omits having Hamlet then force Claudius to drink from the poisoned drink after stabbing him with the poisoned rapier, thus not taking revenge for his mother.
32. The ghost of Hamlet’s father will return in a Coda since not only he

has not been *specifically* avenged, but also those in the know about his ghostly condition have sworn not to divulge what they have seen and heard (Hamlet: “... And now, good friends, / As you are friends, scholars, and soldiers, / Give me one poor request.” Horatio: “What is’t, my lord? / We will.” Hamlet: “Never make known what you have seen tonight.” Horatio and Marcellus: “My lord, we will not.” Hamlet: “Nay, but swear’t.” [It is symptomatic of how little Hamlet is a man of his word that when his “good friends” give him their word, he expects that they will not fulfill their promise]. Horatio: “In faith, my lord, not I.” Marcellus: “Nor I, my lord, in faith.” Hamlet: “Upon my sword.” Marcellus: “We have sworn, my lord, already.” Hamlet: “Indeed, upon my sword, indeed.” Ghost [*crying in the cellarage*]: “Swear.” [The ghost seems to believe too readily that Hamlet will fulfill his promise—he has not learnt from the betrayal of his wife despite her promises—and hence wishes his apparition and revelations to remain secret so as not to endanger Hamlet’s assumed future schemes to take revenge on Claudius]. Hamlet: “... Come on. You hear this fellow in the cellarage. / Consent to swear.” Horatio: “Propose the oath, my lord.” Hamlet: “Never to speak of this that you have seen. / Swear by my sword.” Ghost: “Swear.” (*They swear*). Hamlet: “... And lay your hands again upon my sword: / Never to speak of this that you have heard, / Swear by my sword.” Ghost: “Swear.” (*They swear*) [1.5.145-169]). Indeed Hamlet then adds the stipulation that they ought not to imply their knowledge of some secret “with arms encumbered thus, or thus head shaken ... Or such ambiguous giving out,” ending his request again with “‘Swear.’ Ghost: ‘Swear.’ (*They swear*)” (1.5.181-189).

33. It can certainly be argued that Hamlet should in the first place not have given his word to avenge the king; nonetheless, once he did so, he should have fulfilled his promise. This adaptation is dedicated to Al-Mukhtār b. Abī ‘Ubayd al-Thaqafī, whose battle cry was “Vengeance for al-Ḥusayn,” and who indeed killed many of those implicated in the slaughter of imām Ḥusayn and his seventy-two companions (only women and some children were spared) in Karbalā’ in 680, both when his army defeated the Umayyad forces in 686 in a battle in which their commander, ‘Ubayd Allāh b. Ziyād, who was the main culprit in the slaughter of al-Ḥusayn, and who had, prior to his determinant role in the slaughter at Karbalā’, executed Muslim b. ‘Aqīl, imām Ḥusayn’s cousin; and then in Kūfa, where he had Shamir b. Dhi’l-Jawshan and

- 'Umar b. Sa'd Abī Waqqās beheaded.
34. "*Hic et ubique*" (1.5.164).
35. From the stage directions for the dumb show. How misplaced does Polonius' advice to his son sounds in the context of *Hamlet*! Would Polonius have given the following advise to his son, "Give every man thine ear, but few thy voice" (1.3.68), were he actually an accomplice of Claudius in the preparation of the poisonous drink the latter surreptitiously pours in King Hamlet's ear, as Nicolas Abraham advances in his otherwise revealing "The Phantom of Hamlet, or The Sixth Act preceded by The Intermission of 'Truth'" (Nicolas Abraham and Maria Torok, *The Shell and the Kernel: Renewals of Psychoanalysis*, vol. 1, edited, translated, and with an introduction by Nicholas T. Rand [Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994], 187-205)? I very much doubt it.
36. "ADIEU interj. et n. m. XIIe siècle, *adeu* ; XVe siècle, comme substantif. Composé de la préposition à et de Dieu, par réduction de la formule *Je vous recommande à Dieu*. I. Interj. 1. Formule de politesse employée afin de prendre congé pour toujours ou pour longtemps.... *Adieu donc ! Je ne vous dis pas adieu, car j'espère vous revoir.... Dire adieu à quelqu'un*. Par ext. et fam. Au revoir. *Adieu, à demain !* 2. En s'adressant à ce qu'on quitte ou à ce qu'on a quitté pour toujours. Fig. et litt. *Adieu mon enfance !*" *Dictionnaire de l'Académie française*, neuvième édition, <http://www.academie-francaise.fr/dictionnaire/index.html>.
37. We have three bodily manifestations of the dead body, of bodily remains in my second adaptation of *Hamlet*: the specter, who seems to maintain his dignity at the level of form ("with that fair and warlike form / In which the majesty of buried Denmark / Did sometimes march" [1.1.47-49]); the skull of Yorick, the King's jester; and "the nearly liquid mass of loathsome — of detestable putridity" to which the Hamlet who utters, "I am dead," and who had earlier exclaimed "O that this too too solid flesh would melt / Thaw and resolve itself into a dew" (1.2.129-130), is reduced.
38. Edgar Allan Poe, *The Facts in the Case of M. Valdemar*. As some readers will, dumbstruck, recall: when the doctor who had hypnotized the moribund Mr. Valdemar "asked him ... if he still slept," he answered at a delay: "Yes; — no; — I have been sleeping — and now — now — I am dead." Nearly seven months later, his state having remained exactly the same, when the doctor attempts to awaken him, his hideous voice breaks forth: "For God's sake! — quick! — quick! — put me to sleep — or, quick! — waken me! — quick! — I say to you that I am dead!" It is at this point that "his whole frame at once" "absolutely rotted away" "into a nearly liquid mass of loathsome — of detestable putridity."
39. Friedrich Nietzsche, *On the Genealogy of Morals*, trans. Walter Kaufmann and R. J. Hollingdale/*Ecce Homo*, trans. Walter Kaufmann; edited, with commentary, by Walter Kaufmann (New York: Vintage Books, 1989), 57-62.
40. Friedrich Nietzsche: "I beware of speaking of chemical 'laws': that savours of morality." *The Will to Power*, trans. Walter Kaufmann and R. J. Hollingdale (New York: Random House, 1968), 630.
41. Abdulaziz Abdulhussein Sachedina, *Islamic Messianism: the Idea of Mahdi in Twelver Shi'ism* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1981), 158.
42. "The disciples asked Jesus, peace be with him, 'Indicate to us a work by which we may enter the Garden.' He said, 'Do not speak at all.' They said, 'We cannot do that.' He said, 'So, do not speak except what is good.' (*Sharh Nahj al-Balāgha*, 10, 137)," in *Īsa 'alayh al-salām fī riwāyāt al-muslimīn al-shī'alJesus (Peace Be with Him) Through Shi'ite Narrations*, trans. Muhammad Legenhausen (Beirut: The Sapiential Knowledge Institute [for Religious and Philosophical Studies], 2005), 268.
43. "Nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. There will be famines and earthquakes in various places. All these are the beginning of birth-pains. At that time ... there will be great distress, unequalled from the beginning of the world until now—and never to be equaled again. If those days had not been cut short, no one would survive, but for the sake of the elect those days will be shortened.... Immediately after the distress of those days 'the sun will be darkened, / and the moon will not give its / light; / the stars will fall from the sky, / and the heavenly bodies will / be shaken.' ... when you see all these things, you know that it is near, right at the door. *I tell you the truth, this generation will certainly not pass away until all these things have happened*" (Matthew 24:7-34, my italics).
44. *In the beginning was the Word* (John 1:1) and God in the hypostasis of the Father gave it (as the Son; cf. Qur'ān 3:45, "[And remember] when the angels said: O Mary! Lo! Allāh giveth thee glad tidings of a word from him, whose name is the Messiah, Jesus, son of Mary,"

- and Qur'ān 4:171: "The Messiah, Jesus son of Mary, was only a messenger of Allāh, and His word which He conveyed unto Mary, and a spirit from Him"), i.e., promised; and so He has since then, i.e., since the baptism of Jesus ("As soon as Jesus was baptized, he went up out of the water. At that moment heaven was opened, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and lighting on him. And a voice from heaven said, 'This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased'" [Matthew 3:16-17]), kept silent, and it is in the hypostasis of the Holy Spirit that He talks.
45. Jalal Toufic, *Two or Three Things I'm Dying to Tell You* (Sausalito, CA: The Post-Apollo Press, 2005), 118.
 46. Paradoxically, when he talks in a slow, entranced manner in the first part of the film, he is speaking in his own (mistaken) name and—when not quoting from the words attributed by the Gospels to Jesus Christ—his own words; it is when he seems to be talking naturally that it is the Holy Spirit that is speaking through him.
 47. The Greater Occultation cannot be validly explained just by the sociological, historical, political, and economic conditions that were prevalent then and that made the continuation of the Lesser Occultation quite problematic: conflicts between the various claimants to the deputyship, partly over disposing of the fifth of the Shi'ite's earnings due to the imām; the expiration of the optimal human life-span of seventy-five years since the purported birth date of the imām ...
 48. In other words: if You, God, spare the world, I will lose the world.
 49. It is appropriate to place him in a mental asylum not so much because he burns his house and refuses to justify himself regarding this act, but because he believes and is acting as if the fate of the world depends on him alone.
 50. Daniel Paul Schreber: "Very early on there predominated in recurrent nightly visions the notion of an approaching *end of the world*, as a consequence of the indissoluble connection between God and myself. Bad news came in from all sides that even this or that star or this or that group of stars had to be 'given up'; at one time it was said that even Venus had to be 'flooded,' at another that the whole solar system would now have to be 'disconnected,' that the Cassiopeia (the whole group of stars) had had to be drawn together into a single sun, that perhaps only the Pleiades could still be saved, etc., etc.," *Memoirs of My Nervous Illness*, trans. and ed. Ida Macalpine and Richard A. Hunter, with a new introduction by Samuel M. Weber (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1988), 84.
 51. From Friedrich Nietzsche's 5 January 1889 letter to Jacob Burckhardt, in *Selected Letters of Friedrich Nietzsche*, 347.
 52. Even Jesus Christ, the Son of God, did so. It is part and parcel of the sacrifice of Jesus Christ to be resigned to the continued existence of the world were he to disappear from it; "My God, my God, why have You forsaken *me*?" (Matthew 27:46)—i.e., why have you forsaken me alone and not the world as well? How could it be that the continued existence of the world as well as its fate no longer depends on me, Your Son?
 53. *Moon in a Dewdrop: Writings of Zen Master Dōgen*, edited by Kazuaki Tanahashi; trans. Robert Aitken et al. (San Francisco: North Point Press, 1985), 145-147.
 54. Regarding the appearance of a messianic figure in a generation from which all evil has been abolished, see the section "*You Said 'Stay,' So I Stayed*" in my book *Forthcoming* (Berkeley, CA: Atelos, 2000).
 55. From this perspective and on this point, the narrative of the film is superior to that of the script, where it is stated: "He dreams he is flying ... over a coastal hamlet, low, almost touching the rooftops ... along the streets and alleyways; a crowd of people, maddened with fear, is pouring out of the town, and he thinks they are trying to escape him ..." Andrei Tarkovsky, *Collected Screenplays*, trans. William Powell and Natasha Synessios (London: Faber and Faber, 1999), 554.
 56. The prognosis of the doctor of *Ordet*, "She's asleep, and with any luck there won't be any complications," is a probabilistic one, and so does not commit the doctor completely. Had the doctor said instead, "She will overcome this illness and live," or "She will die within six months," his statement would no longer be just a prognosis but a promise. In relation to the first prognosis-as-promise, if the sick person dies prematurely, the doctor has to resurrect him or her—if even those who are not unaware that the doctor is not omniscient are disappointed when the patient dies before the time set by the prognosis, it is that they intuitively agree with Nietzsche that to give a promise is to promise to maintain it "in the face of accidents, even 'in the face of fate.'" In relation to the second prognosis-as-promise, it has to function as a performative, i.e., the one who seemingly continues to live is gradually revealed to be and is symptomatically

treated by at least some others as already dead (Blanchot's *Death Sentence*).

57. "The Sacrifice of the Promise: An Interview with Jalal Toufic" was published in *No: A Journal of the Arts*, no. 6 (2007): 293-312. It does not include the final question and answer.

Postscript

What will Graziella feel on reading this book? Will she feel *this is not Graziella*?

Appendix:

This Is Not to Say that This Is Not the Case
(2004)



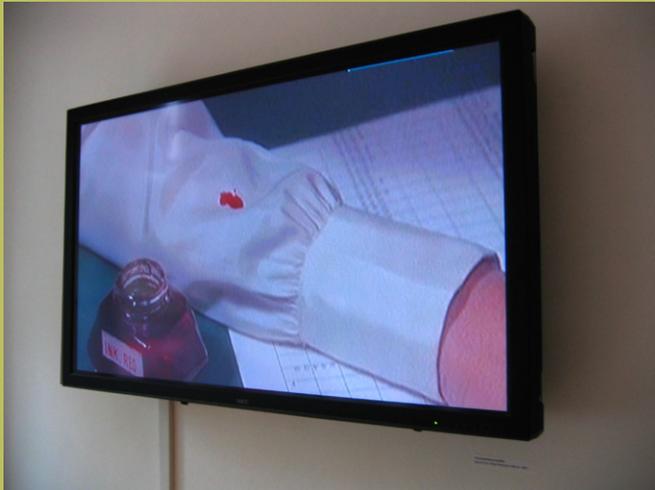
Partial view of *This Is Not to Say that This Is Not the Case*,
mixed-media, Galerie Tanit, Munich, 7 May-25 June 2004.



This Is Not Magritte's *The Treachery of Images*.



Magritte, *The Treachery of Images*, 1928-1929,
oil on canvas, 62.2 x 81 cm, Los Angeles County Museum.



This Is Not Blood, but Red
(Looped excerpt from Alfred Hitchcock's *Marnie*, 1964).



Looped excerpt from *Marnie*.

ORAL HISTORY: MARGARET THATCHER

FRONTLINE

Show #1407T

the gulf war

Part A

Air Date: January 28, 1997

[This program was originally broadcast on January 9, 1996.]

Pres. GEORGE BUSH Summary executions, routine torture—Hitler revisited. America will not stand aside. The world will not allow the strong to swallow up the weak.

Pres. GEORGE BUSH And that's what we're dealing with! We're dealing with Hitler revisited, a totalitarianism and a brutality that is naked and unprecedented in modern times! And that must not stand! We cannot talk about compromise.

EXPERT LIKENS SADDAM TO 1930S HITLER

CBSNEWS.com

August 1, 2002 20:24:01

Former CIA Director James Woolsey warns that Saddam Hussein "poses the same kind of threat to the United States that Hitler posed in Germany in the mid 1930s when the British and the French kept postponing dealing with him in the way that some people are advocating dealing with Saddam now."

**MORE SADDAM TAPES
SURFACE; THOUSANDS
OF IRAQIS PROTEST
U.S. PRESENCE**



04.18.2003

New footage of Saddam Hussein surfaced Friday (April 18), furthering suspicion that the Iraqi leader is still alive. Abu Dhabi TV aired a videotape that shows a man purported to be Hussein wearing a military uniform and beret, and waving to a crowd. His son, Qusay, looks to be with him, as many people cheered, "With our bloods and souls we redeem you, Oh Saddam."

**US STUDIES "SADDAM"
TV PICTURES**



BBC NEWS UK EDITION

Friday, 18 April, 2003, 16:34 GMT 17:34 UK

US intelligence officials are studying television pictures of what is said to be an appearance by Saddam Hussein in Baghdad on 9 April—the day American forces moved into the city. The pictures were shown on Abu Dhabi TV, who said they had been given the tape by an unidentified person.



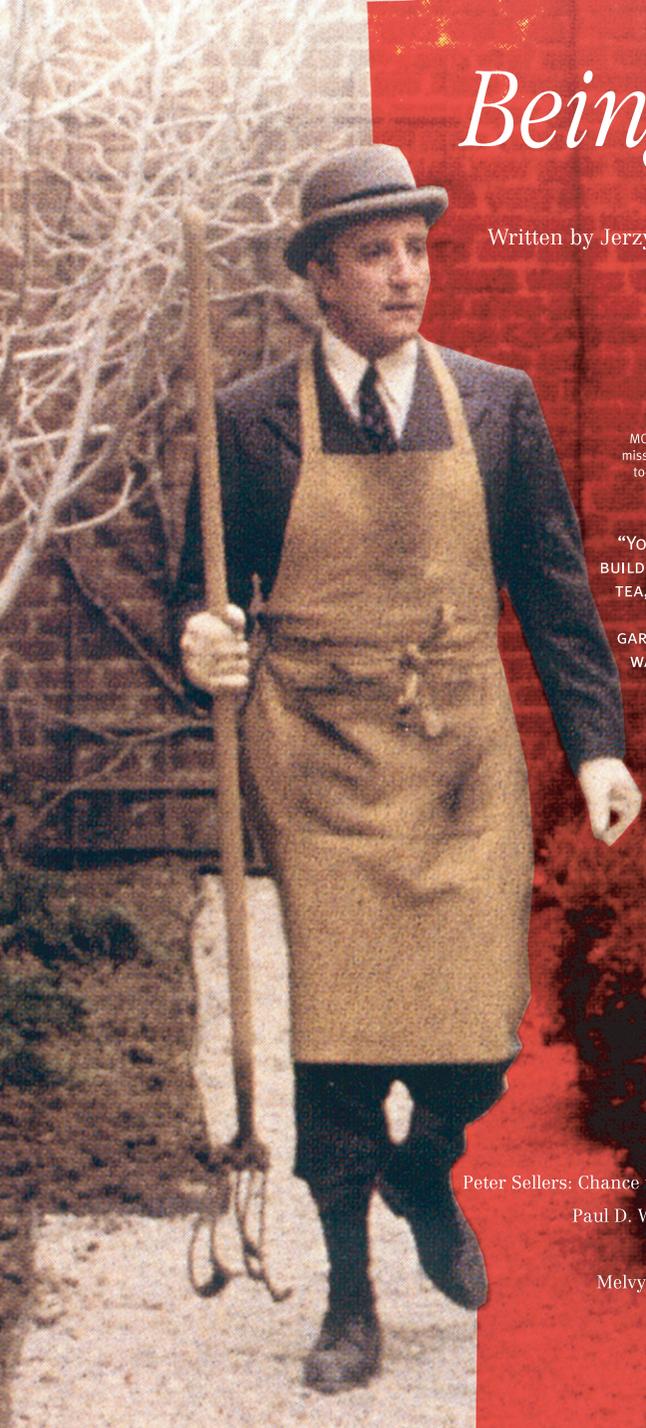
This Is Not Hitler, 1940s version

(Looped excerpt from Ernst Lubitsch's *To Be or Not to Be*, 1942).



This Is Not Hitler, 2003 version

(Looped TV footage of Şaddām Ḥusayn, April 2003).

A man in a dark suit, a brown apron, and a bowler hat is walking towards the left. He is holding a long-handled shovel over his shoulder. The background is a textured, reddish-brown wall with some white, branch-like structures on the left.

Being There

A Hal Ashby film

Written by Jerzy Kosinski (based on his novel)

The New York Times July 22, 2003

OFFICIAL TOUR
Wolfowitz Sees Challenges, and Vindication, in Iraq
By ERIC SCHMITT

MOSUL, Iraq, July 21 — The FRUITS of a long personal mission for Paul D. Wolfowitz were spread out before him today in a modest second-floor conference room in this bustling city in northern Iraq.

“YOU DON’T BUILD A DEMOCRACY LIKE YOU BUILD A HOUSE,” MR. WOLFOWITZ SAID OVER TEA, HONEY PASTRIES AND WATER BUFFALO CHEESE. “DEMOCRACY GROWS LIKE A GARDEN. IF YOU KEEP THE WEEDS OUT AND WATER THE PLANTS AND YOU’RE PATIENT, EVENTUALLY YOU GET SOMETHING MAGNIFICENT.”

CAST

Peter Sellers: Chance the Gardener (“Chauncey Gardner”)

Paul D. Wolfowitz: Deputy Defense Secretary

Shirley MacLaine: Eve Rand

Melvyn Douglas: Benjamin Turnbull Rand

“Brecht: ‘This beer isn’t a beer, but that is compensated for by the fact that this cigar isn’t a cigar either. If this beer wasn’t a beer and this cigar really was a cigar, then there would be a problem.’ In the same manner, this war is not a war, but this is compensated for by the fact that information is not information either” (Jean Baudrillard, *The Gulf War Did Not Take Place*). Saddam is not “Hitler revisited,” but this is compensated for by the possibility, entertained by the Western intelligence agencies when confronted by one of his televised appearances, that Saddam is not Saddam (but a look-alike). The hysterical eponymous protagonist of Hitchcock’s *Marnie* is neither Marion Holland nor Peggy Nicholson nor Mary Taylor (the names she assumes in her various jobs), but that is compensated for by the fact that the drop that triggers her panicked reaction is not of blood but of red ink, and by the suspicion that the hull at the end of the street where her mother resides is not really a ship but a painted backdrop. In addition to Hitler (and his Beer Hall Putsch), Saddam (and his cigar), and Marnie, *This Is Not to Say that This Is Not the Case* (2004) brings to mind the symmetry trick, time transfixed, elective affinities, boundless recognition, decalomania, the false mirror, the treachery of images, the alarm clock, the voice of blood, check mate, the killer in danger, swift hope, freedom of thought, attempting the impossible.

Jalal Toufic is a thinker and a mortal to death. He is the author of *Diŕtracted* (1991; 2nd ed., 2003), *(Vampires): An Uneasy Essay on the Undead in Film* (1993; 2nd ed., 2003), *Over-Sensitivity* (1996, 2nd ed., 2009), *Forthcoming* (2000), *Undying Love, or Love Dies* (2002), *Two or Three Things I'm Dying to Tell You* (2005), *'Āshūrā': This Blood Spilled in My Veins* (2005), and *Undeserving Lebanon* (2007). Several of his books are available for download at his website: <http://www.jalaltoufic.com>. He has taught at the University of California at Berkeley, California Institute of the Arts, the University of Southern California, and, in Lebanon, Holy Spirit University; and he currently teaches at Kadir Has University in Istanbul.



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