

# WHAT WERE YOU THINKING?

Jalal Toufic



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Berliner Künstlerprogramm/DAAD



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## Books by Jalal Toufic

- *The Portrait of the Pubescent Girl: A Rite of Non-Passage* (Forthcoming Books, 2011)
- *What Is the Sum of Recurrently?* (Galeri Nev, 2010)
- *Graziella: The Corrected Edition* (Forthcoming Books, 2009)
- *Undeserving Lebanon* (Forthcoming Books, 2007)
- *‘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* (Sun & Moon, 1996; 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., Forthcoming Books, 2009)
- *(Vampires): An Uneasy Essay on the Undead in Film* (Station Hill, 1993; revised and expanded ed., Post-Apollo, 2003)
- *Diſtracted* (Station Hill, 1991; 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., Tuumba, 2003)

With the exception of *Forthcoming*, these books are presently available for download as PDF files at:

<http://www.jalaltoufic.com/downloads.htm>

## Acknowledgements

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## “Teaching Philosophy”

Many university search committees ask for the applicant’s “teaching philosophy” in announcements of academic vacancies. They must be using the term “philosophy” flippantly and sloppily, since very few people (Plato [*The Republic*, etc.], Nietzsche [in his texts on breeding, etc.] ...) have ever had a teaching philosophy.

From: Diamanda Galás



Sent: March 31, 2006 12:52:21 AM

To: jtoufic@hotmail.com

Hello,

Many years ago a book was found by me in my study and I had no idea how it got there. I then observed a dedication. Throughout the years I have perused it and this year I began to leave it out on my desk.

Today at St. Mark’s bookstore I discovered an incredibly beautiful new edition of this book, along with another one, and under one of the photos I read the quote, “Are the two praying for each other? If not, who is praying for the other? She is praying for him.”

This hit me quite hard as I have been adapting a poem favored by Marlene Dietrich, *O Lieb, Solang Du Lieben Kannst* by Ferdinand Freiligrath, which says something similar but in a completely different way, of course.

I was stunned to see the photos in the book, which are so

filial to me, so close.

And as I sat down and looked again through the NEW edition, I felt I should e-mail you. So I have.

I hope I have reached you.

From: Jalal Toufic

jtoufic@hotmail.com

To: [REDACTED]

Dear Diamanda:

You have reached me—years ago (as the dedication shows), through your *Plague Mass* and your rendition of *I Put a Spell on You*. Some people are unaware that they have been reached (as William S. Burroughs, that incredibly sensitive writer, said: “Some weapons hit you right away; other weapons may take 500 years to hit. It’s like that old joke: ‘Well, you missed me that time.’ ‘Oh yeah? Just try and move your head.’ Well, just try and shake your head 500 years from now. You won’t even know you were hit”); others sense *that* they have been reached, but it takes them “500 years” to know *what* “really” reached them, and in order to do that they have to begin partly losing it, thus undergoing to some degree the work of mourning (from one of Nietzsche’s letters during the onset of his psychosis, of his dying before dying: “To my friend Georg! Once you discovered me, it was no great feat to find me: the difficulty now is to lose me”), and partly gaining it, by enriching it through collaborating in an untimely way in its creation, thus deserving it...

Jalal

In relation to a student who does not appreciate what I am teaching him or her, for example how one may discover “500 years” later that he or she had been struck by a poem or a concept, either I take a Gnostic view and consider him or her devoid of any spark of (spiritual) light, or else I consider that he or she has indeed been reached, even if this is going to become manifest only in “500 years” (Burroughs). A poem or a line of poetry or a philosophical concept, etc., may reach one unbeknownst to one, and may affect, indeed largely determine one’s future life, even lives across several cycles of rebirth-redeath,<sup>1</sup> in the sense that what one does following reading this poem or concept is an obscure, indeed often unconscious search for all the experiences that one is going to need in order to understand, or keenly and intelligently not understand what one grossly did not understand at first.<sup>2</sup> Elia Kazan’s *Splendor in the Grass* (1961) is the paradigmatic film about this. The film’s title is taken from William Wordsworth’s “Ode: Intimation of Immortality from Recollections of Early Childhood”: “Though nothing can bring back the hour / Of splendor in the grass, of glory in the flower / We will grieve not, but rather find / Strength in what remains behind”; but the real motto of the film for me is rather these words from the same poem: “those truths ... / Which we are toiling all our lives to find ...”<sup>3</sup> For the sake of appreciating a poem, indeed a few lines of a poem, for example the aforementioned lines of Wordsworth’s “Ode: Intimation of Immortality from Recollections of Early Childhood,” you may have, like the Bud Stamper of *Splendor in the Grass*, to shun your beloved, “the only girl in the world for” you (Bud does this neither because of class differences nor because his beloved, raised by a mother

for whom “boys don’t respect a girl they can go all the way with. Boys want a nice girl for a wife,” frustrates him sexually); have instead a sexual relationship with a second, promiscuous woman (notwithstanding that his response to the advice of his parochial father, the product of a small town in Southeast Kansas in 1928, “What you need for the time being, Bud, is a different kind of girl. When I was a boy, son, there was always two kinds of girls. Us boys, we’d never even mention them in the same breath. But every now and then, one of us boys would sneak off with a girl, and we’d get a little steam out of our system,” is: “No girl looks good to me except Deanie”); marry a third woman, one whom you do not love, and have children with her; and cope with knowing that your jilted lover suffered a nervous breakdown and was interned in a mental hospital, and that she then accepted the offer of marriage of a fellow discharged patient. Poetically, Bud and Deanie’s lives were determined and affected less by social conventions, class differences, etc., than by an intuition of what would lead them if not to understand then to keenly and intelligently not understand the poem the teacher asked them to explain while they were still young students.<sup>4</sup> Bud’s life was affected by the aforementioned few lines in Wordsworth’s “Ode: Intimation of Immortality from Recollections of Early Childhood” that he did not understand much more than, in Shakespeare’s *Macbeth*, Macbeth’s life was affected by the prophetic words the three witches tell him when he is still a commander: First Witch, “All hail, Macbeth! hail to thee, thane of Glamis!”; Second Witch, “All hail, Macbeth, hail to thee, thane of Cawdor!”; Third Witch, “All hail, Macbeth, thou shalt be king hereafter!” (1.3)—some readers may find out that they, unawares,

steered their lives to fully appreciate these lines in Shakespeare’s play. I, who have had very good students, such as videomaker Roy Samaha (*Untitled for Several Reasons*, 2003; *Pink White Green Black—Noise/Silence Insinuated*, 2004) and filmmaker Nizar Sfair (*NTSC*, 2002; *Videodrug*, 2005), would certainly have also wished to have the kind of “bad” students that are the teenager Deanie Loomis and her boyfriend, Bud Stamper, whose teacher, after complimenting Bud’s classmates on the best term papers she has ever received, takes aside and reprimands on his bad term paper—for Bud turns out retrospectively, by the end of the film, to have been the best student in the class.

### Black Holes Radiate Lovingly

Lina Saneh asked me, as well as other artists, to sign one of her body parts. I, an artist and thinker who neither curses nor uses unseemly language, have chosen to sign the phallus implied jointly by her play *Appendix* and her oft-repeated exclamation *ayrī fīk* (*I thrust my penis in you/my penis is inside you*) when addressed to her husband, Rabih Mroué. In Lewis Carroll’s *Alice’s Adventures in Wonderland* (1865), the Cheshire-Cat is “giving in love what she does not have” (Lacan),<sup>5</sup> a grin (Alice: “I didn’t know that Cheshire-Cats always grinned; in fact, I didn’t know that cats *could* grin”). “We’re all mad here. I’m mad...” The Cheshire-Cat is indeed mad. What kind of madness? It is madly in love, refining itself to what it does not have, a grin, which it gives lovingly. “This time it [the Cat] vanished quite slowly, beginning with the end of the tail, and ending with the grin, which remained some time

after the rest of it had gone. ‘Well! I’ve often seen a cat without a grin,’ thought Alice; ‘but a grin without a cat! It’s the most curious thing I ever saw in my life!’” Yes, it is the most curious thing: witnessing someone madly in love. One of the most obvious things a woman does not have is a penis, therefore the love of a woman may entail giving it—in a linguistic or prosthetic form or else creatively. But is she willing to go all the way and give a Phallus, as a gesture of being *madly* in love? For that she has to disappear! What could be a pretext for accomplishing that? Is it—especially if this disappearance takes the form, as in Saneh’s play *Appendix*, of losing, organ by organ, all she has, her appendix, gall-bladder, breasts, legs, arms, eyes, etc.—making a body without organs? Not necessarily, since, as Deleuze and Guattari emphasize, “the BwO [Body without Organs] is not at all the opposite of the organs. The organs are not its enemies. The enemy is the organism.... It is true that Artaud wages a struggle against the organs, but at the same time what he is going after, what he has it in for, is the organism: *The body is the body. Alone it stands. And in no need of organs. Organism it never is. Organisms are the enemies of the body.* The BwO is not opposed to the organs; rather, the BwO and its ‘true organs,’ which must be composed and positioned, are opposed to the organism, the organic organization of the organs.”<sup>6</sup> The pretext Lina Saneh gives in her play *Appendix* is the following: “Lina has always wanted to be cremated at her death. But it is prohibited to get oneself cremated in Lebanon, for religious reasons. One day, she heard it said that in hospitals the excised limbs and organs of certain patients were burnt.... She told herself that here was perhaps a solution to her problem. That is, she could be operated on,

in several stages, to remove, as she went along, limbs and organs of her body, from the least necessary to the most vital, without for that matter endangering her life. The organs and limbs removed during the operations would then be burnt. She would thus try to gain as much ‘ground’ as possible at the expense of her own body in comparison with what would remain of it for interring at her death. She would thus get herself burnt as she went along, by means of little fires, until she has encroached on the largest fraction of herself at the expense of her enemies—until perhaps the capitulation of the latter.” Lina vanished quite slowly, beginning with the appendix (in her play *Appendix*), and ending with the linguistic penis (implicit in her oft-repeated *Ayrī fik*), which remained some time after the rest of her had gone. The phallus is a woman refined to what she most obviously does not have, a penis, which she gives lovingly. Thus while a woman cannot have a becoming-man,<sup>7</sup> she can have a becoming-Phallus. Can one who is madly in love and the jealous type perform this gesture, when it implies the possibility that a thief, an imposter will lay claim to that penis, cathect it perversely in a prosthetic penis attachment? The ambivalence in relation to seeing a woman with a prosthetic penis attachment during a sexual act is not necessarily due to encountering an indiscernability of the female and the male but results from the circumstance that it is not clear whether the woman in question is giving what she does not have while maintaining what she has, or whether she has stolen the phallus of a woman who has been refined to what she does not have and gave that lovingly—many a pervert’s prosthetic penis attachment is the stolen phallus of a hysteric who is madly in love. Simultaneously with her play *Appendix*, which was

premiered on 21 April 2007, Saneh began the project *Lina Saneh Body Studio*. One reads in the online blog dedicated to this project, and whose first entries are from March and April 2007: “I’ve always wanted to be cremated after my death. But cremation is forbidden in Lebanon, for religious reasons.... But I’m absolutely set on being cremated ... I have long thought of the best way to evade religious law as ratified by state law. For this, I have been inspired by the work of Piero Manzoni, who signs human bodies or body parts, thus constituting them, in the act of signing and seeing, into artworks. I am inviting you to contribute to my project, which consists in the transformation of my body into a collection of art pieces duly signed by different international artists. But this is only the first part of the project entitled: *Lina Saneh Body Studio*. Later, my body-collection-of-art-pieces will be presented to galleries, museums, and collectors, who might be interested to buy these pieces of art, the only condition being that they will not be receiving these artworks/parts-of-my-body before I die, at which point my body will be cut up and each piece sent to its new owners. The latter are then free to exhibit them or refrain from doing so. They are also free to sell them to any interested party, gallery or private collector (this is moreover allowed in my lifetime), however the new owners are contractually bound to preserve them from any deterioration, or otherwise to burn them.” It would seem that Saneh is completely unaware of the likelihood that the preserved organs, as the ancient Egyptians knew all too well, would reveal her secrets, even betray her: “To be said by Osiris N.: ‘My heart of my mother, my heart of my mother, my breast of my being, rise not against me as witness, oppose me not in the Council. Weigh

not heavy against me before the keeper of the balance.... Make not my name to stink in the presence of the Council ... Tell no lie against me in the presence of the great god”<sup>8</sup> (*The Egyptian Book of the Dead*, 30b).<sup>9</sup> *Lina Saneh Body Studio* is not only a needless prosthetic appendix to her play *Appendix*; it is a sort of defense mechanism against, a resistance to her play *Appendix*, and thus reveals a woman who, while not afraid of representation (the title of one of Saneh’s collaborative performances with Rabih Mroué is: *Who’s Afraid of Representation*, 2005), is afraid to be madly in love—how Jalal Toufic wishes that *Lina Saneh Body Studio* is an April Fools’ joke.<sup>10</sup>

In the last scene of Buñuel’s *Belle de Jour* (1967), the husband talks, sees, stands, and walks away from his wheelchair; this reveals that he was madly in love with his wife, giving her what he did not have: paralysis, blindness, and aphonia—many a hysteric can be viewed as madly in love, giving what she or he does not have organically, what cannot be explained by any physical disorder or known physiological mechanism: paralysis, aphonia, seizures, akinesia, dyskinesia, blindness, anosmia, anesthesia, paresthesia ... The ending is a reasonably happy one: thenceforth he will give her what he has and she will give him what she, previously frigid, did not know that she had, but discovered, in a brothel, as having.

“I give you my body, my voice, my existence”: certainly this is a loving declaration, especially if the one who is saying it is dead, therefore one who is giving what he or she does not have. Isn’t this the case with the dead Lady Wakasa in Mizoguchi’s *Ugetsu Monogatari*, 1953, who gives the potter Genjuro a body

she no longer has as well as the Kutsuki Manor, which would otherwise be a ruin, in an exquisite condition? When they are lovers at all, the dead are mad lovers; it is among them that one encounters many of the greatest lovers. Unfortunately, there's always a priest somewhere to tempt one to get rid of that which is too big for one,<sup>11</sup> for example a great love; indeed a priest tempts Genjuro to interpret what is happening as a case of a dead person, a sort of incubus or vampire, sucking the life of the living. Is this the case in *Ugetsu Monogatari*? No! Is it for that matter the case in all vampire films? No! Only in certain vampire films, for example Murnau's *Nosferatu*, is the vampire to be viewed as sucking from the other his energy and taking his life. But in vampire films that are love stories, for example Francis Ford Coppola's *Bram Stoker's Dracula* (1992), with its tagline *Love Never Dies*,<sup>12</sup> the vampire's beloved gives him what she has, her blood and life, while he gives her what he does not have, his body, as can be discerned by its non appearance in the mirror; his voice; extra powers, etc. At least some of the instances of the dead coming back changed can be attributed not only or necessarily to their having no mirror image, but also to their continuing love, and hence to giving what they do not have—what becomings one undergoes, lovingly! Can one pettily interpret the potter's encounter with Lady Wakasa as happening solely in his head? Mizoguchi makes it difficult to maintain this interpretation as the potter is seen in the last scene being assisted in his work by his invisible, inexistent, dead wife. While alive, his wife gave him what she had; following her death, she, madly in love with him, gave him what she did not have, assisting him lovingly in a pottery-making process that requires the

simultaneous complementary efforts of two people. “Why is it one encounters the ghost or the vampire alone? Why is it that when one is with others he or she does not appear? Is it necessarily because he or she is a subjective hallucination of the witness?”<sup>13</sup> No; if the beloved can see the dead lover while others cannot, it is possibly because while the dead lover, a cipher, is naturally giving others nothing, he or she is giving what he or she does not have, a body, a voice, etc., to the one with whom he or she is madly in love, with the result that the dead lover is seen and heard by his or her beloved while others see and hear nothing.<sup>14</sup> “Alas, how is't with you, / That you do bend your eye on vacancy, / And with th'incorporal air do hold discourse?” (Shakespeare's *Hamlet*, 3.4); from these words of Gertrude to her son Hamlet, one can deduce that King Hamlet is madly in love with Prince Hamlet but not with his wife.<sup>15</sup> For many living humans, the love of the dead is a grave problem, because their love for the beloved subsists, melancholically, even after the latter's death and/or because their lover continues to love them even after his or her death. Therefore, with few exceptions, such as those among them who are madly in love or died before dying, the living have made a calculating attempt to stop this love. For that, it was not enough to limit the dead to a specific territory, the grave—*Here Lies*. It was additionally crucial to change the formula of love, to define it otherwise, so it became to give *solely* what one has—thus it was hoped that the dead would be dissuaded and deterred from maintaining their love by making them believe that they, who, being and having nothing (*Dracula* to Mina in Coppola's *Dracula*: “I am nothing, lifeless, soulless ...”), can give only what they do not have, cannot love. Basically, marriage's

standard vow, *Till death do us part*, was never primarily addressed to the living to maintain a lifelong love but has always been a directive addressed to the dead to cease their love, to discontinue giving what they do not have to the living, leave the latter alone.

When he exclaimed, “I love you completely; I want all of you. Give me all you have, including your urine, menstrual blood ...”, she, disappointed, blurted: “Is that all you want?!”—for did not his words imply, among other things, that he wished her to cease loving him once dead? One can want everything in a woman, ask her to give one everything she has, or else one can want from a woman to give one only or mainly or additionally what she does not have, (im-)possibly a penis—in a linguistic or prosthetic form or else creatively. So that the most irrevocable manner of telling someone that one will not fall in love with him or her is to tell him or her: “I am not interested in what you want to give me whether you have it or don’t have it and are willing to create it!”<sup>16</sup>

“I do not have it!” “Then give it to me *lovingly!*” If love entails giving what one does not have, then “unrequited” love is both a limit case of love and the exemplary love, and the “unrequited” lover is the exemplary lover: “I am not asking you to love me, but to give me what you do not have, love for me, *lovingly.*”

The term *al-faqīr* (the poor) applies according to Islam to each and every human (“O mankind, you are the poor in your relation to God, and God—He is the Independent [or, the Wealthy], the Praiseworthy” [Qur’ān 35:15]); it is moreover one of the appellations of the Ṣūfī. Since, according to a *ḥadīth qudsī*,<sup>17</sup> God created the world out of love: “I was a Hidden Treasure and

loved to be known. Therefore I created the Creation that I might be known”; and since in Islam creatures do not have anything in proper, indeed have to be recreated recurrently (Qur’ān’s *renewed creation*) by the One who has necessity of existence, God, since they do not have such a necessity, so that when it seems that they are giving what belongs to them, they are giving what they properly speaking do not have, what actually belongs to God, Islam is basically and radically a religion of love. To fully love God is to be madly in love with God—often exclaiming this love in (Ṣūfī) extatic utterances (*shaḥāḥāt*, plural of *shaḥ*)—since while in relation to the Divine Names, one can give what one has, love for them; in relation to the Divine Essence (*al-dhāt al-ilāhiyya*), one has to give what one does not have, indeed what one *cannot* have, love for that unknowable essence, lovingly.

## The Aura: An Approach

Dedicated to those who when they reach what to common people has become within *spitting/shouting/striking distance* sense that it may still be *nowhere near*

In the case of some artworks, films, and thoughtful books, while the material is from this world, the result is another universe that detaches from this one as baby universes do in the physical multiverse. The title of a lecture Philip K. Dick gave in 1978 was: “How to Build a Universe that Doesn’t Fall Apart Two Days Later”;<sup>18</sup> all works of art that present “a universe that doesn’t fall apart two days later”<sup>19</sup> are *out of this world*, not only in the informal

sense of *extraordinary*, but also literally, and have aura.

I care less about either distance or closeness; what I am drawn by is distance that remains one however close one gets. In Lars von Trier's *The Kingdom* (1994), as he stands in front of a corpse soon to be dissected, a doctor asks one of his students: "Would you mind if I touched your face?" "No thanks!" He then asks another: "You. Stand next to him. Closer! Closer! Closer! Closer!" "I don't like it." "Do you think the people who lie on this table like it? Would they like it when we begin to cut them up?" "I don't know." "I say that the fear of being touched, of getting close to people, is the fear of death. Why? Because it is the fear of fellowship. Every time you move along the seat of the bus to avoid contact, every time you avoid poking your finger in the wound of a patient's illness, it is the fear of fellowship, of that greater fellowship. Everyone we work on here has accepted his place in the fellowship.... With sublime generosity a corpse delivers its body to the science that belongs to all of us.... That invokes respect. Right—the first incision." Yes, the corpse is open to proximity, even to communion, but the dead as undead is the site of an aura, that is, of the "phenomenon of a distance, however close it may be" (Walter Benjamin). In Bram Stoker's novel *Dracula*, originally the distance between Jonathan Harker, who lives in London, and Count Dracula, who haunts a castle in Transylvania, in the midst of the Carpathian mountains, is over a thousand miles. Harker, a solicitor, is then sent out by his employer to explain the purchase of a London estate to Count Dracula and get his signature on the required papers. He reduces gradually the physical distance between him and Dracula. Across one or more lapses, he arrives

at the castle, and there is invited by Dracula to a dinner the same night. In Murnau's and Herzog's *Nosferatus*, Harker sits next to the count at the dinner table. Is he now close to the latter? Or is he now dealing with a problematic distance? Does he unconsciously feel this problematic distance so he "misjudges" the distance of the knife with which he is cutting a piece of bread to his other hand, wounding his finger? At this point, the distance briefly seems to get even smaller, as the driven undead cannot resist grasping Harker's bleeding finger and drinking and sucking his blood. I imagine that horrified but unable to extricate his finger from the forcible grasp of the vampire, Harker swish pans his look to the side, only to see himself all alone in the mirror ("the man was close to me, and I could see him over my shoulder. But there was no reflection of him in the mirror! The whole room behind me was displayed; but there was no sign of a man in it, except myself"),<sup>20</sup> that is, only to witness that the undead is nowhere (inside the mirror) near (outside the mirror), yes, *nowhere near*. In other words, with regard to the vampire, Harker encounters the phenomenon of a distance however close he may get to the vampire. While earlier Harker was unsettled and disoriented by being closer than he reckoned as a result of the lapse of consciousness he underwent ("Chapter II: Jonathan Harker's Journal [*continued*]. 5 May. — I must have been asleep, for certainly if I had been fully awake I must have noticed the approach of such a remarkable place"),<sup>21</sup> he is now, as a result of the vampire's aura, puzzled by realizing that he is more distant from the vampire than he at first believed, perceiving in the mirror the phenomenon of a distance however close the vampire may be to him outside the mirror. The one who is discerning regarding the

aura fathoms that, unless he is resurrected, the vampire continues to be distant from any living person even while sucking his blood, that is, even while “being” as near to him as his jugular vein—but not nearer than that—and however close the living get to him, *without having to see that in the mirror*.<sup>22</sup> Harker disavowed the vampire’s anomalous absence in the mirror. The next day, while exploring the castle, he came across documents in manuscript form that mentioned his host’s birthdate ... and date of death, centuries ago! Once more—the first time was on not seeing his host in the mirror even though he stood next to him in front of it—he felt that he was not the contemporary of his host. Yet, when a few days later he saw Count Dracula in a coffin, he considered, on recovering his composure, taking advantage of the vampire’s condition to drive a stake in his heart. But very quickly he came to the realization that he could not do so: the count was frozen, immobile rather than motionless. Harker was not the contemporary of his undead host not only because he himself was born in the nineteenth century while his host was born and died hundreds of years earlier, but also partly because when immobilized, whether in a coffin or while standing, the undead was not in time, was withheld from it, therefore was distant however close one may get to him. Harker again felt the aura of the vampire; while they were both ostensibly in the same present, he could not be the immobilized vampire’s contemporary: in order to stab him, an action that occurs in time, he had to wait for him to be out of the state of immobilization and again in time.

Walter Benjamin: “The concept of aura which was proposed ... with reference to historical objects may usefully be

illustrated with reference to the aura of natural ones. We define the aura of the latter as the unique phenomenon of a distance, however close it may be. If, while resting on a summer afternoon, you follow with your eyes a mountain range on the horizon or a branch which casts its shadow over you, you experience the aura of those mountains, of that branch” (“The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction,” 1936).<sup>23</sup> What is the man or woman addressed by Walter Benjamin resting from? Might it be from their futile attempts to catch up, in an infinitely divisible space, with a tortoise, one consequently auratic? “Imagine Achilles chasing a tortoise ... Before Achilles can catch the tortoise he must reach the point where the tortoise started. But in the time he takes to do this the tortoise crawls a little further forward. So next Achilles must reach this new point. But in the time it takes Achilles to achieve this the tortoise crawls forward a tiny bit further. And so on to infinity: every time that Achilles reaches the place where the tortoise was, the tortoise has had enough time to get a little bit further, and so Achilles has another run to make, and so Achilles has an infinite number of finite catch-ups to do before he can catch the tortoise, and so, Zeno concludes, he never catches the tortoise.”<sup>24</sup> Benjamin wrote in a footnote to his essay: “The *essentially* distant thing is the unapproachable”; in the context of an essay that’s largely around the aura, *the phenomenon of a distance, however close it may be*, I would rather have written: “The essentially distant thing is the unreachable—in a particular manner: the *infinitely* approachable.” The two examples Benjamin gives of the aura of a natural object are actually examples of objects that naturally have no aura! If there is a natural object that has aura, it is the black hole and its

event horizon from the reference frame of an outside observer: “Windbag, watching Goulash from a spaceship safely outside the horizon, sees Goulash acting in a bizarre way. Windbag has lowered to the horizon a cable equipped with a camcorder and other probes, to better keep an eye on Goulash. As Goulash falls toward the black hole, his speed increases until it approaches that of light. Einstein found that if two persons are moving fast relative to each other, each sees the other’s clock slow down; in addition, a clock that is near a massive object will run slowly compared with one in empty space. Windbag sees a strangely lethargic Goulash. As he falls, the latter shakes his fist at Windbag. But he appears to be moving ever more slowly; at the horizon, Windbag sees Goulash’s motions slow to a halt. Although Goulash falls through the horizon, Windbag *never quite sees him get there*” (my italics).<sup>25</sup> Can a mountain be auratic? Unless it exists in an infinitely divisible space, in which case it is subject to a Zeno paradox and auratic, a mountain may be auratic if it is *unnatural*, for example if it is actually the guise of an angel. “Beyond the issue of the rightful hierarchy of angels (Seraphim, Cherubim, Thrones, Dominions, Virtues, Powers, Principalities, Archangels, Angels?), we tend to have two figures of the angel: the angel as overwhelming (Rilke: “Who, if I cried out, would hear me among the angels’ / Hierarchies? And even if one of them pressed me / suddenly against his heart: I would be consumed / in that overwhelming existence” [*Duino Elegies*, trans. Stephen Mitchell]) and the angel as discreet, the guardian angel. One of the main tasks of the guardian angel is to shield the chosen from the overwhelming presence of the other angel. Did an angel appear to prophets or other humans on mountains?

Yes, Jibrā’īl (Gabriel) appeared repeatedly to Muḥammad on Harā’ (aka Hirā’), a mountain to the northeast of Mecca. But the aforementioned question is not the most pertinent one when it comes to the relation of angels to mountains. The angel can appear in the form of a man: “Gabriel came to the Prophet while Umm Salama was with him. Gabriel started talking (to the Prophet) and then left. Then the Prophet asked Umm Salama, ‘Who is he?’ ... She replied, ‘He is Diḥya’ [al-Kalbī: a handsome man amongst the companions of the Prophet]”;<sup>26</sup> but the angel can also appear in other forms, for example a mountain. Was that then a guardian angel who appeared to Moses in the form of mountain Ṭūr (aka mount Sinai)? And did Moses have, through God’s mercy, by means of the angel-as-mountain an aside from a sight “no one may see ... and live” (Exodus 33:18–20: “Then Moses said, ‘Now show me your glory.’ And the LORD said, ‘... No one may see me and live’”)? “Moses ... said: My Lord! Show me (Thy Self), that I may gaze upon Thee. He said: Thou wilt not see Me, but gaze upon the mountain!” “Gaze upon the mountain” would here mean: have an aside at the angel in the form of the mountain. “If it stand still in its place, then thou wilt see Me. And when his Lord revealed (His) glory to the mountain He sent it crashing down. And Moses fell down senseless. And when he woke he said: Glory unto Thee!”<sup>27</sup>

Respecting God, distance is not reciprocal: God is distant however close one tries to get to him (“Then he [the prophet Muḥammad] drew close and He [God] came down. *Till he was (distant) two bows’ length or even nearer* ... indeed he saw Him at a second descent, Near the Lote-tree beyond which none may pass .... Behold, the Lote-tree was shrouded [in mystery unspeakable!].

The eye did not turn aside, nor did it exceed the limit” [Qur’ān 53:8–17]), while God is near to one however distant one, for example Cain or Jonah, tries to be from Him (“We are nearer to him than his jugular vein” [Qur’ān 50:16]).

“A large crowd followed and pressed around him [Jesus]. And a woman was there who had been subject to bleeding for twelve years.... When she heard about Jesus, she came up behind him in the crowd and touched his cloak, because she thought, ‘If I just touch his clothes, I will be healed.’ Immediately her bleeding stopped and she felt in her body that she was freed from her suffering.... Jesus ... turned around in the crowd and asked, ‘Who touched my clothes?’ ‘You see the people crowding against you,’ his disciples answered, ‘and yet you can ask, “Who touched me?”’” (Mark 5:24–31; cf. Matthew 9:20–21). How unaware of the aura, at least at that point, were Jesus Christ’s disciples according to Mark for them to mishear “Who touched my clothes?” as “Who touched me?” “And when the men of that place recognized Jesus, they sent word to all the surrounding country. People brought all their sick to him and begged him to let the sick just touch the edge of his cloak, and all who touched him were healed” (Matthew 14:35–36). I am taken aback by this misreckoning of the distance of Jesus Christ, this time on the part of Matthew, apparent in the slippage from “just touch the edge of his cloak” to “touched him”—how much more sensitive to the aura of Jesus than Matthew were the people who brought their sick! They proved to be not common. It is appropriate that Jesus, who has aura, therefore who has distance however close one gets to him, is not himself touched, that the closest they get to touching him is, notwithstanding Matthew, touching the edge of

his cloak. “Now Thomas (called Didymus), one of the Twelve, was not with the disciples when Jesus came. So the other disciples told him, ‘We have seen the Lord!’ But he said to them, ‘Unless I see the nail marks in his hands and put my finger where the nails were, and put my hand into his side, I will not believe it.’ A week later his disciples were in the house again, and Thomas was with them. Though the doors were locked, Jesus came and stood among them and said, ‘Peace be with you!’ Then he said to Thomas, ‘Put your finger here; see my hands. Reach out your hand and put it into my side. Stop doubting and believe.’ Thomas said to him, ‘My Lord and my God!’ Then Jesus told him, ‘Because you have seen me, you have believed; blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed’” (John 20:24–29)—Jesus, who has aura, did not say: “Because you have touched me, you have believed; blessed are those who have not touched and yet have believed.”<sup>28</sup> Had Thomas insisted on touching the one who came and stood among them and had he successfully done so, then this would indicate either that the one he actually managed to touch was not Jesus Christ but an imposter;<sup>29</sup> or else that he managed to touch one who has aura—that is, with regard to whom there is a distance however close one may get—only through a miracle, so that his feat would have been the first miracle performed by one of the ostensible disciples of Christ—unless by touching Jesus, Thomas would have felt that his hand was no longer at hand, no longer belonged to him, the distance becoming now internal to him—and then Christ would have had to miraculously restore his hand to him, make him feel again that it belonged to him. Yes, others cannot touch Jesus—who has aura, therefore who maintains a distance however close one

gets to him—except *miraculously*. “Jesus reached out his hand and touched the man. ‘I am willing,’ he said. ‘Be clean!’ Immediately he was cured of his leprosy” (Matthew 8:3); “And he touched her hand, and the fever left her: and she arose, and ministered unto them” (Matthew 8:15); “When he had gone indoors, the blind men came to him, and he asked them, ‘Do you believe that I am able to do this?’ ‘Yes, Lord,’ they replied. Then he touched their eyes and said, ‘According to your faith will it be done to you’; and their sight was restored” (Matthew 9:28–30). What are the miracles here? They are the cure of the man’s leprosy, the disappearance of the woman’s fever, the restoration of the sight of the blind, but also that Jesus, who has aura, therefore who maintains a distance, however close it may be, actually touched these humans!<sup>30</sup> In other words, when the one who has aura touched the blind and by touching them healed them, this included two miracles, healing their blindness unnaturally, and touching them when otherwise he maintains a distance, however close it may be.

### The Contemporary Is Still Forthcoming<sup>31</sup>

Contemporary art? As far as I am largely *unconcerned*, *none* of what is termed contemporary art, including what is exhibited and screened in various “museums of contemporary art,” for example the Museum of Contemporary Art in Sydney (MCA) or the Museum of Contemporary Art in Los Angeles (MOCA), is contemporary<sup>32</sup> and most of it is not art! There can be no museum of contemporary art since while now we can have museums but not contemporaneity, with the coming of the messiah we are going

to have contemporaneity but no museums—there is going to be no need for a museum in the redeemed world, a world where one finds only what is willed to eternally recur.

In 1666, Sabbatai Zevi, the purported Jewish messiah, apostatized and converted to Islam; while most of his followers left him, some persisted in viewing him as the awaited messiah. 1676 should have proved to be the year of a far greater crisis in messianism. What happened in 1676? Sabbatai Zevi died, but also, far more crucially for messianism, “the Danish astronomer Ole Roemer ... became the first person to measure the speed of light. Until that time, scientists assumed that the speed of light was either too fast to measure or infinite. The dominant view, vigorously argued by the French philosopher Descartes, favored an infinite speed. Roemer, working at the Paris Observatory, ... was compiling extensive observations of the orbit of Io, the innermost of the four big satellites of Jupiter discovered by Galileo in 1610.... The satellite is eclipsed by Jupiter once every orbit, as seen from the Earth. By timing these eclipses over many years, Roemer noticed something peculiar. The time interval between successive eclipses became steadily shorter as the Earth in its orbit moved toward Jupiter and became steadily longer as the Earth moved away from Jupiter.... He realized that the time difference must be due to the finite speed of light. That is, light from the Jupiter system has to travel farther to reach the Earth when the two planets are on opposite sides of the Sun than when they are closer together. Romer estimated that light required twenty-two minutes to cross the diameter of the Earth’s orbit. The speed of light could then be found by dividing the diameter of the Earth’s orbit by the time

difference. The Dutch scientist Christiaan Huygens, who first did the arithmetic, found a value for the speed of light equivalent to 131,000 miles per second. The correct value is 186,000 miles per second. The difference was due to errors in Roemer's estimate for the maximum time delay (the correct value is 16.7, not 22 minutes), and also to an imprecise knowledge of the Earth's orbital diameter."<sup>33</sup> I would like to think that it is not fortuitous, but fitting, that the death of the purported Jewish messiah happened in the same year in which it was discovered that light has a finite speed and in which the first real calculation of that speed was being done. Messianists went on as if this did not concern them! And yet this (as well as, later, the four dimensional spacetime of the block universe of relativity) should, as far as they were concerned, have been thought provoking and produced a crisis, as a crucified messiah (Jesus) or one who apostatized and converted to another religion (Sabbatai Zevi) was and did for earlier messianists. They proved not to be really the contemporaries of the discovery that light has a finite speed of 131,000 miles per second (actually, 186,000 miles per second), a discovery that made it impossible for them to be the contemporaries of what they perceived and makes it impossible for us to be the contemporaries of what we perceive. Taking into consideration that the speed of light is finite, more specifically 299,792,458 meters per second in a vacuum ( $c$ ), and that the speed of sound is finite, approximately 768 miles per hour in dry air at 20 °C, one perceives only the past. To see how the sun is presently, I have to wait for its light to reach me. In terms of what they see and hear, indeed of what they can see and hear, people are not the contemporaries of each other and, more generally, of the

universe, a universe where light has a finite speed of 299,792,458 meters per second in a vacuum, thus a universe that does not allow for contemporaneity. The awaited messiah/Mahdī is going to end waiting, including the recurrent wait of the ones living then for light to reach them from objects,<sup>34</sup> ushering in the epoch of contemporaneity<sup>35</sup> (that until then we cannot be contemporaries, including, indeed mainly, of the event, should not mean that we are bound to be behind the event [Baudrillard: "It was Rilke who said 'Events move in such a way that they will always inevitably be ahead of us. We shall never catch up with them'" ]<sup>36</sup>—we can be ahead of it!—including, as thinkers, through thought experiments). *The messiah is forthcoming* has several meanings: the condition of possibility for his fulfilling his function, the experience of countless recurrence, which can become possible through either time travel to very similar branches of the multiverse or virtual emulations,<sup>37</sup> is yet to be made possible<sup>38</sup> (had he, as we are told by many messianists, already come or were he, as millions of Jews and Twelver Shi'ites wish and hope would happen, to appear on Earth today, the messiah/Mahdī would have been and would still be forthcoming, since the condition for his full presence was not then and is not yet present); moreover, once this condition has been actualized, between his appearance on Earth and his ending up willing the eternal recurrence of various events, he continues to be forthcoming both in relation to us, since, given that light travels at 299,792,458 meters per second in a vacuum (and sound at approximately 768 miles per hour), we perceive him at a delay (that's imperceptible to the naked eye), and in relation to himself, that is, he is not yet fully the messiah—the messiah arrives first as

forthcoming. It may very well be that the day that the forthcoming messiah/Mahdī as an *overman* would be made to experience over and over is the very day in which he became occulted in relation to those living then and to the world (“He [Jesus] went away a second time and prayed, ‘My Father, if it is not possible for this cup to be taken away unless I drink it, may your will be done’” [Matthew 26:42]. If, as the New Testament reports, the crucifixion was not taken away from the Christ, then it must have been willed by God, that is, willed to recur eternally,<sup>39</sup> with the consequence that Jesus would be made to go through it countless times until *he* wills its eternal recurrence, and that while many happenings would not only disappear, but would retroactively never have existed in the willed, redeemed world, the crucifixion, if not all that led to it from the time Jesus Christ prayed to God, is going to continue to be part of the willed, redeemed world. I would rather think that in answer to his prayer, Jesus came to the realization that it is not the will of God that he be crucified [“They slew him (the Messiah, Jesus son of Mary, Allāh’s messenger) not nor crucified him, but it appeared so unto them ...” (Qur’ān 4:157)], and consequently that the crucifixion [of another] would most probably not be part of the willed, redeemed world,<sup>40</sup> or another day that’s within a generation of when he was occulted (“Truly I tell you, some who are standing here will not taste death before they see the Son of Man coming in his kingdom” [Matthew 16:28]—his kingdom is the world resulting from his willing the eternal recurrence of some events of that day). Thus the messiah/Mahdī would have come again (in a virtual reality or in branches of the multiverse very similar to the state of the world at the time in which he said he would come back) within

the period his earliest disciples were expecting him to come—in the case of the Mahdī, within the Lesser Occultation (*al-ghayba al-sughrā*), which lasted from 874 to 941. I can very well imagine the following remake of the Wachowski brothers’ *The Matrix*: Neo, whose body is actually in suspended animation while his brain is connected to a computer simulation, believes he lives in Palestine in AD 1, then he is “awakened” by someone (Morpheus) and informed by him about the actual state of affairs. At one point in the Wachowski brothers’ *The Matrix*, Neo exclaims: “Déjà vu!” Trinity: “What did you see?” Neo: “A black cat went past us, and then another that looked just like it.” Trinity: “How much like it? Was it the same cat?” Neo: “It might have been. I’m not sure.... What is it?” Trinity: “A déjà vu is usually a glitch in the Matrix. It happens when they change something.” How can one affect the world outside the simulation? In my proposed remake I envision that in some of the other very similar branches of the multiverse, Morpheus later subjects Neo to countless recurrence through trapping him in a simulation, most fittingly one of Palestine in AD 1, so that he would end up, across many virtual suicides, willing the eternal recurrence of some events, thus making actual the epochal will, which affects, like meditation does, all simulations and all worlds (with the inaugural appearance of the epochal will in a simulation, many things in the universe or entire branches of the multiverse outside the simulation may cease any existence, vanish as if *they* were simulations, and the “laws” of the universe or multiverse may be abrogated)—it is those who have designed and implemented the Matrix who would try to obstruct the experiment of subjecting Neo to countless recurrence. 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*]”);<sup>41</sup> one can paraphrase Dōgen’s words with respect to zazen thus in relation to the will: “When even for a moment, you will the eternal recurrence of three actions ... all beings in the ten (to be precise, eleven?) dimensions and/or the multiverse, including the three lower simulations, are affected ... all things that are still there then are ones that are willed to eternally recur. Thus in the past, future, and present of the limitless multiverse this willing carries on the will’s affirmation endlessly.... Know that even if all the scientists and thinkers of the ten dimensions and/or the multiverse, more innumerable than the sands of the Ganges, exert their strength and try to measure the merit of one person’s willing the eternal recurrence of some events, they will not be able to fully comprehend it.” The messiah is the overman who goes through countless recurrence and ends up, across many suicides, willing the eternal recurrence of various events, thus making actual the epochal will. Once the will has become an actuality, the speed of light becomes if not infinite then so fast that the light travel time from the most distant objects in the

universe to a sentient being falls below the quantum mechanical uncertainty, and—allowing for the associated changes in the electron charge,  $e$ , and/or Planck’s constant,  $h$ , that would preserve the fine-structure constant<sup>42</sup> and/or other changes that would permit intelligent beings to continue to exist—those living then become the contemporaries of what they perceive, for example of the willful overman as messiah/Mahdī and of the sun as it is and not as it was 499 seconds (8.32 minutes) in the past.<sup>43</sup> During the transition, during the birth pangs of the messianic age, they might see two suns, the sun as it was 8.32 minutes earlier and the sun as it is at that very moment. In Coppola’s *Dracula*, whose events take place in the final years of the nineteenth century, i.e., when the experience of countless recurrence was not yet possible, Dracula’s first words to Mina, “See me now!” are twice ironic, twice problematic, because he is doubly not in the now, since, as is made clear by the absence of an image of him in the reflective windowpane in front of which he is ostensibly standing, he is not really (fully) there,<sup>44</sup> and since the light reflected from him and traveling to Mina’s eyes at 298,925,574 meters per second would reach her at a delay. Coppola’s *Dracula* is an imposter, a counterfeiter of the one who can properly utter the words “See me now!”;<sup>45</sup> indeed the latter words could very well be the ones with which the messiah announces that he is no longer forthcoming.

Can there be one or more events in the universe of relativity where every point in spacetime is misnamed an “event”? Yes, the appearance of the will and its overruling of relativity. If everything that has ever occurred cannot be redeemed, then the universe that’s the end result of the attainment by the overman,

then the accomplished messiah, of willing the eternal recurrence of some events cannot be the block universe of relativity. Nietzsche wrote: “Impotent against that which has been—it [the will] is an angry spectator of everything past. The will cannot will backward; that it cannot break time and time’s greed—that is the will’s loneliest misery. Willing liberates ... That time does not run backward, that is its wrath.... This, yes this alone is *revenge* itself: the will’s unwillingness toward time and time’s ‘it was.’ ... Has the will already become its own redeemer and joy bringer? Has it unlearned the spirit of revenge ... ? And who taught it reconciliation with time, and what is higher than any reconciliation—but how shall this happen? Who would teach it to also will backward?”<sup>46</sup> (with the exception of the *will* in *willing liberates*, the “will” in the rest of the citation of Nietzsche should be qualified by quotation marks, since what Nietzsche is writing about is not yet the will); and Derrida wrote, “‘Forgiveness died in the death camps,’ he [Vladimir Jankélévitch] says. Yes. Unless it only becomes possible from the moment that it appears impossible. Its history would begin, on the contrary, with the unforgivable,”<sup>47</sup> and “forgiveness forgives only the unforgivable.... That is to say that forgiveness must announce itself as impossibility itself. It can only be possible in doing the impossible.”<sup>48</sup> One of the consequences of the willing by the overman of the eternal recurrence of various events and the ensuing inaugural appearance of the epochal will is that the latter abrogates the laws of the unwilled, unredeemed world,<sup>49</sup> including the “laws” of nature,<sup>50</sup> and that the ones still there then would no longer be living in the block universe of spacetime of relativity, in which all is preserved,<sup>51</sup> even what is Evil, even what

is unforgivable, even what cannot be willed to recur eternally, but would be living in a universe where things are transient but subsist only because they are willed to eternally recur.<sup>52</sup> What is higher than any reconciliation and what is higher than any forgiveness that can accomplish the impossible of forgiving the unforgivable but not the impossible of undoing what has been done is the inexistence, once the will has appeared, of anything that cannot be willed to recur eternally.<sup>53</sup> At the most basic level, the forgiveness of the unforgivable that Derrida—who, like Nietzsche (“To ‘will’ anything ... I have never experienced this”)<sup>54</sup> and like all of us still, lacked will—wrote about was still revengeful, as the forgiveness of anyone is until the will becomes possible and is actualized, following which anything that cannot be willed to eternally recur not only disappears but has never existed (many films are no longer going to exist in the willed universe, since they are unworthy of being willed to return eternally). The will, which wills backward as well as forward, liberates from all that cannot be willed, i.e., willed to return eternally, including what, until the will’s actualization, had already occurred, and thus from revengefulness and the nihilism that’s a consequence of the past’s *fait accompli*, of the resigned conviction that what has already been done cannot be undone. That the will wills also backward does not mean that it wills the disappearance of specific events of the past, for that would still be revengeful; rather it means that it wills affirmatively what in the past can be willed to return eternally, with as a *byproduct* that what thenceforth cannot be willed to recur eternally, including in the past, would have disappeared, indeed never have existed. Notwithstanding an article of faith of most,

if not all Twelver Shi‘ites, the willful overman, who is going to be deemed the Mahdī, is not going to avenge imam Ḥusayn, prophet Muḥammad’s grandson (who was slaughtered alongside many members of his family and his companions in Karbalā’), not because he is going to accomplish the impossible of forgiving the unforgivable but because, by making possible a universe where only what can be willed to eternally recur can exist, he is going to accomplish the impossible whereby the unforgivable, what cannot be willed to recur eternally, would no longer have ever existed, with the consequence that there is then nothing to forgive—were the forgiveness of the unforgivable or Derrida’s texts on his concept of such a forgiveness, which is forgiveness as such, to continue to be part of the universe when the will becomes actual, then the willful overman as the contemporary messiah is going to “forgive” this will-less forgiveness, this still revengeful forgiveness and Derrida’s concept of forgiveness.

### And Yet the Messiah Is Not Late

Were all the predictions (whether based on *gematria* or otherwise) of the descent of the messiah by those who do not believe that Jesus was the awaited Redeemer wrong, since no messiah appeared on Earth at those dates and initiated redemption? Not necessarily, once we understand that the messiah’s descent is to hell and not to Earth: it is possible that the awaited messiah descended to hell in one of these calculated and awaited years and that he is still there. The Talmudic saying according to which the son of David will appear only in a generation that was “either wholly sinful

or wholly righteous”<sup>55</sup> intimates, through the detour of humans’ conceited view of an Earth filled with injustice and degradation as hellish,<sup>56</sup> that the messiah would appear in hell. His followers wait for him not because he has not yet appeared but because he appears not on Earth but in hell. The yearning believers have to faithfully continue to wait for the Redeemer, even if hundreds or thousands of years passed since the start of his occultation, but the awaited one has at no point betrayed his promise to them but has come back as soon as he promised he would. Both *zazen* (seated meditation) and messianic waiting are not a phase toward something else: the way *zazen* is already enlightenment according to Zen master Dōgen (“To think that practice and enlightenment are not one is a non-Buddhist view. In the Buddha-dharma they are one. Inasmuch as practice now is based on enlightenment, the practice of a beginner is itself the whole of original enlightenment. Therefore, in giving the instruction for practice, a Zen teacher advises his/her disciples not to seek enlightenment apart from practice ... Because it is the very enlightenment of practice, there is no end to enlightenment; because it is the very practice of enlightenment, there is no beginning to practice”), messianic waiting is coeval with the appearance of the messiah—but where he truly has to appear, neither in some site on Earth, nor in the subtle *‘alam al-khayāl* (the Imaginal World), but in hell. If waiting finds its privileged locus in messianism, it is not only because the latter has historically proved to be the longest lasting, a millennial one, but also because from an earthly perspective the messiah’s time is one of waiting, since he does not come to Earth but to hell. “All the pain and suffering described by Dante in the

inferno part of his *Divine Comedy* and painted by Hieronymous Bosch in his representations of hell ... all the imagined suffering of all the creatures in hell depicted in the Qur’ān and the Bible, when refined to their intensity, are merely the equivalent, itself reduced to the bodily and psychological level, of Iblīs’ spiritual suffering on being cut off from God [“So, when I have made him [Ādam] and have breathed into him of My Spirit, do ye [angels] fall down, prostrating yourselves unto him. So the angels fell prostrate, all of them together save Iblīs. He refused to be among the prostrate” (Qur’ān 15:29–33)... The Ṣūfī al-Ḥallāj: ... “There had been no monotheist (*muwahhid*) comparable to Iblīs among the inhabitants of heaven” ... and the Ṣūfī Aḥmad Ghazālī: “He who does not learn *tawḥīd* [profession of God’s Unity] under Iblīs is only a *zindīq* [heretic]!” *Hell is paved with good intentions*, the first of which was Iblīs’ refusal to fall prostrate to Ādam out of *tawḥīd*, rigorous, fervent monotheism; and out of exclusive, jealous love for God. When God told Iblīs, “Then go thou forth from hence, for lo! thou art outcast” (Qur’ān 7:18), Iblīs cried out in a loud voice, “*Ilāhī, Ilāhī, limādhā taraktanī?*” (My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?).<sup>57</sup> Iblīs could not endure such pain. How to forget? All that by which God, the only Reality, had to be forgotten—distractions and base dulling manners—had to be created. So the inconsolable angel became a demiurge of both a multitude of worlds and entities and increasingly base levels of being... Idolatry, love of sacrilege, anger, lechery, lying, laziness, sloth, betrayal, a treacherous tongue, and the other vices and sins Rimbaud catalogues in *A Season in Hell* are not what one finds in hell, but a manner of forgetting it... Jesus said, ‘Whoever is

near me is near the fire, and whoever is far from me is far from the kingdom’ (*The Gospel of Thomas* #82). If the Son of God descended to hell, it was not to minister to the dead, but to show that hell, which is not a locus of suffering for debased humans but the unbearable suffering of being banished from God, can be endured (at the highest spiritual level), and thus spare Iblīs succumbing to the temptation of trying to forget, and consequently do away with the need for the continuing existence of the debased states as a manner of forgetting the disaster of being banished from the Beloved, God. To the Christ suffering in hell, the devil showed ‘all the kingdoms of the world and their splendor. “All this I will give you”’ (Matthew 4:8–9)—i.e., I will give you my forgetfulness. Did Christ resist this temptation? The Kingdom of God would truly have been established on Earth, all states of baseness would have disappeared had Christ managed to endure hell.”<sup>58</sup> It is the good fortune of those who do not believe that Jesus Christ was the awaited redeemer that their messiahs have not appeared in the world to forget, for this indicates that it is still possible that their messiahs prove, to Iblīs, that *hell*, i.e., *separation from God*, can be withstood, ushering in redemption. I would like to imagine that some of the Jewish contemporaries of Jesus of Nazareth refused to believe in him as the messiah because his mere incarnation on Earth already signaled his failure. To a messiah who would appear on Earth before it has been covered with justice, one is justified in saying, *Go to hell!* since it is by withstanding (the) hell (of being separated from God) that he will resolve the base states created by Iblīs to forget his banishment from the Beloved, God.

## The Lesser and Greater Exiles<sup>59</sup>

The mortal, who is not simply someone who will die physically some day in the future, but who is also dead before he or she dies physically,<sup>60</sup> is never fully at home and in a homeland, but, in so far as he or she is dead even while alive, is a “stranger [as is confirmed by his or her depersonalization ...] in a strange land [partly because this land is labyrinthine]” (Stoker’s *Dracula*), in exile irrespective of whether or not he or she lives in his or her country. The exile from one’s country is merely the *lesser exile*, whereas the death contained in all mortals even while they live is, along with the one after their physical demise, the *greater exile*; the dedication of the essay “Saving Face” in my book *Two or Three Things I’m Dying to Tell You* (2005) is: “To my father, ‘Umrān Tawfīq ‘Umrān, who fled the Iraq of the Ba‘th in 1968 in order to save face, and whose lesser exile<sup>61</sup> lasted till 1986, the year of his death, the greater exile.<sup>62</sup>” While only some humans are exiles from their countries and thus experience the lesser exile, taking into consideration that mortals are dead even while alive, all undergo the greater exile.<sup>63</sup> And whereas the lesser exile is related to being deprived of one’s country, to no longer “having” a country, the greater exile is related to being deprived of a world, to becoming *poor in world*. “He had thought that death would be the end of him. But it was not. Death was the end of the world. To die is to experience the end of the world”<sup>64</sup>—in the form not so much of an absence of everything that constituted the world, but, among other symptoms, of the inconsistency of the latter’s erstwhile constituents, for example, of crows, the sky, and a wheat field. Even within the greater exile,

sometimes, following a lapse, there is a reprieve, one having a world for “two days,” but then the world falls apart again (“the trees and hedges were of cardboard, placed here and there, like stage accessories”<sup>65</sup> ...), one becoming once more deprived of a world, an exile from the world. This exile from the world is greater than the exile from a country, “one’s” country, not simply because the world is larger, greater than any country, includes the latter, but more fundamentally because while it is not essential for a human to have a country, to belong to a country, it is essential for a human to have a world, to belong to a world. “If deprivation in certain forms is a kind of suffering,”<sup>66</sup> then as far as the mortal is concerned “a kind of pain and suffering would have to permeate”<sup>67</sup> (the death realm, and therefore) the greater exile.

The dead is triply in exile: since he is deprived of world; since in undead’s labyrinthine space, where he is lost, he cannot feel at home; and since one cannot be fully “in” the labyrinth, but is maintained by the latter outside it: “In Stoker’s *Dracula*, Harker loses consciousness as he approaches the vampire’s castle: ‘I must have been asleep, for certainly if I had been fully awake I must have noticed the approach of such a remarkable place’; in Murnau’s *Nosferatu*, Harker loses consciousness while leaving the vampire’s castle. The frontier, the place of entry of the labyrinthine realm of undead is inaccessible since hidden by the trance that seizes one there (*entrance n. 2. A means or point by which to enter; entrance v. tr. 1. To put into a trance [American Heritage Dictionary]*)... You can neither enter nor leave the labyrinth; and you’ve always been lost in it, that is, you cannot be found there. Are you then ever in the labyrinth which

you cannot leave? On a map, a labyrinth is formed of one line that meanders on and on, twists and involutes, forming a fractal object with a dimension between one and two, with the following two consequences. First, the labyrinth is all border, hence one cannot be fully inside it: if one can hide in the labyrinth, it is not because one is inside the labyrinth, for the labyrinth maintains one on the outside (thus it has aura), but because it is in the labyrinth that one is lost.”<sup>68</sup> Insofar as one is never *fully* in the labyrinth, as is shown for example by the absence of the vampire in the mirror in death’s labyrinthine realm, one is an exile from it even while “in” it; but insofar as at least at times one feels that one has always been in it and insofar as any place where we do not feel once we’re there that we’ve always been in it is one of exile, then with the exception of heaven and hell, where too once in them, one feels that one has always been there, every other place, including one’s country (where one does not feel that one has always been in it, but most often that one was born there at a certain date), is a place of exile (in Kubrick’s *The Shining*, insofar as Jack Torrance is never *fully* in the labyrinthine Overlook Hotel, he is an exile from it even while “in” it; but insofar as at least at times he feels that he has always been in this hotel [something confirmed by Delbert Grady: “You have *always* been the caretaker. I should know, sir; I’ve always been here”]) we see him arrive in at one point in time and insofar as any place where we do not feel once we’re there that we’ve always been in it is one of exile, every other place outside the Overlook Hotel is a place of exile).

Heidegger: “The stone is worldless, the animal is poor in world, man is world-forming.”<sup>69</sup> By dying physically, the erstwhile

living and world-forming human loses the world in two manners: the corpse is, like the stone, worldless; the undead in the realm of death is, like the (living) animal, poor in world. What is stupefying about the physical death of a human is not so much how the body changes suddenly from animate to inanimate, but how it changes surreptitiously from something that was inextricably related to what has a world into something unrelated to a world, worldless. While the loss of world is not a form of exile in the case of the corpse, since the latter is worldless (Heidegger: “the stone *cannot even be deprived* of something like world”<sup>70</sup>), deprivation of world, poverty in world is a state of exile of the undead. Since it is essential for the human to have a world, world-formation, the state of the dead is inhuman—indeed in that state he or she is close in many ways to the living animal; consequently the mortal, who even while alive is already dead, cannot strictly speaking be *human, all too human*, but is, however much he or she might wish to be otherwise, human yet inhuman. Furthermore, the mortal, who even while alive is also already dead, cannot strictly speaking be *mundane, all too mundane*, but is, however much she or he, for instance Edward Said, the author of, among so many badly written and thoughtless texts, “Reflections on Exile,”<sup>71</sup> might wish to be otherwise, both worldly and unworldly. In paranoia, excessive worldliness, in the manner of a conspiracy that involves everyone and everything, is conjoined to an end of the world,<sup>72</sup> therefore to a poverty in, deprivation of world; in other words, the poverty in world of the paranoid schizophrenic, who is someone who has died before dying (physically), takes the paradoxical guise of excessive worldliness, an excessive consistency, indeed a conspiracy of the

world as a whole, so that one can accurately say that the paranoid schizophrenic's poverty in world is all too worldly. Is it possible to regain the world one was deprived of by death? In the interval between hearing his name, "Lazarus ..." (John 11:43), uttered by Jesus Christ as life ("Jesus said to her, 'I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in me will live, even though he dies'" [John 11:25]), and consequently turning to answer the call, this time without his turn being overturned by an over-turn, and coming forth in response to Resurrection's injunction ("Come out!" [John 11:43]), Lazarus, as a spectral, subtle body, gaped at the corpse. Heidegger: "Can we transpose ourselves into a stone? ... we generally have a quick and ready answer to this question: No, we reply, we cannot transpose ourselves into a stone. And this is impossible for us not because we lack the appropriate means to accomplish something that is possible in principle. It is impossible because the stone as such does not admit of this possibility at all."<sup>73</sup> Did Lazarus in the interim have the notion or drive to incorporate the corpse in front of him, to eat this worldless thing, this world-forsaken thing, and make it part of his worldly body to come (forth)? Heidegger continues: "I say emphatically that we *usually* answer in this way because in fact there are ways and means belonging to human Dasein in which man never simply regards purely material things, or indeed technical things, as such but rather 'animates' them, as we might somewhat misleadingly put it. There are two fundamental ways in which this can happen: first when human Dasein is determined in its existence by *myth*, and second in the case of *art*"<sup>74</sup>—I will add: and, last (?) but not least, in the case of *religion*. The main problem for resurrection in

relation to the corpse is not so much "reanimating" it as changing it from only a worldless object in the world of the mourners to something inextricably integral to what has a world.<sup>75</sup> As part of resurrection, did Christ miraculously make the otherwise impossible transposition and embodiment of the undead Lazarus, poor in world, in this worldless object, "his" corpse, possible? Whatever the answer to this question, to resurrect the human dead is to confer on him or her not only a life but also a world.<sup>76</sup> "Then he [Jesus] said to them all [his ostensible disciples] ... : 'What good is it for a man to gain the whole world, and yet lose or forfeit his very self?'" (Luke 9:23–25; cf. Matthew 16:26 and Mark 8:36)—yet by resurrecting Lazarus, the Holy Trinity gave him not only his self and life, but also a world, a whole world.<sup>77</sup>

### The Resurrected Brother of Mary and Martha: A Human Who Lived *then* Died!

To be fully alive and *then* die physically, a state most people mistakenly view as being ours in general, a given, is actually an exceptional state. What would it take to achieve what we assume our condition to be? It would take no less than being resurrected by the Christ, "the life" (John 11:25). Yes, to be fully alive and then die physically is not the condition of all humans, but is rather the exceptional condition of the New Testament's brother of Mary and Martha, the one who was resurrected by the Christ, *the life*, and hence was, until he died physically, solely alive, rather than, as we, mortals, are, dead while alive. Following his resurrection by *the life*, the brother of Mary and Martha was no longer really

a mortal; in that he was no longer really a mortal, i.e., no longer dead while alive, the resurrected brother of Mary and Martha had become what the Arabic word *ḥayawān* indicates, alive, alive to the highest degree, and an animal. When he picked some heads of grain and ate them on the Sabbath, the Pharisees did not say to him, “You are doing what is unlawful on the Sabbath”! Indeed, whatever the resurrected brother of Mary and Martha did, people did not consider it as condemnable, unconsciously treating him as an animal, one to whom the values of Good and Evil did not apply (animals did not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil). In order to resurrect, one’s call to the dead by the name he had while alive must be such as to re-differentiate this name from every name in history (in “his” dying before dying [“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 myself”], Nietzsche writes: “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”),<sup>78</sup> and such as to overcome the over-turn that undoes the dead’s turn to reply to the call in the labyrinth of undeath; but it never occurs to those mortals living then to call the resurrected, because, at the most basic level, he no longer needs the call since, as is the case of most animals, he faces himself in the mirror naturally, i.e., since his facing himself in the mirror is not the result of a successful interpellation, and, at a derivative level, because he happens to be facing the mortal whenever the latter needs him to be in that direction. From the time of his resurrection to his subsequent physical death, no one called the resurrected brother of Mary and

Martha. But *he* called; about the ninth hour after he was given again spirit by the Holy Spirit, the resurrected brother of Mary and Martha cried out in a loud voice, “My God, why have you left me poor in world?” After the Holy Spirit infused the resurrected brother of Mary and Martha again with spirit, that is, after the latter could no longer be considered only an animal, the “wise men” of that time felt that he was “no good”<sup>79</sup>—notwithstanding that, fully alive, he could not be evaluated, was beyond (or rather below) Good and Evil<sup>80</sup> (Nietzsche: “Judgments, value judgments on life, for or against, can ultimately never be true: they have value only as symptoms, they can be taken seriously only as symptoms,—in themselves, judgments like these are stupidities.... *the value of life cannot be estimated*”).<sup>81</sup> The resurrected brother of Mary and Martha proved to be a bigger problem for the Pharisees than Jesus, since the latter still affirmed the Law (“Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them. For truly I tell you, until heaven and earth disappear, not the smallest letter, not the least stroke of a pen, will by any means disappear from the Law until everything is accomplished. Therefore anyone who sets aside one of the least of these commands and teaches others accordingly will be called least in the kingdom of heaven, but whoever practices and teaches these commands will be called great in the kingdom of heaven. For I tell you that unless your righteousness surpasses that of the Pharisees and the teachers of the law, you will certainly not enter the kingdom of heaven” [Matthew 5:17–20]), while the former’s transgressions, his “strange actions,” went on becoming more blatant and flagrant. While it may have been for the glory of God that Lazarus was

resurrected, it was certainly not for the glory of the Law. It is to the discredit of Paul that in none of his letters does he mention the real resurrected, the one through whom the question of whether the Law has been abrogated/made inoperative with the resurrection, at least in the case of the resurrected, is to be really raised. How come no Christian has written a text or epistle to the people of Bethany titled, *Twilight of the Law*, in which a section is titled, “The Problem of the Resurrected Brother of Mary and Martha”?

“Six days before the Passover, Jesus came to Bethany, where Lazarus lived, whom Jesus had raised from the dead. Here a dinner was given in Jesus’ honor. Martha served, while Lazarus was among those reclining at the table with him. Then Mary took about a pint of pure nard, an expensive perfume; she poured it on Jesus’ feet and wiped his feet with her hair. And the house was filled with the fragrance of the perfume. But one of his disciples, Judas Iscariot, who was later to betray him, objected, ‘Why wasn’t this perfume sold and the money given to the poor? It was worth a year’s wages.’ ... ‘Leave her alone,’ Jesus replied. ‘It was intended that she should save this perfume for the day of my burial.’<sup>82</sup> You will always have the poor among you, but you will not always have me” (John 12:1–8). Is that all?! Was there no dialogue worth reporting other than the one between Judas and Jesus? Wasn’t there a dialogue between the life and the resurrection and the resurrection and the life, between the Christ and the resurrected brother of Mary and Martha? I imagine the resurrected brother of Mary and Martha turning to Judas and saying: “What a petty view of poverty you have! You are talking about those who are poor only in a secondary sense, since they have a world, a whole world. I am poor in world.”

I imagine that he then said to Jesus, “I heard that you asked rhetorically, ‘What good will it be for someone to gain the whole world, yet forfeit their soul?’” (Matthew 16:26), then lamented, “Now that you have given me my life back and that the Holy Spirit has infused me with a soul and spirit, why have you, through whom, as far as one can tell, the world was made,<sup>83</sup> not also bestowed a world on me?” I imagine that Jesus answered him with these words of Nietzsche, who would later sign some of his final letters with “The Crucified”: “I teach to you ... the creating friend, who always has a complete world to bestow.”<sup>84</sup> The resurrected prayed then to God, the world-creating friend, to bestow a world on him. And God the creator of worlds (it may very well be that God does not create [out of nothing] the things/events, for example Earth, wheat field, crows, Julius Caesar’s crossing the Rubicon in 49 BC, but rather creates and bestows a world, makes it possible for us to experience these as a world—while it may be the case that when one goes mad, one actually perceives and experiences more of the “universe” or multiverse than one does normally, even so one becomes poor in world then) bestowed a world on the resurrected, henceforth his *waliyy* (friend). There are at least three risks of resurrection: that the one who returns be another—this danger is averted when the one doing the resurrection is the life, the Christ; that the one who returns be only a *hayawān*, both someone who is only and fully living and an animal—this danger is averted with the reinfusion of spirit in the resurrected by the Holy Spirit; and that the one who returns to life be poor in world—a condition that can be remedied through the bestowal by God the world-creator of a world on the resurrected. It seems that the resurrection demands to be the act of

the Trinity: the Christ, the life, gives the resurrected back life; the Holy Spirit gives him, who is then only alive and therefore really solely an animal, spirit; and God the world-creator creates a world and bestows it on him.

Given that the resurrected brother of Mary and Martha did not remember anything that happened to him in death,<sup>85</sup> at first his two sisters were apprehensive that his memory was overwhelmed by what he underwent in undeath and that he would no longer remember them or remember very little of their previous life together. Instead, unlike with other people, who would have needed age revivification in order to re-access much of the early years of their childhood, which was otherwise occulted by infantile amnesia, and notwithstanding that he could not be hypnotized since he no longer dreamt when he went to sleep<sup>86</sup>—it was as if he had done all the dreaming he was ever to do in his “four days” (John 11:17) in the undeath realm, where he felt that he had spent an eternity or an infinite time—the resurrected brother of Mary and Martha could remember the slightest, minutest incidents of his and his sisters’ common childhood, recounting to them childhood events that they had long forgotten as well as ones they denied vehemently ever having happened given that these involved what seemed to be perverse sexual experiences. One of the prerequisites for fulfilling Jesus Christ’s enjoinder to be like little children (“And he said: ‘Truly I tell you, unless you change and become like little children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven’” [Matthew 18:3]) is to fully accept oneself as a child, one’s childhood, including one’s sexuality then, that is, not to repress much of it, as implied by *infantile amnesia* (before Jesus Christ’s many miracles, what most

took aback his acquaintances was that he remembered everything from his childhood—will we one day discover new Gospels in which Jesus Christ, who did not undergo *infantile amnesia*, often refers to his childhood, *exactly as if he were reliving it?*). Moreover, the resurrected brother of Mary and Martha never forgot the name of a relative or had a slip of the tongue, etc., thus he had no need, at least in the context of this world, to interpret what he did. What Deleuze and Guattari write about the female protagonist of Henry James’ novella “In the Cage,” a telegrapher with a “prodigious talent for interpretation,” actually applies far more to the resurrected brother of Mary and Martha (and to others in their perceptions of and dealings with him): “She ended up knowing so much that she could no longer interpret anything. *There were no longer shadows to help her see more clearly, only glare.*”<sup>87</sup>

Didn’t Judas intuit during the aforementioned dinner given in Jesus’ honor in Bethany and attended by the resurrected brother of Mary and Martha that he and the eleven other apparent disciples of Jesus were not the latter’s true disciples, that the true disciple of the life and resurrection was Lazarus, the resurrection and the life, and so felt less qualms when it came to betraying the one he no longer considered his Lord? Jesus Christ, the life and the resurrection, had only one disciple, whom he loved (“Now Jesus loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus” [John 11:5]), Lazarus, the resurrection and the life, whereas his apparent disciples, one of whom betrayed him and the other eleven abandoned him as soon as he was apprehended, if they were the disciples of anyone, it was later of the Holy Spirit. The disciple of the one who when “some of the Pharisees and teachers of the law said to him, ‘Teacher, we

want to see a sign from you,” answered, “A wicked and adulterous generation asks for a sign! But none will be given it except the sign of the prophet Jonah. For as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of a huge fish, so the Son of Man will be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth” (Matthew 12:39–40), is Lazarus, someone who was four days in the grave and who when Jesus called him, “Lazarus, come out!” (John 11:43), left the realm of death and followed him (to life). And yet, following the death of Judas, “said Peter, ‘It is written in the Book of Psalms: ... “May another take his place of leadership.” Therefore it is necessary to choose one of the men who have been with us the whole time the Lord Jesus was living among us, beginning from John’s baptism to the time when Jesus was taken up from us. For one of these must become a witness with us of his resurrection.’ So they nominated two men: Joseph called Barsabbas (also known as Justus) and Matthias. Then they prayed, ‘Lord, you know everyone’s heart. Show us which of these two you have chosen to take over this apostolic ministry, which Judas left to go where he belongs.’ Then they cast lots, and the lot fell to Matthias; so he was added to the eleven apostles” (Acts 1:20–26). In their search for a replacement of the dead Judas, the remaining apparent disciples surely managed to skip the resurrected brother of Mary and Martha, the Christ’s one real disciple!

Nietzsche: “There was really only one Christian, and he died on the cross” (*The Anti-Christ*, #39).<sup>88</sup> If by “there was really only one Christian,” Nietzsche was referring to Jesus, then his assertion “he died on the cross” is false since *the life* (John 11:25) did not die (“They slew him [the Messiah, Jesus son of Mary, Allāh’s

messenger] not nor crucified him, but it appeared so unto them ...” [Qur’ān 4:157]—someone else, a look-alike, was crucified in his place), indeed cannot die on the cross or in any other manner: “‘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* [actually the life and the resurrection], Jesus Christ, who could have said to the [genuinely Christian] mourners around his body, ‘Pretend to weep, since Jesus Christ, the resurrection and the life [actually the life and the resurrection], only pretends to die.’”<sup>89</sup> If one considers that Nietzsche does not include in the term *Christian* the Christ but only some follower of his, then Nietzsche’s assertion is accurate; this one and only Christian is the resurrected brother of Mary and Martha. I propose the following add-on to Nietzsche’s assertion: “There was really only one Christian martyr, and he died on the cross.” Is Lazarus to be considered a Christian martyr because had Jesus Christ not lingered two days where he happened to be (“So when he heard that Lazarus was sick, he stayed where he was two more days” [John 11:6]) but instead immediately went to Bethany and miraculously cured him, who was then gravely ill, Lazarus would not have died at that point? That Lazarus died for the glory of God does not make him strictly speaking a *Christian* martyr; what makes him a Christian martyr, possibly the only Christian martyr, is that he lived for the cause of the Christ, of the life, and he could do so only by being no longer a mortal, i.e., dead while alive, but instead solely alive. Trusting Nietzsche’s intuition that the only Christian died on the cross, I deduce that the resurrected brother

of Mary and Martha was crucified (“Meanwhile a large crowd of Jews found out that Jesus was there and came, not only because of him but also to see Lazarus, whom he had raised from the dead. So the chief priests made plans to kill Lazarus as well, for on account of him many of the Jews were going over to Jesus and believing in him” [John 12:9–11]). If one includes the Christ in the term *Christian* in Nietzsche’s assertion, then there were really only two Christians, the life and the resurrection, Jesus Christ, and the resurrection and the life, the resurrected brother of Mary and Martha. In Lebanon, Christians say, *al-masīh qām, haqqan qām* (Christ rose [from death, i.e., was resurrected], truly he rose); they should rather say: *Alī‘āzar qām, haqqan qām* (Lazarus rose [from death, i.e., was resurrected], truly he rose). The word order in John 25, “I am the resurrection and the life,” is inaccurate—the life, even if it is crucified, cannot die and therefore cannot be resurrected.<sup>90</sup> The assertive sentence must be: “I am the life and the resurrection”—“I am ... the resurrection” here means: I am the one through whom the resurrection can happen. It is the resurrected brother of Mary and Martha who can say, “I am the resurrection and the life”; I can very well imagine that when his listeners did not understand what he just said, the resurrected brother of Mary and Martha *told them plainly*: “I’ve been resurrected—by the life—and thenceforth can only be alive—until I physically die.” It is a great mark of a disciple of the Christ and indicates a true *imitation of Christ* when his description is mistaken for that of Jesus Christ: the one who used to be called Lazarus is the resurrection and the life and he died on the cross.

## A Limit Case of the Desire for Recognition: The Last Man

“Anthropogenetic Desire is different from animal Desire ... in that it is directed, not toward a real, ‘positive,’ given object, but toward another Desire.... All the Desires of an animal are in the final analysis a function of its desire to preserve its life. Human Desire, therefore, must win out over this desire for preservation.... Man’s humanity ‘comes to light’ only in risking his life to satisfy his human Desire—that is, his Desire directed toward another Desire.... all human, anthropogenetic Desire ... is, finally, a function of the desire for ‘recognition.’ ... Therefore, to speak of the ‘origin’ of Self-Consciousness is necessarily to speak of a fight to the death for ‘recognition.’ Without this fight to the death for pure prestige, there would never have been human beings on earth.”<sup>91</sup> And yet ever since reading about him in the *Phenomenology of Spirit*, I’ve disdained the Hegelian master, the victor of the fight to the death for recognition; when I died before dying (physically) my disdain for him was confirmed: he is unworthy of his mortality. The Hegelian duel to death for recognition presents several scenarios. In one of these, one man risks his animal, biological life for recognition, while the other discovers that he is not ready to do so, ostensibly because he is too attached to life, the first becoming the master and the second his slave. And yet, during their duel, were the seemingly courageous man who is in disavowal of his mortality discerning, he would intuit that the anxiety of the other cannot be fully reduced to an affect concerning organic, animal demise (a demise limited

to life), and that the other is holding to life against two kinds of deaths, one as a non event (Epicurus: “Death is nothing to us, since when we are, death has not come, and when death has come, we are not”)<sup>92</sup> that can be inflicted by his living human foe, and that requires from him nothing in order to occur; and another that no living man can inflict on him, yet in which he apprehends that it has always been his state. In another one of Hegel’s scenarios for the duel to death for recognition, one of the two men kills the other; were there only two men in the universe at that point in time, the killer would then be accidentally the “last man” and consequently would extrinsically fail to be recognized. The “last man” in Hegel’s scenario is not recognized because there is no one else left in the duel to death, but the one who is intrinsically *the last man* is not recognized even if there is one or more men around. To be intrinsically *the last man*, another encounter with death, an encounter with another sort of death is required. The Hegelian duel to death for recognition fails to think, due to the cowardliness of Hegel’s limited view of death in that primal scene of desire, the possibility that one of the two men be someone who has already died before dying<sup>93</sup> or who is intensely aware that he is a mortal, that is, already dead even while alive, thus *the last man* (irrespective of whether his opponent is physically still alive),<sup>94</sup> which is confirmed in his state of dead before dying (physically) by the circumstance that he often feels that there is no one else beside him in the universe (Leo Tolstoy: “The example of a syllogism which he had learned in Kiezwetter’s *Logic*: ‘Caius is a man, men are mortal, therefore Caius is mortal,’ had seemed to him all his life to be true as applied to Caius but certainly

not as regards himself. That Caius—man in the abstract—was mortal, was perfectly correct; but he was not Caius, nor man in the abstract: he had always been a creature quite, quite different from all others.” “Freud: ‘It is true that the statement “All men are mortal” is paraded in text-books of logic as an example of a general proposition; but no human being really grasps it ...’ ‘the psycho-analytic school could venture on the assertion that at bottom no one believes in his own death, or, to put the same thing in another way, that in the unconscious every one of us is convinced of his own immortality.’ It may be true that it is only others who die, not I, but that is in part because in death I assume all the (other) 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.’ Every name in history, and thus, synecdochically, every human in history has died but not I. This gets materialized in the absence of others often experienced in death: the deserted cities in which the somnambulist dead wanders in Bergman’s *Wild Strawberries* and Buñuel’s *The Discreet Charm of the Bourgeoisie*”).<sup>95</sup> The anxiety of *the last man* is related not so much to the imminent threat of dying physically in the duel for recognition with the other, living human, but to the death he has already underwent and in which he does not recognize himself (“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”<sup>96</sup> [from a letter that Nietzsche wrote at the onset of his psychosis, of his dying before dying]), indeed is not able to recognize himself, let alone recognize another (how can one be recognized by *the last man*?). The recognition that matters the most to the mortal, who

is dead even while still alive, and that is desired most intensely by him is not the recognition he receives insofar as he is alive, a state in which he recognizes himself, but the one addressed to him as dead, a state in which he no longer recognizes himself. While *the last man* as living may be anxious and fearful, as already dead he is courageous since the (un)dead, even were he a cowardly person when he was alive and even when most scared, is nonetheless, due to the over-turns he or she undergoes, which do not allow him to turn back,<sup>97</sup> courageous (a courage that is not a psychological state)—many are not courageous enough to acknowledge their condition of mortality, in which they are essentially courageous. One should not value courage in general and disvalue fear in general (sometimes we encounter a great fear confronting a mediocre courage); rather one should value a certain kind of courage and a certain kind of fear, and disvalue another sort of courage and another sort of fear. Under what condition would I no longer consider Hegel’s master contemptible? Only if he happens to be someone resurrected by the Christ, the life, therefore one who is solely alive, no longer a mortal, that is, no longer dead while alive, thus appropriately rather than inauthentically no longer anxious concerning the other death, death-as-undeath.

### Asfār

“*Sāfara*, inf. n. ... *He journeyed*, or *went*, ... or *went forth to journey*, ... *ilā baladi kadhā* [*to such a country*, or *town*].... And *sāfara safaran b’īdan* [*He journeyed*, or *went*, *a far journey*]. ... [Hence,] *He died*. ... *Musāfir*: A man *journeying*, or *travelling*; a

*traveler*; a *wayfarer*; ... as also *sāfir*; ... *sāfir*: A woman having her face uncovered ... *Sifr*: A *book*, or *writing*: ... or a *great*, or *large*, *book*: or a *section of the Book of the Law revealed to Moses*: ... or a *book that discovers*, or *reveals*, *truths*: ... or a book is thus called because it discovers things, and makes them evident: ... pl. *Asfār*.... you say of a woman, *safarat*, ... aor., ... inf. n. *sufūr*, ... meaning *She removed her veil* ... ‘*an wajhihā from her face*.’”<sup>98</sup> *Musāfir*: the one whose travels reveal the esoteric “in” him or her. There are several levels or manners of this *isfār*: (1) one does manifestly in the country to which one traveled what one was reluctant if not too embarrassed to exhibit in one’s own country—at this level the *safar*/trip’s uncovering of the esoteric is still in relation to others but not to oneself; (2) one discovers in that country what one little suspected was in him or her; (3) one perceives all around one what was previously esoteric “in” one: “Know that the interior of the human being in the [lower] world is his exterior aspect in the other world, and what was invisible here becomes something that is witnessed there” (Mullā Ṣadrā).<sup>99</sup> Jesus Christ: “By their fruit you will recognize them” (Matthew 7:16)—but these fruits are not revealed fully except in ‘*ālam al-khayāl* (the Imaginal World), the *barzakh*, the Bardo, death, which are trips/*asfār*, where what was esoteric becomes exoteric (cf. Philip K. Dick’s *Eye in the Sky*).<sup>100</sup> In the aforementioned third level itself, there is a large, if not infinite number of sublevels, for example, that in which the self is manifested upon the horizons (“We shall show them Our signs upon the horizons and in themselves” [Qur’ān 41:53]); as well as ones where what is externalized upon the horizons is the interior that one felt to be already external to one, the *extimate*,

for instance that which is received from an angel (resulting in heavenly externalization) or from the Devil (resulting in “hellish”/demonic externalization), two of the four kinds of thoughts and the four sources of inspirations listed in Abū Bakr al-Kalābādhī’s *The Doctrine of the Ṣūfīs* (“One of the Shaykhs said: ‘There are four kinds of thoughts: from God, from an angel, from self, and from the Devil.... By the light of unification the thought from God is received, and by the light of gnosis the thought from the angel is received; by the light of faith [the thought of] the self is denied,<sup>101</sup> and by the light of Islam [the thought of] the Devil is rejected”).<sup>102</sup> There are no trips/*asfār* to spiritual countries; rather, a spiritual country, for example, heaven or hell, is a *safar*/trip that, once started, one feels one has always been part of. Some people are the spiritual citizens of heaven, while some people are the spiritual citizens of hell. Both have an impression of *déjà vu* on finding themselves there; indeed once in heaven or hell, one would feel that one has always been there. Spiritual realms include ones that can be found only in novels (for example Sadegh Hedayat’s *The Blind Owl*), paintings, and fictional films. In Kubrick’s *The Shining*, the Overlook Hotel is a spiritual zone for Jack Torrance: when he arrives in it in the 1970s, he feels that he’s already been there (“When I came up here for my interview, it was as though I had been here before. I mean, we all have moments of *déjà-vu*, but this was ridiculous. It was almost as though I knew what was going to be around every corner”), then he is told by Grady, “You’ve always been the caretaker. I should know, sir. I’ve always been here,” then he can be seen in a photograph dated 1922.

## Why I Collaborate (in an Untimely Manner) on Outstanding Books

Nietzsche: “Ultimately, no one can extract from things, books included, more than he already knows.... Now let us imagine an extreme case: that a book speaks of nothing but events which lie outside the possibility of general or even of rare experience ... In this case simply nothing will be heard, with the acoustical illusion that where nothing is heard there *is* nothing” (“Why I Write Such Excellent Books,” *Ecce Homo*). Was Nietzsche’s experiential thought of the eternal recurrence in Sils-Maria in August 1881 “outside the possibility of general or even of rare experience”? No; such an experiential thought is rare—as long as one does not take into consideration eternal recurrence (at least in its acceptance as recurrence of the same), the eternal recurrence of the experiential thought of eternal recurrence. What lies “outside the possibility of general or even of rare experience” is (his) death (as undeath). What had remained a metaphorical manner of speaking in Nietzsche’s book *Ecce Homo*, “to give it the form of a riddle: as my father I am already dead and as my mother I am still alive ... My father died when he was thirty-six years old ...”<sup>103</sup> became actual, literal, though still a riddle, “shortly” before his January 5, 1889 letter to Jakob Burckhardt: “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 myself.”<sup>104</sup> Nietzsche, the living Nietzsche, who, to my knowledge, was ahead of everyone else, at least in his diagnosis and prognosis of nihilism (“What I relate is the history of the next

two centuries. I describe what is coming, what can no longer come differently: the advent of nihilism),”<sup>105</sup> was very late, if not too late when it came to collaborating with himself as dead/mad, since very soon after writing a few letters through this sort of collaboration, it appears that he no longer wrote. It is concerning the events Nietzsche underwent during his protracted psychosis, in other words, his dying before dying (physically) from January 1889 to August 25, 1900, the date of his physical death—and beyond—that simply nothing was heard, with the acoustical illusion that where nothing was heard there was nothing. The event, paradigmatically dying before dying, which happens to me while alone (“the event is encountered in solitude [this means not only that I encounter the event in the absence of others, but also that during it I do not keep myself company through the interior monologue, which ceases then]; this is partly the event’s affinity with death. Indeed, death, not as the cessation of organic life, which is the non-event *par excellence*, but as the labyrinthine realm of undeath, where one is radically solitary, is the event *par excellence*”), is too big for me—also in the sense that I am not fully able to produce the lament (Deleuze: “‘What’s happening to me is too big for me.’ That’s the lament”<sup>106</sup>) in song, music, writing, thought, film, or theater that is worthy of it, and that in order to do so an untimely collaboration with others is required.<sup>107</sup> Nietzsche misattributed the following words to *The Anti-Christ*, “This book belongs to the very few. Perhaps none of them is even living yet ...—Only the day after tomorrow belongs to me. Some are born posthumously”; the latter words apply far better to the book that is to be written by others (perhaps none of them was living at the time Nietzsche wrote *The*

*Anti-Christ*) in an untimely collaboration with the Nietzsche who died before dying physically (“This autumn ... I twice attended my funeral”) and who for a brief interlude was “born posthumously” and thus could in a letter inform Jakob Burckhardt about his condition. The latter, outstanding book thus “speaks of nothing but events which lie outside the possibility of general or even of rare experience ...”—part of Nietzsche’s solitude has to do with the paucity if not absence of untimely collaborators with him while he was dead before dying (physically) between 1889 and 1900—and beyond? Why should one try to collaborate (in an untimely manner) with the Nietzsche who died before dying? One should do so partly because in the same letter to Jakob Burckhardt on January 5, 1889, Nietzsche exclaimed, “every name in history is I,” implicating all of us in what he was undergoing in his dying before dying (physically), and because as mortals each one of us is dead before dying (physically), with the consequence that the part/version of each one of us that is dead exclaims at one point or another, “Every name in history [which includes Friedrich (Nietzsche)] is I.”<sup>108</sup>

## The Madman

Friedrich Nietzsche writes in *The Gay Science* (1882): “Have you not heard of that madman who lit a lantern in the bright morning hours, ran to the market place, and cried incessantly: ‘I seek God! I seek God!’—As many of those who did not believe in God were standing around just then, he provoked much laughter...

“The madman jumped into their midst and pierced them

with his eyes. ‘Whither is God?’ he cried; ‘I will tell you. *We have killed him*—you and I. All of us are his murderers.... What were we doing when we unchained this earth from its sun? ... Is not night continually closing in on us? Do we not need to light lanterns in the morning? ...

“How shall we comfort ourselves, the murderers of all murderers? What was holiest and mightiest of all that the world has yet owned has bled to death under our knives ... Is not the greatness of this deed too great for us? Must we ourselves not become gods simply to appear worthy of it? There has never been a greater deed; and whoever is born after us—for the sake of this deed he will belong to a higher history than all history hitherto.

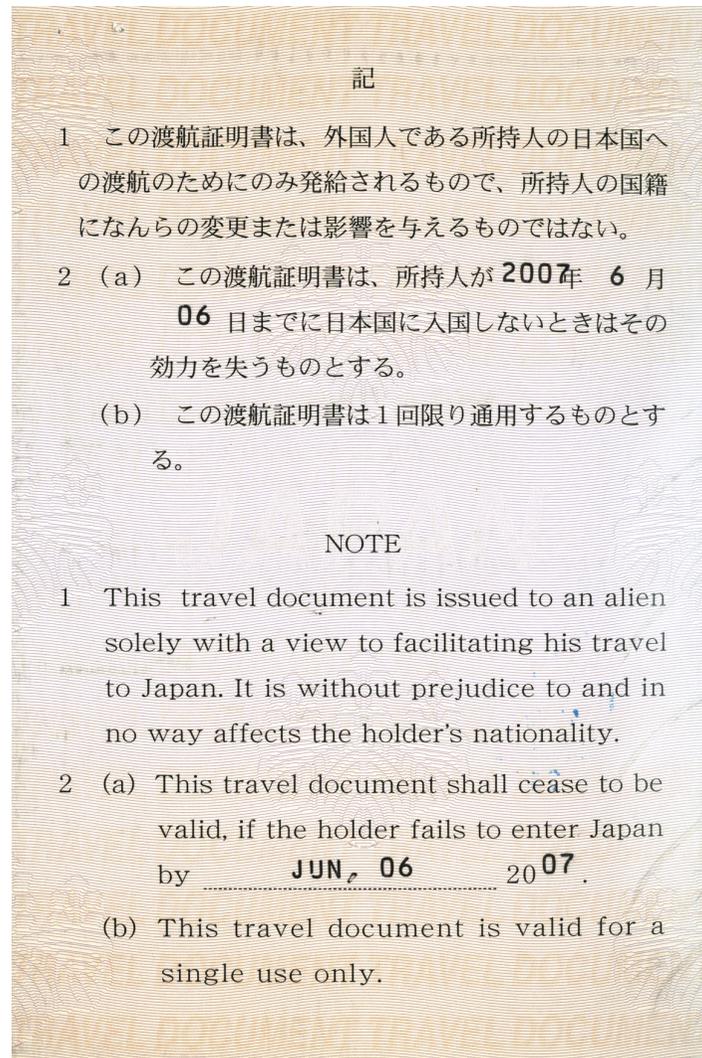
“Here the madman fell silent and looked again at his listeners. ‘I have come too early,’ he said then; ‘my time is not yet. This tremendous event is still on its way, still wandering; it has not yet reached the ears of men.... the light of the stars requires time; deeds, though done, still require time to be seen and heard. This deed is still more distant from them than the most distant stars—and yet they have done it themselves.’<sup>109</sup> The following two sorts of people are unworthy of the event of the death, indeed murder of God: those who believe in the death of God but shirk from assuming the momentous consequences of this condition, and those who according to Nietzsche still believe in the shadow of God: “After Buddha was dead, his shadow was still shown for centuries in a cave—a tremendous, gruesome shadow. God is dead; but given the way of man, there may still be caves for thousands of years in which his shadow will be shown.—And we—we still have to vanquish his shadow, too.”<sup>110</sup> One has to be equal to the

death, through murder, of God, to deserve it. If humans are not equal to this death, do not end up deserving it, then sooner or later they will be replaced and discarded by those who can—cyborgs and artificial intelligence? Nietzsche’s madman concludes that he has “come too early”; what about Nietzsche? Writing about the murder of God, Nietzsche was in the position of his Zarathustra, not ripe for his fruits (“Oh Zarathustra, your fruits are ripe, but you are not ripe for your fruits!” [*Thus Spoke Zarathustra*]). Nietzsche, this fateful man, who had written, also in *The Gay Science*, “*For the new year.* — ... Today everyone allows himself to express his dearest wish and thoughts: so I, too, want to say what I wish from myself today and what thought ... shall be the reason, warrant, and sweetness of the rest of my life! ... *Amor fati*: let that be my love from now on!”<sup>111</sup> and, in *Ecce Homo*, “The fortunate thing about my existence, perhaps its unique feature, is its fatefulness,” must have maddeningly felt in 1889 that “he” had become ripe for his fruit, that what had to take the guise of a fiction in 1882 can now be enacted in reality—to be more precise, in the real. (If humanity is in disavowal of having murdered God, and thus fails to assist him to shoulder what is too big for any one human, a human who was an accomplice in the murder of God might go mad—to find, paradoxically, the community [Nietzsche: “Every name in history is I”] that can support him in this task.) As indicated by his 5 January 1889 letter to Jakob Burckhardt, who was then a professor at the University of Basel, Nietzsche performed, as a madman, the task he had declared through his madman in *The Gay Science* (“‘Whither is God?’ ... *We have killed him*—you and I. All of us are his murderers.... Is not the greatness of this deed too great for

us? Must we ourselves not become gods simply to appear worthy of it?"): "Actually I would much rather be a Basel professor than God; but I have not ventured to carry my private egoism so far as to omit creating the world on his account."<sup>112</sup> Through his psychosis, during which he assumed the role of God, whether the world-creator or the Crucified ("Everything now turns out best for me, I now love every fate: — who would like to be my fate?"<sup>113</sup> It turned out that the answer was: God, a murdered God, the Crucified: "The Crucified" were the two words with which several of his letters at the onset of his psychosis were signed!), Nietzsche, who was aware that he was one of the murderers of God, did not remain what he despised the vast majority of others for wishing to be (even after the death, through murder, of God): *human, all too human*.

### An Airport Transit Visa to *La Jetée*?

When I was invited to travel to Japan as "Theoretical Consultant" for Rabih Mroué's play *How Nancy Wished that Everything Was an April Fool's Joke*, which was due to be premiered at the Tokyo International Arts Festival on 23 March 2007, as well as to give a lecture in that city, I was informed by the Japanese embassy in Beirut that since Japan does not recognize the travel document with which I travel, a Lebanese laissez-passer, ... they would issue me a temporary travel document that would allow me to nonetheless visit Japan (I refuse to use an exclamation point here as this should be the decent procedure in such cases; did they, over and above that decency, intuit my great affinity with much of Japanese culture?).





所持人の署名  
Signature of Holder

*Jalal O Toufic*

番号  
No. 07A00079

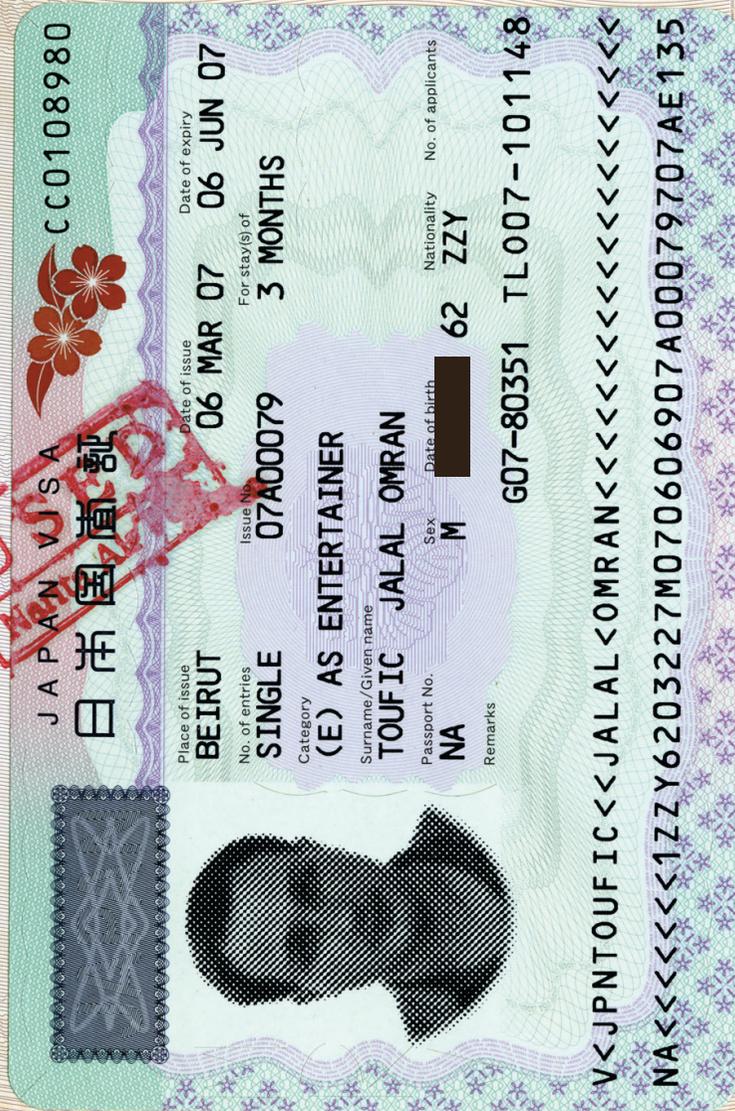
1 氏名  
Name in Full **TOUFIC** **JALAL OMRAN**  
(Surname) (Given and Middle Name)

2 性別  
Sex **M**

3 生年月日  
Date of Birth [Redacted] [Redacted] **1962**  
(Day) (Month) (Year)

4 出生地  
Place of Birth [Redacted] **LEBANON**  
(City) (Province) (Country or Region)

5 摘要  
Remarks **as entertainer/G07-80351**



Baudrillard: “The initial stunning impact of the deserts and California is gone, and yet, to be fair, is there anything more beautiful in the world? It seems unlikely. I have to assume, then, that I have come across—*once in my life*—the most beautiful place I shall ever see.... This is where the rest of life begins” (*Cool Memories*).<sup>114</sup> In relation to the encounter with Tokyo, I can say: “Is there a more beautiful, refined and perverse city in the world than Tokyo? It seems unlikely. I have to assume, then, that I have come across—*once in my life*—the most beautiful, refined and perverse city I shall ever see.... This is where the rest of my life begins”—or, to be more accurate, since Tokyo was the one city that I felt I had to visit before I die: this is where my afterlife begins.<sup>115</sup>

How straightforward it is for a film whose protagonist is a Western man or woman, for example Sofia Coppola’s *Loft in Translation* (2003), to end with his or her drive to the airport. Can a film whose protagonist is an Iraqi simply end with his or her trip to the airport? Two hours before my scheduled flight back to Beirut, I was informed at the Air France counter at Tokyo’s Narita International Airport that since I travel with an Iraqi passport (by the date of the flight via Paris, I had been issued, at long last, an Iraqi passport and therefore no longer traveled with a Lebanese laissez-passer), I had to have an airport transit visa to France in order to be allowed to board the airplane to fly back to Lebanon via Paris Charles de Gaulle Airport.<sup>116</sup> I wished videomaker Lamia Joreige and Hania Mroué, the play’s assistant director and the founder of Beirut’s Metropolis cinema, with whom I was scheduled to fly back, a safe flight and took the bus back to the Tokyo hotel from which I had checked out that morning. My trip back to the city felt like the car drive of Burton

following his failed meeting with cosmonaut Kris in Tarkovsky’s *Solaris*—a drive that happens to have been actually filmed not in Russia, as the diegesis would imply, but in Akasaka and Iikura in Tokyo. During that bus ride back to my Tokyo hotel, I gathered that in Tarkovsky’s *Solaris* Burton visited Kris not simply to inform him about the extraterrestrial ocean Solaris and to give him advice on how to behave there but also with an unconscious hope against hope of accompanying him on his Solaris trip.<sup>117</sup> Remarkably, it is not on the way to the airport, but now, while going back to the city on being denied boarding on the Air France plane, that I am feeling the most intense nostalgia for this city! In relation to travel from one country to another, the real last night of some Palestinians, Iraqis, etc., is not the one that immediately precedes their scheduled flights, but the extra one that they end up spending in the city of departure if their passports or visas turn out to have unexpected problems at the airline counter and they are informed that they cannot fly but have to consult some embassy or other or change their tickets to include a more permissive transit airport. I, who happen to have written in my book *Two or Three Things I’m Dying to Tell You* (2005) that the title of *The Thousand and One Nights* refers to “the one thousand nights of the one thousand unjustly murdered previous one-night wives of King Shahrayār plus his night with Shahrazād, a night that is itself like a thousand nights” and in which she tells a myriad of stories, will never say that I stayed thirteen nights in Japan in 2007, but: twelve and one nights. The free time on a business trip to a city one is visiting for the first time is for exploring it, which in the case of Tokyo includes most probably one’s and its fetishes,<sup>118</sup> while (once one has switched the airplane ticket for the return flight to one via a

country that does not exhibit the utmost inhospitality: requiring an airport transit visa) the extra night and day are not for accomplishing the outstanding things one did not have time to do during one's scheduled stay, since one then wanders in the city as if one were doing so in an airport and so unconsciously limits oneself to visiting places one might find in the latter (for example, bookstores with a small collection of mostly bad books), but for love, consequently for the eclipse of the city<sup>119</sup> and fetishes. It is not on returning to one's city that one feels nostalgic about the city one has just visited and with which one feels a strong affinity, but, following one's return to one's city, on visiting another foreign city with which one feels far less affinity or no affinity at all. In my case, it was not on returning to Beirut from Tokyo that I felt intensely nostalgic for the latter but on visiting Cape Town two months later. And indeed, after returning from Cape Town to Beirut, I found myself gravitating to mosques and to dance studios, in order to see people removing their shoes prior to entering these respective arenas, that is, in order to be reminded of Japan.

### Istanbul Song

Having decided to leave Lebanon after finishing writing my book *Undeserving Lebanon* (it was published a few months later, in December 2007), did I choose Turkey for destination only because of my affinity to Ottoman and Turkish art music and Sufi music? There was additionally something in me that must have felt that I needed to get closer to the site of some largely unacknowledged loss that took place there before my birth, a loss that made of me

a born loser. An Arabic acquaintance of mine considered that in their complex historical relationship with Turks, Arabs' losses came to an end with their liberation from the "yoke" of the Ottoman sultanate. When I indicated my disagreement, he reconsidered, then remembered Syria's loss of the Sanjak<sup>120</sup> of Alexandretta to Turkey (thenceforth the Turkish province of Hatay) in 1939. I protested: "Is that all? *C'est tout?*" He could think of nothing else. "And yet, what about the substitution of the Latin alphabet for the Arabic one in Turkey?"<sup>121</sup> On November 1, 1928, the Grand National Assembly of the Republic of Turkey passed Law no. 1353, "On the Adoption and Application of the New Turkish Letters," "which came into effect two days later.... The use of books printed in the old characters for instruction in schools was forbidden. No books were to be published in the old letters after the end of the year."<sup>122</sup> Arabs protested against the annexation of Alexandretta by Turkey, but how many of them protested against the change of alphabet in Turkey and the removal of so many Arabic words from Turkish? "In addition to collecting songs, at this time, the Republic also collected pure Turkish words. All this was happening within the background of the language purification movement."<sup>123</sup> "Statistical analyses have occasionally been undertaken to see how much of the current vocabulary of the press consisted of 'native' words—i.e., words known, presumed or declared to be of Turkish origin—and how much was 'foreign'—i.e., Arabic or Persian ... The most reliable is Kâmil İmer's scholarly study ["Origins of Vocabulary of Five Newspapers (*Ulus, Akşam, Cumhuriyet, Milliyet, and Hürriyet*), 1931–1965"]."<sup>124</sup> According to table 12.1 of that study, while in 1931 Arabic words accounted for 51%, in 1965 they accounted for 26%. As an Arab in Istanbul in 2007,

I feel outdated, since when I recognize an Arabic word in present-day Turkish dictionaries, it is often qualified as obsolete or rare. Here are some words qualified as obsolete in the *Türkçe-İngilizce Redhouse Sözlüğü* (*The Redhouse Turkish-English Dictionary*, 1999; as the preface indicates, “*The Redhouse Turkish-English Dictionary* is a new edition of *The Redhouse Contemporary Turkish-English Dictionary* ... The entries include not just the words that are most frequently encountered in Turkey today, but many words that, although now either obsolete or obsolescent, were in common use only fifty or sixty years ago”): “**Hafi** *obs.* secret, hidden. **Hakim** *obs.* 1. sage, a profoundly wise man. 2. philosopher. 3. wise, sage, sagacious. **Hatime** *obs.* Epilog, *Brit.* Epilogue. **Havas** *obs.* 1. properties, attributes. 2. the elite. 3. the upper classes. **Hayalat, -ti** *obs.* 1. imagined things, visions, fancies; fantasies; dreams; daydreams. 2. images, reflections. 3. shadows, indistinct images. 4. ghosts, visions, apparitions. **Hayif, -yfi** *obs.* 1. injustice; cruelty. 2. regret, sorrow, pity. 3. Alas!/What a pity! **Hazf, -fi** *obs.* 1. getting rid of, elimination; delition; elision. 2. gram. Ellipsis. **Hıfz** *obs.* 1. guarding, protection, preservation. 2. memorization.” I looked for these obsolete Arabic words in mental hospitals in Istanbul, more specifically in the utterances of the voices-over of schizophrenics, through which one can overhear not only the unconscious of the individual in question, but the unconscious of the language, all that has become “obsolete” in it as a result of a repression.<sup>125</sup> Were I to learn Turkish, it would not be to manage more easily my everyday interactions with the cashiers at various Macrocenter, Migros, and Carrefour supermarkets and hypermarkets; my monthly interaction with one or more employees at “my” branch of Garanti Bank; my exceptional interactions with the

staff at a hospital, etc., but mainly to write in a Turkish that includes many of the Arabic terms that are presently considered obsolete in current Turkish language or have been expurgated altogether from it. To my knowledge, none of those who decry the impoverishment of Arabic language include as a contributing factor to this state the replacement of Arabic script by the Latin one for the writing of Turkish and the programmatic replacement of Arabic words as part of the language purification movement in Turkey that started in 1928 and lasted for several decades. Can so many Arabic words be erased from Turkish language without Arabic language, *even the one in the Arab World*, being affected by that? Most Arabs have thought little, if at all, about this loss, which is one of the worst losses Arabs have suffered in the twentieth century. The substitution of the Latin script for the Arabic one and the linguistic cleansing through the concerted removal of many Arabic words from Turkish language in the Republic of Turkey are a symptom of a withdrawal of tradition past a surpassing disaster. Unlike republican Turkey, Ottoman Turkey was a cosmopolitan culture, indeed one of the great cosmopolitan cultures. Cosmopolitan cultures do not get rid of the “foreign” without losing the native, for getting rid of what is “foreign” is so disastrous, especially for a cosmopolitan culture, it often amounts to a surpassing disaster, with the consequent withdrawal of tradition, including of the native (component of it). Nowhere is this clearer than in the attempt by the Republic of Turkey to get rid of the Arabic and Persian words that were part of Ottoman culture and language, ending up making the vast majority of Turks unable to read Ottoman inscriptions and manuscripts, which were written in the Arabic script, so that these became uncanny, something one encounters as

unreadable, if not foreign while knowing that it should be familiar (to those Turks who would expect any *yabancı* [foreigner] to have learnt Turkish “by now,” for example me after two years in Turkey, my response is: I expect you by now to have learnt Ottoman, or at the very least to have learnt the Arabic script so you can read, if not fully understand the inscriptions on your mosques, palaces and on the main gate of your largest university, Istanbul University). The native is what fits, the foreign is what does not fit, and tradition is what fits and does not fit. The native is the proximate, the foreign is the distant, and tradition is what remains *distant however close one gets* (hence its aura)<sup>126</sup>—this characteristic of tradition becomes clearer in the aftermath of surpassing disasters.

“Culture is the norm, art is the exception” (Godard).<sup>127</sup> Is art the only exception? Can politics too be an exception—to culture? Yes, it can—exceptionally. Was politics in Turkey from 1923 to the 1930s an exception to the culture in the Turkey of that time? If it were, it would have felt an affinity with if not all then at least some of the other (specific) exceptions to the culture of the Turkey of that time. Unfortunately, while being an exception to certain characteristics of the Turkish culture of the time, which it considered backward and sick, the politics of the nascent Republic of Turkey proved to be largely a systematic attempt to abolish altogether some of the greatest exceptions to and of Ottoman culture, for example great Sufi and Ottoman art music and great Sufi texts, resorting in doing so to the culture of Europe, i.e., the norm, while disregarding the latter’s exceptions.

Was the Ottoman sultanate, as the term “the sick man of Europe” would imply, the only part of Europe that was sick? No.

Most of the terms that were being used to criticize and denigrate the Ottomans by Western diplomats and then by the Young Turks and then by Mustafa Kemal and his followers, for example *decadent* and *sick*, had already been used and continued to be used by the most advanced thinkers, writers and artists of Europe to criticize the Europe that the nascent Republic of Turkey wished to emulate. For example Nietzsche was exasperated by “the most *anti-cultural* sickness and unreason there is, nationalism, this *névrose nationale* (national neurosis) that Europe is sick from ...”<sup>128</sup> and that led to World War I, with its millions of dead in the trench battles. But the main sickness of Europe was then and continues to be nihilism; the prescient Nietzsche had already written in an entry in the projected preface, dated November 1887–March 1888, to *The Will to Power*: “What I relate is the history of the next two centuries. I describe what is coming, what can no longer come differently: the advent of nihilism.”<sup>129</sup> Did Mustafa Kemal and his followers end up then replacing “the sick man of Europe” with ... the imitator of a *sick* Europe? Unbeknownst to them, what the leaders of the nascent Republic of Turkey were emulating and forcing most of their citizens to imitate was a sickness that Europe for the most part did not acknowledge, disavowed: nihilism. Even this fundamental crisis, this crisis of foundations and values, nihilism, which one has to go through oneself, as an initiation, perhaps the greatest, was skirted by the nascent Republic of Turkey. To deal with the nihilism they were faced with through the devaluation of Ottoman values that resulted from the series of military defeats and the dismal economic situation, the leaders of the nascent Republic of Turkey opted to imitate the (more hidden) nihilism of the culture of Europe, whose

values according to the discerning and farsighted thinker Nietzsche were already devalued, continue to be devalued and are going to be devalued for at least another century! But if it is extremely difficult to deal with nihilism, since to do so one or a people has to create new values, how much more difficult it is to deal with the imported nihilism of the other! Not acknowledging that the values they were importing wholesale and imitating were already devalued, it was all the more difficult for Turks to deal with this nihilism through the *creation* of new values. While not being conscious of this motivation, do the current leaders of Turkey wish to join the European Union in part so that its nihilism would become more manifestly theirs and thus easier to confront and deal with?

Nietzsche: “You see that I do not want to take leave ungratefully from that time of severe sickness whose profits I have not yet exhausted even today. I am very conscious of the advantages that my fickle health gives me over all robust squares ... And as for sickness: are we not almost tempted to ask whether we could get along without it?” (“Preface for the Second Edition,” section 3, *The Gay Science*). Can one say the same about Turkey? No, it took leave ungratefully from that time of severe sickness, the last years of the Ottoman sultanate, from “the sick man of Europe,” peremptorily declaring the bankruptcy of the latter, and as a result dismissed outright profits and assets (William S. Burroughs: “The old novelists like Scott were always writing their way out of debt ... laudable ... So William Seward Hall sets out to write his way out of death. Death, he reflects, is equivalent to a declaration of spiritual bankruptcy. One must be careful to avoid the crime of concealing assets ... a precise inventory will often show that the assets are

considerable and that bankruptcy is not justified”<sup>130</sup>) that have remained outstanding, including the chance to switch perspectives between the sanctioned Kemalist perspective, a perspective largely based on the purportedly healthy values of mainstream European culture, and the one(s) based on the values provided by the many centuries of Ottoman culture. Nietzsche: “To be able to look out from the optic of sickness towards *healthier* concepts and values, and again the other way around, to look down from the fullness and self-assurance of the *rich* life into the secret work of the instinct of decadence—that was my longest training, my genuine experience, if I became the master of anything, it was this. I have a hand for switching *perspectives*: the first reason why a ‘revaluation of values’ is even possible, perhaps for me alone.”<sup>131</sup> Indeed it is the case that those who have access to and make use of two perspectives, for example William S. Burroughs, who was able to look out from the optic of addiction towards healthier concepts and values, and vice versa, and I, who was able to look out from the optic of death (before dying physically) towards vital values and mundane concepts, and vice versa, have proved to be those best equipped for the task of a “revaluation of values.” When instead of having or experimenting different perspectives, so that you are able to switch between them, you do away with one of the two perspectives or repress it, as Turkey did in the beginning years of the republic, in the 1920s and 1930s,<sup>132</sup> then you end up importing already existing values (in the case of the nascent Republic of Turkey, actually old European values that were already largely devalued even prior to World War I—and that were to be further devalued in World War II). Certainly this “revaluation of values” is advisedly qualified by quotation marks,

since we are not yet, in 2011, and certainly Turkey was not in the 1920s and 1930s, in a position to do a revaluation of values—the revaluation of values in the strongest sense will be ushered in by the *overman*, the one who is going to go through the ordeal of countless recurrence and, through willing the eternal recurrence of various events, make possible the production and achievement of the epochal will—only the will can implement an unqualified *revaluation of values*.<sup>133</sup> A minor revaluation of values<sup>134</sup> would usher in a new calendar that starts with it, thus Nietzsche announced a new calendar in his book *The Anti-Christ*: “Time is counted from the *dies nefastus* [unlucky day] when this catastrophe began, — from the *first* day of Christianity! — *Why not count from its last day instead?* — *From Today?* — Revaluation of all values! Law Against Christianity[.] Given on the Day of Salvation, on the first day of the year one (—30 September 1888, according to the false calculation of time) ...”<sup>135</sup>—a major revaluation of values would unsettle that very schema of chronology. Since the Republic of Turkey’s revaluation of Ottoman values was the replacement of one set of pre-established (devalued) values by another, the mainstream Ottoman one of that time with the mainstream European one, it is appropriate that the calendar of the Republic of Turkey was no different than the Gregorian calendar, which demarcated dates in terms of AD (Anno Domini [“used to indicate that a date comes the specified number of years after the accepted date of Christ’s birth”]) and BC (before Christ [used to indicate that a date is before the Christian Era]), and this notwithstanding that one of the first acts of the Republic of Turkey, already in 1923, was the population exchange with Greece, which applied to the Greek

Orthodox citizens of Turkey and the Muslims of Greece.

What was being limited by Mustafa Kemal and his followers was what was *too big* for many if not all Turks: the empire, then the very idea of an empire, then *what was too big for the empire itself*, the great Ottoman elegiac music. Turkey was then in danger of being exactly as big, in other words, as small as it was, not only geographically but also culturally, ethnically, linguistically, and musically, thus joyless (Deleuze: “‘What’s happening to me is too big for me.’ That’s the lament. 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 ...”).<sup>136</sup> The following words are part of the morning oath recited by Turkish primary school students, “Happy is the person who says, ‘I am a Turk’”; what a dictum involving the betrayal of desire (Slavoj Žižek: “In psychoanalysis, the betrayal of desire has a precise name: happiness”)<sup>137</sup>! Indeed, how joyless many Turks in Istanbul seem on subways and in the streets. It is mostly in their lamentation songs that one encounters the great flux of desire of Turks and Kurds. And yet this music was under attack for a substantial period in the nascent Republic of Turkey. “Monophonic music education (Ottoman music) was banned in public and private schools in 1927.<sup>138</sup> Lodges and cloisters (*tekke ve zaviyeler*), which were the centers of *tekke* music, were also abolished. In 1934, art music was banned from the radio stations for two years.”<sup>139</sup> Well then, it was all the more incumbent on those non-Turks who had contributed to Ottoman culture to reclaim great Ottoman music and songs at that point. Unfortunaley, this music was largely disavowed and disclaimed not only by nationalist republican Turks, who considered it not Turkish enough, too influenced by

Arabic and Persian culture, etc., and not modern enough, but also by all the other erstwhile constituents of the Ottoman Empire: by most Arabs, who ended up considering Ottoman culture as too Turkish; by most Greeks, who ended up considering it to be too Oriental; and by Armenians, who related to it then almost exclusively in terms of the deportations and massacres they suffered between 1915 and 1917. (Actually, for the most part Arabs and Greeks were unworthy of it at that point.) I, for whom it has always been not *India Song* but *Istanbul Song*, tremble to think that I might have died without ever having had the chance to hear Müzeyyen Senar singing *Ahum Gibi Ah Var Mı Acep* to the musical accompaniment of Ercüment Batanay (*Birlikte 50 Yıl, İmaj Müzik, 2006*); Bekir Sıdkı Sezgin performing *İrticali Mevlid-i Şerif* and Itri's *Raşt Na't-ı Mevlana*; *Esin Var Asilyanın, Efendimsin, Ruzi Seb, and Muhayyer peshrev* performed by the Kudsi Erguner Ensemble; Cinuçen Tanrıkorur performing *Bayatıtaraban "Ayîn-î-Şerîfi"*; Münir Nurettin Selçuk singing *Aheşte Çek Kürekleri*; Seha Okuş singing *Tokat Bir Bağ İçinde*; Özdal Orhon singing *Her Akşam Muhakkak Tesadüfümüz, Bir Gamlı Hazanın, Neden Gücendin Sen Bana, and Sîneler Aşkınla Inler*; Sadettin Kaynak singing *Zülfü Sümbül*; Hafız Şaşı Osman Efendi singing *Mâhutâbım Beyi Seyrâne Mi Çıktın Bu Gece*; İsak el-Gazî singing *Bî-karar Olmaktı Sevmekten Murâdı Gönlümiin*; Tanburi Cemil Bey's *Tanburla Gerdaniye Taksim, Gülizar Taksim, Şedaraban Saz Semaisi*; Cemil Bey's *Muhayyer Saz Semai* performed by Yorgo Bacanos; *Uşşaktan Nihavende Geçiş Taksimi* and *Bayati'ye Geçiş Taksimi* performed by Necdet Yaşar; *Çile Bülbülüm Çile* sung by Safiye Ayla and, in an encore across several decades, by Duman's Kaan Tangöze; Necmi Rıza Ahıskan singing *Deryada Deryalıklar*;

*Hicaz Saz Semaisi* (by Refik Talat Alpman) performed by Cüneyd Orhon; Muallim İsmail Hakkı Bey's *Ferahfeza Saz Semai*; Aziz Şenses singing *Atı Olan Ata Biner Atlanır* and *Ela Geyik*; Sabahat Akkiraz singing *Deli Gönül Hangi Dala Konarsın, Arguvan, and Ağıt ...* "In order to establish a Western musical education and performance, Paul Hindemith was invited by the government to head the foundation of the Ankara School of Music in 1935."<sup>140</sup> Was the choice then between two kinds of music: the one a Paul Hindemith would have taught and Ottoman art music? No, it was between music, which may or may not be melancholic, and melancholia itself in the medium of music. It appears that the leaders of the nascent Republic of Turkey included among the pathologies of "the sick man of Europe" melancholia (according to Freud, it results from the failure of the healthy process of mourning). The unconscious intent behind Mustafa Kemal's "willed" ban of Ottoman art music in Turkey in the 1930s might very well have been to get rid of melancholia itself in the medium of music by means of (a certain kind of) Western music. Had Ottoman art music, this music that's often of inconsolable loss, been irretrievably lost, what would be able to convey one's melancholia about the loss of this music, which for the most part is melancholia itself in the medium of music? Can writing do it? While in the 1920s and the 1930s, many a Turk, but also an Arab, a Kurd, an Armenian, a Greek could have written a book titled *The Loser*,<sup>141</sup> with for subtitle, *Istanbul Song*, I doubt very much that writing can do it, since while writing can certainly convey melancholia, it cannot be melancholia itself in the medium of writing. With the loss of this music would have been lost what is most apt to render and convey this loss as well as loss in general.



















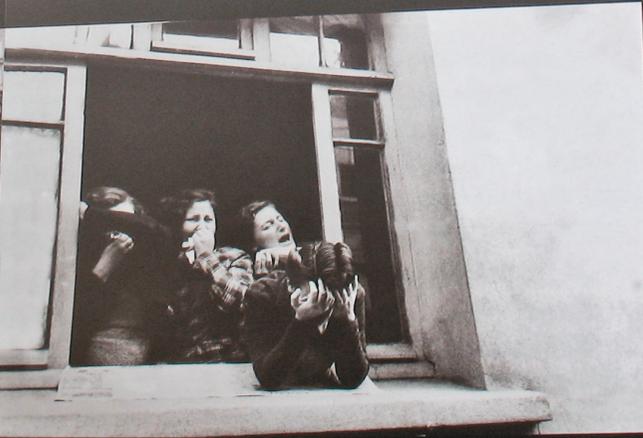












SOCIETE OTTOMANE  
DE CHANGE ET DE VALEURS.

HSBC



How to Read an Image/Text  
Past a Surpassing Disaster?

1. How to Read an Image Past a Surpassing Disaster?





بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم  
هذا ما كتبه...

...في سنة...

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم  
هذا ما كتبه...

...في سنة...

انسانوں کی ساری باتیں





توكيا دولتده لطفنت  
 كو بونك خاجنده  
 و خدافتك خاندان آل عثمان  
 ملت بيلينه انتخاب صورتيله  
 دائر مجلس ملك اليرك  
 ۱۳۰ نجي اجتماعك  
 ايدره ايمى سادى و  
 مذکور چهره و كتابت  
 محققينك طرفنده  
 تقريرنده استقام ايدره

بالت  
 و



۱ سرى ۱۳۲۸  
 توكيا دولتده لطفنت ميهك تاسس و استقرائيه و بونك خاجنده  
 صلواتك معبر اولميقه و خدافتك خاندان آل عثمان مياننده توكيا بونك  
 مجلس انتخاب صورتيله بر ذمه تويم ايديله جفته و ايريس ملك اليرك سرى ۱۳۲۸  
 تا جفته كي يوز او تورنجي اجتماعك ايلنجي حده سنده اتفاقله لغويه اقداره  
 ايدره و سريه و عدليه و قانونه اساسي اجتماعك نيت و تنظيم ايلسه بولسا  
 ايمى سادى ۱۳۲۸ تا ۱۳۲۹ مترك ميفرنتك قذلو ادر  
 انجمن رساد اعضاس طرفنده انضا سنده اتفاق ايلسه اولده  
 قوه و تكميله



بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

شريف محمد اللين باشا  
و اوقلى

شريف حامد محمد اللين  
بورصة مدفون در رحله فاته  
16 كانون اول 1905 هـ

SERIF

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## 2. How to Read a Text Pašt a Surpassing Disaster?

More important to me than the translation of my book *The Withdrawal of Tradition Pašt a Surpassing Disaster* to French (*Le Retrait de la tradition suite au désastre démesuré*, trans. Omar Berrada and Ninon Vinsonneau [Paris: Les Prairies ordinaires, 2011])<sup>142</sup> is its translation to Ottoman! Indeed, this is my most important project concerning Turkey yet: the publication of a bilingual translation of my book *The Withdrawal of Tradition Pašt a Surpassing Disaster* to Turkish and Ottoman. To be a consummate Ottoman translator, it is not enough to translate from Ottoman to some other language; one has also to translate from other languages to Ottoman—there were no all-around Ottoman translators between the establishment of the Republic of Turkey, in 1923, and 2010, the date of the translation by Selim Kuru of sections of my book *The Withdrawal of Tradition Pašt a Surpassing Disaster* to Ottoman. How felicitous to see Turkish, Arabic, and Persian, three languages that belong to three language families (Persian [aka Farsi] is a member of the Indo-Iranian language group, itself a branch of the Indo-European language family; Arabic is a member of the Semitic branch of the Afro-Asiatic language family; and Turkish is a member of the Altaic language family), again in the same text, all the more so when this happens to be one of my texts. Indeed my project for this translation was conceived in part as a contribution toward the creative resumption of an Arabo-Persian-Turkish culture.

فلاکت فائقه  
عقبندہ بر  
متنی ناصل  
مطالعہ  
ایتمہ لی؟

## استرداد عنعنه بعد از فلاكات فائقه

وليد رعدہ اتحافاً

اگر هیروشیمه و ناکاساکی یه ۶ و ۹ آغوستوس ۱۹۴۵ تاریخلرنده آتوم بومباسی آتلمه سی بر فلاکت فائقه ایسه اولوقت یالکز مقدار تلفات و موزه لر، کتبخانه لر، عبادتخانه لر داخل ظاهری تحریبات ابنیه و داخی آنوک کبی محتلف قیودات جسمانیه نک تحریباتی دکل، فقط ”عمیق“ وجود انسانده کی کرفتار رادیواکتیویته اولان حجره لرده اوزون وعده لی تأثیرات مادیه مخفیه، و مؤجلاً میدانه چیقابلن خفی تراومه تأثیراتی، و بونلره علاوة ادبیات، فلسفه، و متون تفکرک و داخی بعض سینه ما فیلملری، ویدیولر و آثار موسیقیه نک که نسخه لری ماده موجود اولاییلر؛ و ماده تحریب اوله مش تصویرات و ابنیه نک؛ و رهبران صوفیانک؛ و بعض محال روحانیات/مخصوصیتک غیر مادی استردادی داخی موجود اولاجقدر. تعبیر آخریله بر فلاکتک فوق العاده اولوب اولدیغی (بوyle بر فلاکتک محصولی اولان غیر مادی استرداد حساسیتی ایله معرف بر امت ایچون) مقدار تلفاته، روحی تراومه نک شدنه و مقدار تحریبات مادیه یه بناء تحقیق اولنه مز، اما عقبنده امراض استرداد عنعنه یه متصادف اولنوب اولنمدیغنه بناء تحقیق اولنه بیلر.<sup>۲</sup>

...

بر فلاکت فائقه ایچون، تلفات قضائیه بوyle بر فلاکتک مقابل حسسز قائلنرک قورتارلمش عد ایتدوکی شیلرک چوغنی احتوا ایدر. بر فلاکت فائقه بابنده

No one has yet shown an interest in translating my published yet forthcoming book *The Withdrawal of Tradition Pašt a Surpassing Disaster* (Forthcoming Books, 2009) to Turkish notwithstanding that in the 1920s and 1930s Turkey exemplified such a withdrawal! Until Selim S. Kuru did, at my instigation, a translation of part of the book to Ottoman, I would have refused any request for the translation of the book to Turkish, indicating that the book’s translation to Ottoman is a condition of possibility of its translation to Turkish. Will such a translation to Ottoman contribute to the resurrection of tradition? Will such a translation of a published yet forthcoming book to an ostensibly past and largely forgotten language prove to be itself forthcoming even after its publication?

This translation is part of my mixed-media work *How to Read an Image/Text Pašt a Surpassing Disaster?*, which deals with the withdrawal of Ottoman tradition past a surpassing disaster, and which was premiered at “Blind Dates: New Encounters from the Edges of a Former Empire,” Pratt Manhattan Gallery, New York, November 19, 2010–February 12, 2011. *How to Read an Image/Text Pašt a Surpassing Disaster?* is composed of two parts: a) “How to Read an Image Past a Surpassing Disaster?”: 6 images (five photographs as well as a print out—that includes two photos—of the Ottoman translation of the first paragraph of my book *The Withdrawal of Tradition Pašt a Surpassing Disaster*); and b) “How to Read a Text Past a Surpassing Disaster?”: a booklet of the translation into Ottoman of several pages of the first essay of my aforementioned book.

حالا عنعنه نك بقاء و قرار ايتديكنى عد ايدن بر فيلمجى، بر متفكر، بر محرر، بر ويديوچى، يا خود بر موسيقى شناس بوسفك دمان ”فورتوله بيلن“ لردن بعضيسنى بيله احيا اتمسى كر كديكنه اصلا احتمال ويرمز؛ ”بن نيچون فورتولد، نيچون بو قدر شئ تحريب اولدى فقط، شو بئنا صابه صاغلام اياقده؟“ سؤالنى بو بئنا كى يوزلرجه كتب و محصولات صناعيه نك ماده امعا اوله مقله برابر فلاكت فائقه تأثيرله غير مادی استرداد ايلديكندن شبيه ايتمكسزن سؤال ايديلنلر رياكاردرلر، كم مدقتلر يعنى حالا فلاكت فائقه نك اوتنه ياننده درلر.

فلاكت فائقه دن ماده تحليلى ايله يه جكم اثارك تكرار احيايه محتاجيته واقف اولسم داخى عنعنه يى محافظه ايمه ده الومدن كلنى آردومه قويمه مه لييم—بر شعبه علومدن علم تاريخك حدوداتدن برىسى داخى اورا ك بقاى ماديسنك ضرورت احيايه كوزلرنى كور ايتمش اولسيدر. نادراً بر فيلمك بر كتابى كندونه مخصوص معياريله بر واسطه ديكره و/يا خود بر عصر ديكره و بويله جه ديكر بر زمان مفهومه تطبيقه دكل، فقط آنى احيايه سعى كوستردىكنى حس ايدرم—بعد از احيا، بو فيلم بعض فيلمجيلرك تقدديرنه بئنا نو ظهور مفهومه تطبيقه محتاج اوله بيلر. بزر بر صورته، اقتباس صورتيه حصوله كتيرلن فيلملر فرقى دورلره تطبيقلرله نظراً يا خود بر فيلمجيك يا ويديوچيك كندو داخى فيلم يا ويديوچى اولان نابهنگام شريكه مراعات ايمه يشندن متولد تعميرنه نظراً تماشا ايديله مزلر. هرزوك مورنونك نوسفرا تو (۱۹۲۲) سندن مقتبساً حصوله كتيردىكى فيلم، بر فيلم ناصدانك با صدا و با رنك ترجمه سى مثالى دكل، بالعقب بر فلاكت فائقه يى، نازى دورنى، متعاقب مورنونك فيلمنك استردادى عقبده احياسى اوله رق تماشا ايديله بيلر. اول ميانده، بو فيلمك موفقيتتى تقدير بانبده ايكي طريق موجوددر: بو فيلم مورنونك فيلمي نوسفرا تو ايله ارتباطى صرف نظر اولنديغنه داخى موفق اولمش ميدر؟ اوله مش ايسه، مع ما فيه احيا ايدلش بر فيلم عد ايدلر مى؟ نوسفرا تو مورنونك يكرمى بر فيلمندن حالا موجود طوقوزندن برسيدر و ايكي دفعه استرداد ايتمشدر: اولاً ۱۹۲۵ سنه سنده سيتوكرك ديراكولا نام حكايه سنك حق مؤلفنى احلال ايتديكندن محكمه قراريله—كه نسخه لرى ۱۹۲۸ سنه سنده تقرار تداولده ايدى؛ و بعد از فلاكت دور نازى كه هر نقر تداولده ايسه ده، متعاقب سنللك فيلمجيلرى

ايچون استرداد ايتمشدر (هرزوك: ” فيلملرمزيله اول زمانه ضعيف بر جسير انشائنه سعى ايدپوز“). هرزوك نوسفرا تو (۱۹۷۹) سى: بر نا-موتا حقنده موجود بر فلمى احيايه سعى ايدن، يعنى او كنده دورديغى حالده وامپيرك كورنمديكى آيينه نك داخى عقس ايتدرديكى اوزره عيى ائشاده هم موجود هم ده نا موجود اولان حقنده بر وامپير فيلمى؛ لکن فلاكت فائقه دور نازيدن متولد اوله رق بو فلاكت فائقه دن صوكره كى نسل ايچون هم موجود هم نا موجود اولان بر فيلم. بر جوق فيلمجيه الحام ويرمش اولان و ورتوك افاده سى ايله ” فيلم توليد ايدن فيلملر“ حصوله كتيرن غودارد و هرزوك فيلملرى احيا ايدن فيلملر داخى حصوله كتيرمشلردر. اول وقتلرده فلاكت فائقه حقنده هيچ بر شئ بيلمه ين هال هارتلى اول فيلملرنده غوداردى امتثال ايتمش اوله بيلر، غودارد بالذات كندو داخى بعض فلاكت فائقه نتيجه سنده اولكى فيلملرنه مواصلت ايدمه مين بر شخص كى بعضى فيلملر (غوداردك، احيا موضوعنده كى يكى طالع فيلمنك اسمنك داخى ايماء ايتديكى اوزره ”يكى طالع“ فيلملرى بولنردنر) حصوله كتيرمشدر، مثلاً قرال لير فيلمنده ايما اولنان فيلم. بر فلاكت فائقه موجوديتنى كشفك اك امين طريقي، بعض حساس و مدرك فيلم يابمجيلرى و/يا خود مألفر و/يا خود متفكرلر، آخر فيلمجى و/يا خود مألّف و/يا خود متفكر عندنده، بر شخص يا خود مدرّس اوله رق كنديسى ايچون، انسانجه، كلياً انسانجه قالدغى نسبتله، موجود و حاضر اولانى احيا احتياجى حس ايتديكى زمان ظهور ايدر.

فضيح اولنلر خارج فلاكت فيلملرى بعضاً آثار صنايعينك، آثار ادبينك و/يا خود فيلملرك احياسنى حاويدر.... متعاقب سنه نك كان فيلم فستيوالى ايچون غودارده شيكسبيرك قرال لير نام اثرنك فيلمه تطبيقتى توديع ايدن ”قانون فيلمس“ مولداتى مناهم غولان و يورام غلوبوس بوتياترونك آشكاراً موجوديته لاقيد قالمشلردر. بو اثر ”قرال لير انجق بر ماقيه حكايه سى اولارق يازيله بلر.“ دين نورمان مايلر ايچون داخى موجود بولنمقدمه در كه مايلىرى غوداردك قرال ليرينك (۱۹۸۷) قسم اولنده قرال ليرك سينمه تياتروسنى اتمام ايدريكن تماشا ايدرر. بو اثر، اول ائشاده فيلمك تياتروسنى تحرير ايتديكى كى فيلمده كى دون ليه زو روليني داخى اوينايان مايلره، ”كيّت [نورمان مايلرك] فيزيدر اوطاكه كيرر، تياتروى—تياتروكى دكل تياتروى—اتمام ايتديكى اشيديجك سنى اوپر.“ دين غودارد ايچون داخى

موجوددر. فقط صکره سطحده ”هیچ“ لفظی محرر بر لوحه مشاهده اولترکن بر سسک ” و آپاکسنز چرنوبیل دوری اولدی،<sup>۱</sup> و هر شی غائب اولدی و آز صکره هر شی کری کلدی، الکتریق، ایبات،<sup>۲</sup> آرابه لر—بن و حرث خارج هر شی.“ دیدیکی ایشیدرز. غوداردک ”قاعده حرث، صنعت استنثا“ فحواسنی نظری اعتباره آلان فیلم قهرامانی، بوکا مؤخرأ ”بوندن اولای بحث ایتدم می امین دکلم، اما چرنوبیلدن صوکره ایدی. فیلملرک و بالکلیه صنعتک غائب اولدیغی، موجود اولدیغی بر دور غیبوبت ایچریسینده یز، و بر شکله بونلری تکرار ایجاد ایتلمی یز.“ دیرک علاوه ایدر. غائب اولمده دوام ایدنه، استرداد ایدنه، ”هر شی“ رجوع ایتدکن صوکره بیله موجود اولیانه نه لر داخل ایدیه ییلر؟ روبرت برسونک (مثلا یان کسجی، ۱۹۵۹، سچیلمش بالتازار، ۱۹۶۶، کولده کی لانسولوت، ۱۹۷۴، یاره، ۱۹۸۲)، کارل تئودور دزیرک (مثلا ژان دارکک عنابی، ۱۹۲۸، وامپیر، ۱۹۳۲، اُردت [یا خود لفظ، ۱۹۸۷])، پییر پُولو پاسولینینک (مثلا تیورما، ۱۹۶۸، الف لیله و لیله، ۱۹۷۴)، فریتز لانغ (مثلا م، ۱۹۳۱، و دوکتور مابوسک وصیتی، ۱۹۳۳)، لیوو کاراکسک (کوتی قان، ۱۹۸۶) کی قرال لیر فیلمنده ادکار رولنده در، فیلملری؛ ویرژینیا وولفک بر قوییه سنی غوداردک فیلمنده ساحلده کوردیکمز امواج نام کتابی؛ وان غوغک بوغدای تارلاسنده قوزغونلر (۱۸۹۵)؛ جیوتونک عیسانک موتنه فریاد (۱۳۰۵ جوارنده)؛ غوداردک غویا فیلمه تتبیق ایتدیکی قرال لیر داخل شیکسبیرک آثاری؛ یا فرایسوز تروفونک فیلملرنه نه دیمه لی؟ قوشیده کی قادین (۱۹۸۱) بلکی خارج، فیلملری بعد از فلاکت فائقه موجود قالدی. ویلیام شیکسبیرزاده حامسی اوینایان آمریقالی تیاترو مدیری پیتر سللارسک، ۱۹۸۰ سنه سنده اجرا ایتدیکی قرال لیر و ۱۹۸۳ و ۱۹۸۴ سنه لرنده مدیری اولدیغی بوستون شیکسبیر قومپانیاسنده تمثیل ایتدیکی شیکسبیر تیاترولری داخل، آثاری غوداردک بحث ایتدیکی فلاکت فائقه جه استرداد ایدنلردن عد اولینه ییلر می؟ اولینه مز. نورمان مایلرک، ۱۹۸۷ اولنده نشر ایتدیکی کتابلر و داخی غوداردک قرال لیرینه تحریر ایتدیکی فیلم تیاترو سی غوداردک علان ایتدیکی فلاکت فائقه آخرنده استرداد ایتمش میدر؟ فیلم تیاترو سی استرداد ایتمه مشه بکز، شوپله کی شیکسبیرک تیاتروسینک کندوسی استرداد ایتمدیکی و احیاسی یولنده شیکسبیرزاده حامسک سعینه محتاج اولدیغندن ناشی بر موافقه واصل اولاییلز، فقط بو تیاتردن

بر چوق مکالمه مایلرک تیاترو اوپوندن اقتباس ایتدیکی فیلم حکایه سی واسطه سیله ایکی قهرمان، دون لئارو (اختیار بر اشقیا) و دوختری قوردلیا، ایچون خاضر ایدی، و محیا تیاتروده ظهور ایتدیگر: ”اختیار آدمک دوختری صاغ اولسن، بنم [شیکسبیرزاده حامس] یدمه بر طاقم مکالمه موجود.“ بر فلاکت فائقه وقوعندن صوکره عنعنه نک استردادی نظری اعتباره آلیر ایسه ک، بر صنعتکارک یاخود مألنک وظائفندن بری نه در؟ ”بنوم وظیفه م: اک اول اجدامک آثاری اولق اوزره، غائب اولش اولانی تقرار ضبط ایتمک... آه، بو آراده، بنوم اسمم شیکسبیرزاده حامس.“ بو قهرمانک عنندنه، غودارد طرفندن جانلاندرلان بر پروفوسور، پیلاکی، که تدقیقاتک کندو تدقیقاته مشبه اولدیغینی ایشیتمشدر کندوسنه رفاقات ایتمکه در. غوداردک قرال لیرنده، تقرار نشأت ایدن صولغون بر چیچکه پراکنده یاپراقلرنک تقرار اتصال اتدیکی تصویر قوکتونک اورفوسک وصیتی (۱۹۶۵) فیلمنده کی افتراس ایدمش چیچکک احیاسندن اقتباس میدر؟ بو چیچکی احیا تشبثی میدر؟ قوکتونک نا-موتا خصوصنده که فیلمنده که چیچکک احیاسنک تصویرنک احیاسی میدر؟ مؤخری طوغریدر. غوداردک قرال لیری، فیلمجیلر و/یاخود صنعتکاران و/یاخود مألنان و/یاخود متفکرانک بر فلاکت فائقه خصوصنده کی وظیفه ثلاثه سنی تحقیق ایدر: ۱- بر استرداد عنعنه و بالمناصبه بر فلاکت فائقه وقوعنی اظهار ایلمک. قرال لیر: ”بن، کم نه وقت موتا، کم نه وقت محیا واقفم“ (ویلیام شیکسبیر، قرال لیر ۵-۳-۲۶۰)؛ بر فلاکت فائقه نک عقبنده، بر شیئک نه زمان موجود اولدیغنی، و استردادی سببیه نه زمان نا موجود اولدیغنی و قوفی مهمدر: تیاترو اوپونی فیلمجیلری، و مألنی نورمان مایلر ایچون ظاهراً موجود ایکن اهالی فلاکت فائقه ایچون آرتیق موجود دکلدز: ۲- بر فلاکت فائقه واسطه سیله استرداد ایتمش اولانی احیا که دانیمارکاده ایکن هاملتک ”موجود اولق یاخود اولمق“ لفظنی تکرار کشف ایدن، و قرال لیری بالکلیه دکل ایسه ده، اثرک %۹۹نی تکرار کشف حفید ویلیام شیکسبیر اولان قهرمانه تعیین ایدمش بر وظیفه در—اوت، استرداد عنعنه دن صوکره، ”تصویر، بر قیام وقتنده ظهور ایده جکدر“ (بو لفظی پروفوسور پیلاکی عزیز پوله عطف ایدر)؛<sup>۳</sup> ۳- و، بعض مشوم دورلرده، فلاکت فائقه نک مختلف کیمیاخانه لرده و/یاخود دولت یا خارج دولت محضی فعالیتلرده، الخ، ترتیب ایدلیدیکی فیلمک یاپلیدیغی زامان واسطه

سیله اعراض جهتیه ایماء ایدملی در، یعنی فیلم قریباً ظهوری ملحوظ فلاکتِ فائقه نک منعی باینده اقل مقدار معاصرانک مدققانه مداخله سی ایچون مخوف بر علامت شکلنده خدمت ایتملی در.

...

اکثریا متفکر، مآلف، فیلمجی، ویدیوجی، صنعتکار یاخود شیخ عنعنه قبل الفلاکتِ فائقه یی احیایه تشبث ایدر ایکن بو مثللو مدهش وظیفه یی ایفاده موفقیت اجرا ایده مه دکلری حسنه دوچار اوله بیلرلر. لکن بر استرداد تجربه سنک موجودیتتی اک ایی بالذات کندوسی تقدیر ایدر ایسه داخی، احیا فعالیتتک موفقیتتی تعیینده افضل حاکم بلکی کندوسی اوله ممقده در. بو سببله بر فلاکتِ فائقه عقببنده واقع استردادِ عنعنه یه حساس اولیان اشخاص اکثریا بوکا حساس اشخاص مقابلنده دعواسنی یورتمکده در. زیرا بونلارک احیاده موفقیتسز لکلرنی اعلانلری سایه سنده عنعنه نک موجودیتتی خقانیت اوزره اشارتلی ممکندر— مستردی احیا اکثریا نانکور اموردندر. بعض متفکر، مآلف، صنعتکار و فیلمجنک خودپسندلکی بر فلاکتِ فائقه عقببنده استرداد ایتمشی احیا تشبثنده دکل، بو تشبثک موفقیت یا انهمی موضوعنده کندولرنی اک افضل حاکم ظنلرنده درمیان اولر (اگر کندوم احیایه تشبث ایدب مغلوبیتته قانع اولسه ایدم مذکور الفاظه مقنع اولز یاخود بو مثللو الفاظک بکا محصوص اولدیغنی فکر ایتمز ایدم!). فرانسز سینما دفترلری مجموعه سینک مایس ۱۹۸۲ تاریخلی نسخه سنده بر ملاقاتده، غوداردک، عذاب فیلمک قهرمانی فیلم مدیری ژرزیسی، تابلو ویوانلر ایچون مناسب تنور حصولنه ناقابل قالبی فیلمی تمامه ایردیره مز اولارق تمثیل ایتدوکنندن ناشی کندوسنی ریاکار حس ایتدیکنی اعتراف ایدر، زیرا کندوسی، غودارد، بو تابلو ویوانلری چکر ایکن تنوری بالعکس مناسب عد ایتمشدر. بو چفته عیارک موجودیتی ریاکارلقدن چوق محی نک کی بو موقعده بوژرزی در، موفق می یا منهزم می اولدیغنک افضل حاکمی کندوسی اولمادیغی باینده غیر مناسب مطالعه یه حمل ایدیلر و بو مطالعه موجبجه آخر موفقیتته قانع ایکن کندو تشبثک منهزم اولدیغی فکرنده در. غوداردک عذابنده فرقلی ادوار تاریخیه یه عائد فرقلی تابلو ویوانلر ایله عینی حرکتِ دوربیننک برابر موجودیتی موتانک احیاسی (یوم القارده می؟ داها طوغریسی یوم تنقید الحکم

[یا تنقید مَلْکَة الحکم می دیمه لیم؟] ده، کی بزى، قلیلاً داخی اولسه، ابطال حکم الله ایچون حاضرلر) موقعندن انتظار ایدیلجک قدر پوستمودرن دکلدر. بر فلاکتِ فائقه نک مسترد ایتدیکنی، عنعنه یی، احیایه تشبث ایچون کندونی غیر کافی تلقی ایدر ایسه، او زمان بر فصلِ جهنمک نهایتده، عنعنه یی کلیاً فسخ ایدجکدر: ”قطعیاً مودرن“ (رَمبو). عنعنه یی کندو اختیاری ایله رد ایدن یاخود اکا لاقید بر مودرنزم اصلا مطلقیت کسب ایده مز، فقط مطلقیتته تشبثده درحال مجرد بر حاله تحول ایدن اضافی بر مودرنزم اولارق توقف ایدر— ذَاةً أَوَّازٍ میالغه سی داخی بوندندر. آنجق بر فلاکتِ فائقه عقببنجه استردادِ عنعنه یی فرق ایده بیلنلر عنعنه یی احیایه سعی و جهد ایدنلر، و فقط منهزم اولانلر حقیقتاً و کلیاً مودرن اولا بیلرلر.<sup>۴</sup>

مترجمی: سلیم س. قوری

۱. ۳۱ اوجاق و ۱۱ شباط تاریخری اراسنده برلشمس ملتر پلازاده بو خصوصه بنومه بر سمپنر ویررک و اولاً ”شمی فرق ایدیورم کی بو خصوصی داها اول بر بیرده، احتمالاً جلال توفیقک اثرلرنده مطالعه ایتمش ایدم. داها اولکی مصاحبه مزده فکرلرمی آنک کلامنه، آثارنه، و مفهوملرنه مراجعت ایتمدن افاده ایدمیکم ایچون بینمزدکی هر تعاتیده جلالدن پک چوق اقتباسده بولنه جفیمدن بحث ایتمش ایدم“ (Silvia Kolbowski and Walid Raad, *Between Artists* [Canada: A. R. T. Press 2006]. 6). دبه تحریرده بولنه رق بنوم استرداد عنعنه بعد از فلاکات فائقه مفهومه بو قدر قرابت اظهار ایدن بر صنعتکاره مناسب طور مخصوص نه اوله لی؟ ایشته بو مفهومی ابراز ایتمیکم مقاله نك بو تحصیص ایدلمش نسخه سی اوله لی.

۲. اکر بر فلاکتی متعاقباً استرداد ایدیچک کتابلر، تصویرلر، و بنالر اولسه ایدی، بو وضعیت فلاکتک فوق العاده ایلدینغه دلالت ایدر میدی؟ یاخود فلاکتی متعاقب استرداد اوله بیشتی فلاکتک فوق العاده اوله بیشتدن دکل ده، هر نه قدر کندی اعلان ایتمیکم ”عنعنه“ سنی مدح ایدر ایسه ایتمسن، بر حرثک اصلاً بر عنعنه یی صاحب اوله بیشتدن می متولددر؟ اوت.

۳. حامش مترجم: بوراده مألّف مقاله، انگلیز لساننده مرائی معنی سنه ”هیپوکریت“ لفظنی، کندو ایچادی اولوب، لاتین لسانندن کم معنی سنه ”هیپو“ حرف جری و انگلیز لساننده مدقق معنی سنه ”کریتیک“ لفظنی مشکل یکی الفاظ ایله جناس غیر تام تشکیل ایتمشدر لکن مترجم مقاله بونی لسان عثمانی ده افاده دن عاجزدر.

۴. غاس وان صانت ایله وقتسز بر موقعه وقوع بولان تجربه مشترکه مسعود بر اورتاقلق اولدی. اکر بنوم توصیه می دفته آنسه ایدی، اصلنده کی هر چرچوه یی زیاده سیله هیچکوک طرزنده عینبیله حصوله کتیردیکی هیچکوک روح خاسته سی (۱۹۶۰) فیلمندن مقتبس بر فیلمه تشبث ایتمز، فقط سوفوروو طرزنده بر روح خاسته سی حصوله کتیردی، بویله جه حصوله کلن روح خاسته سی، سوفوروو آکولی (نشان رسمی، ۱۶۵۰-۱۶۵۰ جوارى)، نك رامبراند آکولندن مثللو) عد ایدیلر ایدی. بویله حائز مقصد بر فیلم سوفوروو ظاهراً حائز مقصد فقط بر چکمدن محصل ۹۶ دقیقه لق بر فیلم، سفینه روسیه (۲۰۰۲)، احتیصال ایدنجه فوقالعاده مناسب بر حال عرض ایچکدی. وان صانت هیچکوکدن مقتبس روح خاسته سی (۱۹۹۸) خصوصنده توصیه می دفته آلدیغندندر کی بو هزیمت آلود اشتراکه بناء مادر و اوغلی؛ یاخود، آرزونك شو مستور مقصودی (آنامورفیک ایکی فیلمدن منظره لر) (۴۱ دقیقه، ۲۰۰۶) نام بر ویدیو حصوله کتیردم.

۵. Nigel Andrews, “Dracula in Delft,” *American Film* 4, no. 1 (1978): 33.

۶. ”چرنوبیل نوکلار قوت کارخانه سنده ۱۹۸۶ سنه سنده وقوع بولان حادثه، نوکلار صنایعک تاریخنده کی اک معظم قضا ایدی و بلاروس، اوکراین و روس فدراسیونکنده اراضی واسعه ده کلی مقدارده تحلیله رادیونوکلئیده بائث اولدی“

http://www.iaea.org/Publications/Booklets/Chernobyl/chernobyl.pdf) و داخی  
http://www.who.int/ionizing\_radiation/chernobyl/who\_chernobyl\_report\_2006.pdf). غداردک قرال لیر فیلمنده چرنوبیل نوکلار فلاکتک عطف ایدیلن فیلملرک و عموماً آثار صناعتیکک غیبویتی بر خسار مادی تاریخینک حیالی مبالغه سندن زیاده بر فلاکت فائقه عقبنجه غیر مادی بر استرداد تلقی ایدله لیدر.

۷. مثلاً تارخوسقینک قورباننده کی آلکساندیرک خانه سی؟!

۸. [”عنعنه پالکز امتحان زماندن ماده و صورتاً نجات ایدن دکلدر: ازمان مطرده ده بر مقدار صنعی تحصیلات قاعده کذارى بر رغماً بر هیئت پراکنده شکل اولان عنعنه فلاکت فائقه عقبنده تعریف و تصویر ایدیلر. عنعنه فلاکت فائقه دن اتحاداً ماده نجات ایدر، کی آنک غیر مادی مستردینه سبب همان بو فلاکت ایدی، و داخی عقبنجه صنعتکاران، مؤلفان و متفکرانجه احیا قسمته حائزدی. اعضای عنعنه عد ایدیلن کثیر مقدار آثارک فلاکت فائقه عقبنجه موجودیتلریله اعضای عنعنه دن ایلدیلر فاش اولینر؛ بالعقس عنعنه به شدت ایله هجوم ایدن کثیر مقدار مودرنست آثار صناعتی، مع الکراهه اقاعد تدریجیه حصولندن مقدم، استردادلری ایله عنعنه نك اعضاسندن اولدققرنی افشا ایدرلر.“ جلال توفیق، استرداد عنعنه بعد از فلاکت فائقه

(*The Withdrawal of Tradition Past a Surpassing Disaster*, Forthcoming Books, 2009, <http://www.jalaltoufic.com/downloads.htm>, 63–64).]

۹. بوراده مقصد قطعاً مودرن مطلق مودرن اضافیدن اعلى یه ترفیع دکل، فقطبو ایکسنی تقریق ایتمکدر.

## Forthcoming Books

When the editors of *Indicated by Signs: Contested Public Space, Gendered Bodies, and Hidden Sites of Trauma in Contemporary Visual Art Practices*,<sup>143</sup> in which my essay “Credits Included” was to be included, informed me that the publication is going to be bilingual, in English and Arabic, I indicated to them my refusal that my essay be translated to Arabic and emailed them the following caveat in lieu of the translation: “Recently, when I told the organizer of a cultural forum in Lebanon that I do not feel it is appropriate to translate the text I was to read, she responded vehemently, ‘I must insist that it be translated to Arabic since I consider your work very important. Don’t you care about Arabs?’ Yes, I very much care about many Arabs. And yet ... Does it matter that the text in this book, a revised edition of an earlier essay, is part of a book published by Forthcoming Books? What ought one of the implications be regarding a text published by Forthcoming Books? One of the implications ought to be that judging whether to translate it should take into consideration not only whether it is important, but also whether it is *forthcoming too in relation to translation*. In case the text is forthcoming also in relation to translation, then to translate it would indicate a mistake concerning its temporality and would therefore be a mistranslation. *I would prefer not to* (as Melville’s Bartleby would put it) have an Arabic translation of *The Withdrawal of Tradition Paŕt a Surpassing Disaster* yet.” The “Author’s Note” to the French translation of the latter book qualifies the penultimate sentence of the caveat thus: “—unless one does so through an untimely collaboration with the

future; indeed, no valid translation of the forthcoming, for example of the Nietzsche who wrote, ‘What I relate is the history of the next two centuries. I describe what is coming, what can no longer come differently: the advent of nihilism,’ can be accomplished without an untimely collaboration with the future.”

If I sometimes have qualms about giving a lecture on a concept included in one of my books that have already been published by Forthcoming Books or in my book *Forthcoming* (Atelos, 2000), it is not because it has already been published, in some cases more than a decade ago, but because it is still forthcoming, yet to become available (the concept of the *withdrawal* of tradition past a surpassing disaster, thus of the unavailability of what seems to be available, proved to be forthcoming and thus was itself not available for years). Would the respective intervals between the first and second editions of my first three books have also served to measure the lag of most people to these books? Not if even the second edition, for example of *Over-Sensitivity*, is still forthcoming, as its publication by Forthcoming Books implies (judging by how little effect my first and main essay on dance, “The Subtle Dancer,” published originally in the first edition of *Over-Sensitivity*, 1996, has had on them, choreographers and dancers, including the ones described as contemporary, are fifteen years behind my writings). Whereas what is forthcoming in common sense parlance refers to what is soon to be published, forthcoming in my sense refers to books that continue to be forthcoming even after their publication (*The Will to Power: Attempt at a Revaluation of All Values* was around 1889 “forthcoming,” in the sense of soon to be published, had Nietzsche, a thinker who was on a writing

spree in 1888, a year in which he finished four great books, not been struck with a psychotic breakdown; but, more radically, this book continued to be forthcoming even after its publication—and translation: “What I relate is the history of the next two centuries. I describe what is coming, what can no longer come differently: the advent of nihilism”)—the upper bound on their continuing to be forthcoming after their publication is the full presence of the messiah. Under what imprint are those of my books that were published by Forthcoming Books going to be available once the messiah appears since with his complete coming it is no longer going to be the case that they are forthcoming?

In the Middle East, so much remains in abeyance, and not only from the past, which is still to a large extent in the form of unedited ancient manuscripts: there is additionally the essentially forthcoming, i.e., that which remains forthcoming even after its publication (for example my book *Forthcoming*, 2000, with its messianic title); the withdrawn following the surpassing disasters that have affected this area and culture (while Munīr Bashīr’s performance of *Maqām Kurd* is listed in the music credits of my *Credits Included: A Video in Red and Green* [1995], at no point is it audible in the video); and last and least the censored. Is what belongs to the present, what is still forthcoming to those who lag behind the time in which they are living, specifically censored? No; censorship, especially in *backward* societies, affects those writers, filmmakers and videomakers whose work, like the censors and the vast majority of other humans, lags behind the time in which they live. It is, unbeknownst to them, the past, to be precise what of the past was fully inscribed in chronological time, that is specifically

targeted by censors. When the present appears to be censored, it is only through a mix-up: there is almost always in writers’ books—even in the second editions of these—elements from the past, the way there are residues of the previous day in dreams (“In every dream it is possible to find a point of contact with the experiences of the previous day”<sup>144</sup> [Freud]), and it is these that are the points of contact with censors. It is as a result of these only that censorship sometimes gives the false impression that the writer and video artist and thinker are of the same time as the censor.

## Q & A

— Hans Ulrich Obrist: First about interviews. You write in the postscript of one of your rare, untimely interviews: “While I am reluctant to give and conduct interviews (this is the second one I give; in addition I have myself once interviewed a filmmaker), the people I am essentially interested in interviewing are Şūfī masters who have already died physically, as well as al-Khaḍīr, whose encounter with Moses in Qur’ān 18:65–82 is one of the most beautiful interviews”—you seem to overlook here your interview with a schizophrenic in your video *Credits Included: A Video in Red and Green*.

— Jalal Toufic: I treat the interviews I do as part of my oeuvre. That’s why I demand that I be provided with the questions in writing. Indeed, toward the end of a phone interview I recently did for the position of Chairperson of the Art Department at Cornell University, I suddenly felt that I was being uncharacteristically sloppy not to have asked, even for this kind of interview, that I be

provided in advance with the questions. Since I treat the interviews I do as part of my oeuvre, I should have included in the enumeration to which you refer interviews in my videos; in addition to my interview with a schizophrenic in *Credits Included: A Video in Red and Green*, I have also interviewed filmmaker Ghassan Salhab on the subject of insomnia in my 15-minute video *Phantom Beirut*:<sup>145</sup> *A Tribute to Ghassan Salhab* (2002).<sup>146</sup> I am basically interested in interviews that are apropos/apposite formally or at the level of the medium. Here are some examples of such interviews:

— The interview in which it is revealed that, at a very basic level, we are frequently if not constantly being interviewed. Here are two examples where the interview is insidiously interfered with by a subterranean coercive interview of the interviewee by the obtrusive (diegetic) voices(-over):<sup>147</sup> my interview with a schizophrenic in my *Credits Included: A Video in Red and Green* (1995), and Antonin Artaud's radio play *To Have Done with the Judgment of God*.<sup>148</sup>

— The interview in which the interviewee answers only by quoting the interviewer, as in Narcissus' interview with the nymph Echo, who, as a punishment for distracting Hera, Zeus' wife, with stories while the god's concubines managed to escape, could only repeat what has just been said, not initiate an utterance. At one point during one of his walks, feeling unsure of where he was, Narcissus inquired: "Is anyone here?" Echo: "Here." Looking around, but not seeing anyone, he asked again: "Why do you avoid me?" Echo: "Why do you avoid me?" She rushed toward him, but he extricated himself from her embrace, saying: "I will die before you ever lie with me!" Echo: "Lie with me!"<sup>149</sup> In this interview "the sender

... receives from the receiver his own message in reverse form" (Lacan). My own contribution to this interview, which proclaims what remains *sous-entendu* in the Greek original, underscoring the resounding pertinence of having Echo as an attendant of a mortal encountering his body's reflection, is the following: "During another of his solitary walks, he sensed her presence. He resolved not to utter any words so as not to give her the opportunity to have a conversation and an interaction with him. He soon came upon a spring. As he looked into its limpid water, he saw his image, facing him. Somehow, he felt that such a thing did not go without saying. And indeed he heard right then a voice say: 'Narcissus!' Deeply entranced by what he was seeing in the spring's water, Narcissus did not even instinctively turn away from the image to look in the direction from which Echo's sudden utterance came. But when the word 'Narcissus' was repeated, he became aware that these two calls were Echo's. But if Echo could only repeat, never initiate, then that first call he heard must be a repetition of some initial utterance of his name. Who could have been the addresser of that initial interpellation? He came to the realization that he himself must have said it (this voiceless interpellation of oneself is virtually the beginning of the interior monologue), that the circumstance that his image in the water was facing him was the result of a successful interpellation."<sup>150</sup>

— The interview where the interviewee answers only by quoting others, which is virtually the case in my "A Curt Inspired Interview around a Short Video and a Long One" in my book *Two or Three Things I'm Dying to Tell You*.

— The interview in which "the sender ... receives from the

receiver his own message in reverse form” (Lacan, “Seminar on [Poe’s] ‘The Purloined Letter’”): the encounter of Moses and al-Khaḍīr as reported in the Qur’ān provides a felicitous example of such an interview. Ibn ‘Arabī: “The shadow of a person appeared to me.... I rose from my bed and headed towards him ... I stared at him and recognized Abū ‘Abd al-Raḥmān al-Sulamī, whose spirit had incarnated and whom God had sent to me out of mercy for me. ‘... If he [Moses] had been patient, he would have seen. As it happened, he was preparing to ask al-Khaḍīr a million questions. All concerned facts that had happened to him and that he reproved when coming from al-Khaḍīr.”<sup>151</sup> As Michel Chodkiewicz observes, “The three acts that Moses reproaches al-Khaḍīr, the boring of a hole in the ship, the slaying of the lad, and the failure to demand payment in exchange of a service, correspond to three episodes of the life of Moses that do not conform externally to the norm: the crossing of the Red Sea, the slaying of an Egyptian and the watering of the herd of the girls of Shu’ayb (Jethro). Therefore al-Khaḍīr does nothing but return to Moses his own image, but Moses judges al-Khaḍīr and therefore himself according to his own state, which is the introduction of the law.”<sup>152</sup>

— The interview that reaches back to what it is etymologically: French *entrevue*, from Old French, from feminine past participle of *entrevoir*, *to see*: *entre-*, *between* (from Latin *inter-*) + *voir*, *to see*.<sup>153</sup> Here are two examples. In Wenders’ *Until the End of the World*, a scientist designs a camera that allows a blind person to see a simulation of a referential image on the condition that the latter be concurrently remembered by, seen in the mind’s eye of the one who recorded it for the camera, i.e., only if the blind person

participates in an interview. And in Bergman’s *Persona*, the close-ups result in an interview, with what was prior to the close-ups half the face of Alma and the complementary half of the face of Elisabet joining in a defaced face that sees nothing.

— The interview in which the interviewer recognizes fully that he or she comes after the interviewee, and asks his or her questions from within the universe constructed by the latter, for example John Corbett’s interview with John Cage, “The Conversation Game,” in which he tried to “construct an interview that was conceptually consistent with Cage. Inspired by a concert he and Marcel Duchamp had given in Toronto in 1968, in which acoustic signals were produced by the individual moves of a game of chess, I chose to make the interview into a game in which the questions would be selected by chance operations.”<sup>154</sup> We can re-title Corbett’s interview: “After John Cage: The Conversation Game.”

— Hans Ulrich Obrist: I am curious to know more about your dialogue with Walid Raad and eventual collaborations with other artists.

— Jalal Toufic: The exemplary case of a collaboration with an artist is that it be both a timely and an untimely one. I believe that this is the case of my collaboration with Walid Raad, with whom I have collaborated in a timely, conscious, exoteric manner, in my video *Credits Included* (1995), in which he acts; as colleagues at the Arab Image Foundation, before I resigned from this institution; and in the seminar “The Withdrawal of Tradition Past a Surpassing Disaster” we co-taught at United Nations Plaza in Berlin in 2007; but also in an untimely manner, unbeknownst to us, I through my

concept of radical closure with irruption of unworldly ahistorical fully-formed entities, and Raad through the video *Hoŝtage: the Bachar Tapes (English Version)*, 2000, produced by him and whose purported director is the hostage Bachar Souheil notwithstanding that historically there was no hostage by that name; as well as the Kahlil Gibran “document” that was projected as a slide and around which Raad’s talk “Miraculous Beginnings” at Musée Surssock, Beirut, revolved,<sup>155</sup> etc., both of which can be legitimately viewed as unworldly a-historical irruptions in the radical closure that Beirut may have become at one point. I have collaborated with Raad neither in a timely manner nor in an untimely manner on his 20-year photographic project of Beirut titled *Sweet Talk*, which remains occulted and which possibly instances a withdrawal of tradition past a surpassing disaster—for artworks, films, videos, literary works, and theoretical works to function as symptoms of a culture, it is best that they would not have collaborated in an untimely manner with each other.

— Hans Ulrich Obrist: How do your videos relate to your literary works? Is there a connection?

— Jalal Toufic: My texts and videos do not try to accomplish the same thing, but complement each other. In my books I am interested in discontinuity both in form (my book *Diŝtracted* is formally aphoristic) and content (for instance I have written on the affinity between the atomists of Islam, for example al-Ashā’ira, and cinema, where the appearance of motion results from the projection of film stills at a rate of 24 frames per second [in the silent era the rate of projection was often 18 frames per second]).

But in my videos, I mainly work with (Bergsonian) duration (for instance the twenty-minute-long shot of the car drive in ‘*Āshūrā*’: *This Blood Spilled in My Veins*, the ten-minute-long shot of the slaughter of two sheep and of the second cow in *The Sleep of Reason: This Blood Spilled in My Veins*, and the twelve-minute-long shot of my nephew sleeping in *A Special Effect Termed “Time”*; or, *Filming Death at Work*) and would like to achieve the basic continuity of a Taoist calligrapher or painter, i.e., have the *chi* (vital breath/original energy) not interrupted even when there are, exceptionally, cuts, for example between different scenes. Moreover, while I am an aphoristic writer, I am not a film/video maker of short films/videos, i.e., one who, like Artavazd Peleshian (*The Seasons*, 29 minutes), Brothers Quay (*Rehearsals for Extinct Anatomies*, 14 minutes), Kubelka, Jan Svankmajer (*Dimensions of Dialogue*, 12 minutes) can, to paraphrase Nietzsche, show in ten minutes what everyone shows in a feature-length film or video—what everyone does *not* show in a feature-length film or video; generally, the longer my video, the more substantial it is. With the exception of my book (*Vampires*): *An Uneasy Essay on the Undead in Film*, where it was a matter of dispersing the universe since it was turning into a paranoid one, in my other books I am trying to build a universe, and thus feel affined to Paul Klee’s “Art does not reproduce the visible; rather, it makes visible” (“Creative Credo,” *The Thinking Eye*). The moment one succeeds in building a universe, it detaches from this world, somewhat like the baby universes of cosmology. But in my video works, I do not have the impulse and aim to produce autonomous works, to try to create a universe, but want my videos to be, as Deleuze wrote, “reasons to

believe in *this* world.” While I have tended to be concerned with the creation of aesthetic facts in my books, I have not tried to do the same in my essayistic documentary videos—notwithstanding that the creation of aesthetic facts can happen in both fiction films and documentary films—but tried rather to document certain worldly facts while making sure to subtract all that is customarily added to make the viewer see only certain parts of the referential image, i.e., all that is added in order to subtract from the image, for example the voice-over (I also try to avoid non-diegetic special effects [speeded motion, etc.] and music partly because they imply that reality is not intense enough on its own). With the rapid advances in digital simulation and virtual reality, when we encounter reality—in the sense of the actual as opposed to simulations—at all, it will increasingly strike us as the Lacanian Real.

Given the rarity of contemporary thinking regarding film and video (Michel Chion [*The Voice in Cinema ...*], Slavoj Žižek [*Looking Awry: An Introduction to Jacques Lacan through Popular Culture; Enjoy Your Symptom: Jacques Lacan in Hollywood and out ...*], as well as the occasional essay by or interview with Jacques Rancière, Raul Ruiz, and a few others—some of whom I am sure exist but are still unknown to me),<sup>156</sup> I have offered in my books several examples “of what I regard as ‘exegesis’” (Nietzsche)—a video is prefixed in the tele-mode, at a distance, to an essay, which is in part an exegetical explication (Latin *explicāre, explicāt-, to unfold, explain: ex-, ex- + plicāre, to fold*) of it. Thus “Credits Included” in my book *Over-Sensitivity* (1996) is an exegetical explication of my video *Credits Included*; “Saving Face” and “Something I’m Dying to Tell You, Lyn” in my book

*Two or Three Things I’m Dying to Tell You* (2005) are exegetical explications of my videos *Saving Face* (2003) and *The Sleep of Reason: This Blood Spilled in My Veins* (2002) respectively; and “‘Āshūrā’; or, Torturous Memory as a Condition of Possibility of an Unconditional Promise” in my book ‘Āshūrā’: *This Blood Spilled in My Veins* (2005) is an exegetical explication of my video *Āshūrā’: This Blood Spilled in My Veins* (2002).

— Hans Ulrich Obrist: What are your unrealized films and other projects?

— Jalal Toufic: I am in the process of finishing writing a “script,” *Jouissance in Poštvar Beirut*, for a vampire film that I will co-direct with videomaker Roy Samaha, initially one of my undergraduate students, then one of my graduate ones. Some of my future conceptual film posters will be for scripts that never reached the production stage, that remained unfilmed, for example Tarkovsky’s *Light Wind* (*Ariel*), *Hoffmanniana*, and *Sardor*, as well as Shādī ‘Abd al-Salām’s *Akhenaten ...* I envision the protagonist in my coming collaborative vampire film seeing in a movie theater the aforementioned poster for Tarkovsky’s *Sardor* hung on the wall along with other posters of famous films, for example Dreyer’s *The Passion of Joan of Arc* and Angelopoulos’ *Eternity and a Day*.

— Hans Ulrich Obrist: Can you tell me about your show *Minor Art: Conceptual Film and Video Poštars*?

— Jalal Toufic: *Minor Art: Conceptual Film and Video Poštars*, presently re-titled *Minor Art: Conceptual Poštars and Book Covers*, is a work in progress began in 2000. The title draws on

Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari's book *Kafka: Toward a Minor Literature*. In his "One Manifesto Less," Deleuze writes: "With regard to his play *Romeo and Juliet*, Carmelo Bene says: 'It is a critical essay on Shakespeare.' But the fact is that CB is not writing on Shakespeare; his critical essay is itself a piece of theatre." I would also say, of my conceptual posters and book covers: they are critical essays on certain films (Dreyer's *The Passion of Joan of Arc*, Angelopoulos' *Eternity and a Day*, etc.), videos and books—except that these critical essays are themselves artworks.

In an era when, anachronistically, some publishers continue to take years to print a manuscript they have already accepted for publication, I hope to encounter more frequently cases where the delay in months and possibly years is not due to financial difficulties but is caused by the failure of the thorough publisher to find someone who is able to come up with a felicitous conceptual cover for the book. Indeed, I can imagine a publisher or author doing a second edition of a book "simply" in order to provide it with an appropriate conceptual cover, when the first cover was merely a decorative one. Let us design great conceptual covers for books; let us make it possible to have love from first sight regarding books; let us work so that a book can be *read from cover to cover*; let us prove wrong the saying: *you can't judge a book by its cover*.<sup>157</sup>

Nietzsche writes in the preface of *On the Genealogy of Morals*: "I have offered in the third essay of the present book an example of what I regard as 'exegesis' in such a case—an aphorism is prefixed to this essay, the essay itself is a commentary on it." The third essay is the exegesis of "Unconcerned, mocking,

violent—thus wisdom wants *us*; she is a woman and always loves only a warrior" (*Thus Spoke Zarathustra*). Similarly, I consider the section *Rear Window Vertigo* in my book *Two or Three Things I'm Dying to Tell You* an exegetical explication/unfolding of the four conceptual posters titled *Rear Window Vertigo* that accompany the essay, and that each is a picture worth a thousand words. To say in a book cover "what everyone says in a book—what everyone does *not* say in a book" (certainly I do not include Nietzsche in this *everyone* of common sense. Regrettably, one cannot judge any of the available English translations of Nietzsche's books by its cover). Regarding books, I much prefer a conceptual book cover to a foreword, prolegomenon, prologue, preface or postscript (I recently wrote a foreword for the third edition of Etel Adnan's *The Arab Apocalypse*; is it in lieu of a conceptual cover for that book? Will I one day do a conceptual cover for it?). And regarding films, I much prefer conceptual film posters, as preambles, to previews of the film. Indeed, I consider (conceptual) film posters to be far more a part of the film than any non-diegetic music or voice-over it may include—certainly a felicitous conceptual film poster is worth a thousand words of non-diegetic voice-over. Deplorably, design for posters is usually used as sloppily and cheaply as non-diegetic music or voice-over in film. I do not use non-diegetic music in my videos and I try to create only conceptual posters for my videos and only conceptual covers for my books. Bresson asked: "What do I start from? From the subject to be expressed? From sensation? Do I start twice?"<sup>158</sup> Let us create inspiring conceptual film posters so that an increasing number of filmmakers would answer the same two questions thus: "I start from a (conceptual) film poster."

Yes, let us create conceptual film posters that beget films (along the lines of Vertov's *films that beget films*).

The mixed-media work that was my contribution to the exhibition *Memorial to the Iraq War* at the Institute of Contemporary Arts (ICA) in London was a response to the following report in *The Economist* issue of 5 March 1998: "The full extent of his country's isolation was brought home to an Iraqi graduate student, Muhammad Darwish, when he wrote to the British Library, enclosing some of its own pre-paid coupons, and asking it to post him some photocopied material on semiotics. Back came the answer that his request could not be processed because of the trade sanctions imposed on Iraq by our government. For Mr Darwish and other Iraqi intellectuals, who are fond of the adage, *Cairo writes, Beirut publishes and Baghdad reads*, this cultural isolation, the inability to get new books, is one of the most galling aspects of their country's status as an untouchable..." My proposal for the installation was: "The 38 books listed in the British Library's catalogue under the subject of dual-use are to be checked out by the ICA for inclusion in the installation *The Dual-Use Memorial* that will be part of the exhibition *Memorial to the Iraq War* at ICA, London.<sup>159</sup> With the exception of four of them, which will be mailed to Iraq prior to the opening of the exhibition, the remaining books will be placed in glass compartments along with the British Library printouts of the online book requests indicating that they have been checked out. For the duration of the exhibition (23 May to 27 June 2007), the books will be mailed at the rate of one a day to designated libraries in Iraq. Every time one of the books is mailed to Iraq, the related receipt from the

post office (which indicates the library to which it is being sent) will replace it. By the end of the exhibition all 38 books would have been mailed to Iraq. In a corner, titled *Packing My Library*, the following three books are to be placed over sundry articles of clothing in a suitcase: Jacques Derrida's *Dissemination* (which includes "Plato's Pharmacy") (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1981); *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud*, volume XI (1910) (which includes "The Antithetical Meaning of Primal Words"); and a compendium of Arabic words with antithetical meanings, Muḥammad b. al-Qāsim al-Anbārī's *Kitāb al-Aḍḍād*. In another corner, a monitor plays a looped excerpt from the scene in Hitchcock's *Marnie* in which the hysterical eponymous protagonist reacts anxiously, as if it were blood, to the drop of red ink that falls on her sleeve. On top of the monitor is a copy of the first volume of Edward William Lane's translation of *The Thousand and One Nights*—one of the great books of dual use—which includes "The Tale of King Yunan and the Sage Duban." Due to funding limitations, the ICA borrowed only nine of these books from the British Library, and before the opening of the exhibition two were sent to the libraries of the two universities I had nominated: the University of Baghdad, and the University of Technology in Baghdad. A day after the opening of the exhibition, the British Library learnt of the work through a report in the BBC and demanded the prompt return of the seven books remaining at the ICA. I and the ICA conceded to this demand. But I asked ICA to take a life-size photograph of the shelf with the seven remaining books as well as the two receipts from the post office. The life-size photograph was then placed on the



Jalal Toufic, *The Dual-Use Memorial*, “Memorial to the Iraq War,” ICA, London, May 23–June 27, 2007. The two photographs are by Samantha Hart.

wall above the shelf from which the books had been removed, with the two receipts in the life-size photograph perfectly aligned with the two actual post office receipts. The following two occasional subtitles for *The Dual-Use Memorial* were then placed, as labels, next to the life-size photograph of the shelf with the books and receipts: *The British Library's Way of Making Us Judge a Book by Its Cover: One-Dimensional, One-Sided* (cf. *My Conceptual Book Covers for a Different, Felicitous Manner of Judging a Book by Its Cover*), aka *After Joseph Kosuth's "One and Three Chairs"* (1965).

— Hans Ulrich Obrist: You mentioned that Edward Said did not interest you. Have there been Middle Eastern pioneers you learnt from?

— Jalal Toufic: My disinterest in Edward Said extends to almost all those Arabs in whom he—so shrewd at championing mainstream Arab cultural figures who *already* wielded significant influence over or actual institutional power in various cultural industries of the Middle East—was interested: for example filmmaker Youssef Chahine, Naguib Mahfouz, who won the 1988 Nobel Prize for literature, so-called Adonis, Mahmoud Darwish ... The latter opines about poetry and about fame to an Israeli journalist in Godard's *Our Music*: "Do you know why we Palestinians are famous? Because *you* are our enemy ... We have the misfortune of having Israel as an enemy, because it has countless allies in the world; and we have the good fortune of having Israel as an enemy, because Jews are the center of interest of the world. That's why you have brought us defeat but you have given us fame"—

taking into consideration the warning of the poet Rilke, "Fame is finally only the sum total of all the misunderstandings that can gather around a new name," the basic misunderstanding fashioned by fame in the case of Mahmoud Darwish, as well as that other "most famous contemporary Arab poet," self-proclaimed Adonis (how much hubris there is in assuming this pen name by one who is *human, all-too-human* and who has not died before dying!), is to be mistaken for a poet—indeed Elias Sanbar misplaced his French translation of Darwish in a poetry book series, *Poésies* Gallimard, which includes such books as Antonin Artaud's *Pour en finir avec le jugement de dieu* (followed by *Le Théâtre de la cruauté*); Ghérasim Luca's *Héros-limite* followed by *Le Chant de la carpe* and *Paralipomènes*; Henri Michaux's *Connaissance par les gouffres* and *L'infini turbulent*; Rainer Maria Rilke's *Élégies de Duino, Sonnets à Orphée* and *autres poèmes*; and Walt Whitman's *Feuilles d'herbe*!

I have learned from and continue to be grateful to the Iranian Henry Corbin (I would like to think that he was an Iranian in a previous life or else that while he was born in France on Earth, he was born in Iran, his spiritual country, in *'ālam al-mithāl*, the World of Archetypal Form).

— Hans Ulrich Obrist: What are your visions for the Emirates—where until now there are auctions and art fairs but no new schools and knowledge production.

— Jalal Toufic: Stephen S. Roach, the Managing Director and Chief Economist of Morgan Stanley, wrote on 23 February 2007: "It has been almost three weeks since I returned from my latest trip

to the Middle East, but I am still haunted by the sight of the cranes of Dubai. According to construction trade sources, somewhere between 15% to 25% of the 125,000 construction cranes currently operating in the world today are located in Dubai... The comparison with Shanghai Pudong—China’s massive urban development project of the 1990s—is unavoidable. I saw Pudong rise from the rice fields and never thought anything could surpass it. I was wrong. Based on industry sources, 26.8 million square feet of office space is expected to come on line in Dubai in 2007, alone— ... nearly equal to the total stock of 30 million square feet of office space in downtown Minneapolis. Based on current projections, another 42 million square feet should come on line in Dubai in 2008—the equivalent of adding the office space of a downtown San Francisco.” And yet how mundane is Dubai, how still poor in universes is this emirate and the country to which it belongs. All these cranes and the buildings they are being used to construct are part of this world, but in Minneapolis and even more so in San Francisco are some great writers, poets and filmmakers who are building extra *universes* that, as Philip K. Dick puts it, don’t fall apart two days later.

## Notes

- 1 It is in such cases that I do not mind a *student for life*—indeed for several lives.
- 2 “‘What is this video about?’ This question was put to me despite the *No questions asked* included in the ad for actors and crew. Lebanese filmmakers and more so video makers should not make films or videos to try to understand and make understandable what happened during the war years. While social scientists, whether sociologists, economists, etc., can provide us with more or less convincing reasons, and mystifiers can grossly nonplus us, valid literature and art provide us with intelligent and subtle incomprehension. One of the main troubles with the world is that, unlike art and literature, it allows only for the gross alternative: understanding/incomprehension. Contrariwise, art and literature do not provide us with the illusion of comprehending, of grasping, but allow us to keenly not understand, intimating to us that the alternative is not between comprehension and incomprehension but between incomprehension in a gross manner and while expecting comprehension; and incomprehension in an intelligent and subtle manner. Great films and works of literature make even those who have researched the economic, sociological, and geopolitical reasons for the famine in Ethiopia, Sudan, and North Korea; the continuing sanctions against Iraq; the massacres in Rwanda; the ethnic cleansing in Kosovo not understand these catastrophes but intelligently and subtly. Art extracts the event from the reasons for its occurrence, even when it recreates these in a fiction. Valid films make us perceive the difference between understanding the reasons for an event and understanding the event. We who already see clearly in Lebanon the metastatic growth of buildings on shorelines and hills; the condoned emission of car pollutants such as diesel; the legalized wiretapping of phones, etc., and consequently desperately warn against ensuing disasters while so many others are oblivious of them, will nonetheless when these disasters actually happen make films and videos that show our subtle

- and intelligent incomprehension of them.... While films, especially Lebanese ones, produced by people who suffered fifteen years of war, should allow us not to understand in an intelligent and subtle manner; theory should make us see (the Arabic *an-naẓarī* means both *the theoretical*, and *al-mansūb ilá an-naẓar*, what is attributed to vision): ‘At the end of the calculations and observations it was noticed that Jupiter and Saturn went according to the calculations, but that Uranus was doing something funny. Another opportunity for Newton’s Laws to be found wanting; but take courage! Two men, [John Couch] Adams and [Urbain] Leverrier, who made these calculations independently and at almost the same time, proposed that the motions of Uranus were due to an unseen planet, and they wrote letters to their respective observatories telling them—“Turn your telescope and look there and you will find a planet.” ... and they found Neptune!’ (Richard Feynman, *The Character of Physical Law* [Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1967], 23–24). I would advance (polemically?): a cinema, especially a national one, can exist without cameras (as was made manifest by such films as Len Lye’s *Colour Box*, 1935, and *Free Radicals*, 1958, with their painted or scratched film stock; and Stan Brakhage’s *Mothlight*, 1963); without editing (Warhol’s *Sleep*); without projection, in an art for the dead à la that of ancient Egypt; but it cannot exist for long, thrive, without theoretical discourse around it. Arab filmmakers and videomakers seem to have left this task to Western critics, for instance to journals such as *Cahiers du cinéma*. This is only a stopgap” (Jalal Toufic, *Diŕtracted*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. [Berkeley, CA: Tuumba Press, 2003], 97–99).
- 3 I do not adjust my teaching to the “level” of the students, for example whether they are first-year undergraduate students or Master’s students, but simply cover less terrain in the case of the less advanced ones, for to simplify a philosopher or thinker, for example Nietzsche, is already to be teaching not him or her but his or her simplifiers and imitators.
- 4 A remake of *Splendor in the Grass* that would start with the lines of poetry as an epigraph or else where these lines are told by the teacher not to the two protagonists but to someone else who does not relay

- them to the two protagonists at any point would have been quite a different film than Kazan’s *Splendor in the Grass*, for then their lives would have provided merely an exemplification of the lines of poetry, whereas in the actual film their lives are steered in an intuitive way to appreciate these lines, to not understand them but in a keen and intelligent way.
- 5 Jacques Lacan, *Écrits: A Selection*, trans. Alan Sheridan (New York: Norton, 1977), 290.
- 6 Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*, translation and foreword by Brian Massumi (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1987), 158.
- 7 *Ibid.*, 291–292: “Why are there so many becomings of man, but no becoming–man? First because man is majoritarian par excellence, whereas becomings are minoritarian; all becoming is a becoming–minoritarian.... Let us try to say it another way: There is no becoming–man because man is the molar entity par excellence, whereas becomings are molecular.... man constitutes the majority, or rather the standard upon which the majority is based: white, male, adult, ‘rational,’ etc., in short, the average European, the subject of enunciation.”
- 8 The body without organs is a body that is no longer betrayed by the organs—though it can be betrayed otherwise. We have to choose what sort of risks we are to run.
- 9 *The Egyptian Book of the Dead: Documents in the Oriental Institute Museum at the University of Chicago*, ed. Thomas George Allen (Chicago, Illinois: University of Chicago Press, 1960), 115.
- 10 A paraphrase of the title of a 2007 Rabih Mroué performance in which Lina Saneh acts.
- 11 “Prophesizing is inseparable from the lament. The prophet is the one who laments, who says: ‘Why has God chosen me? What did I do to be chosen by God?’ In this sense, he’s the opposite of the priest. And then he laments, he laments what happens to him. 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’” (*L’Abécédaire de Gilles Deleuze* [Gilles Deleuze’s ABC primer], with Claire Parnet, directed by Pierre-André

- Boutang, 1996; the quote was translated by Timothy S. Murphy).
- 12 For a different interpretation of *Love Never Dies*, see my book *Forthcoming* (Berkeley, CA: Atelos, 2000), 30; as well as the revised and expanded edition of my book (*Vampires: An Uneasy Essay on the Undead in Film* (Sausalito, CA: The Post-Apollo Press, 2003), 284: “Does the subtitle of Coppola’s *Bram Stoker’s Dracula*, ‘Love Never Dies,’ belie that death is an end? It does only if one misses its irony. Judging from Coppola’s film, love never crosses the entrancing threshold to labyrinthine death: Dracula cannot meet his wife despite the circumstance that as someone who committed suicide, and as a consequence was withheld burial in consecrated ground, she is herself an undead.”
  - 13 Jalal Toufic, (*Vampires: An Uneasy Essay on the Undead in Film*, revised and expanded edition, 78.
  - 14 In the revised and expanded edition of (*Vampires: An Uneasy Essay on the Undead in Film*, I give the following variant interpretation: “It is because the ghost or the vampire belongs to the labyrinthine realm of undeath, a realm where people are lost, including to each other” (78).
  - 15 Is Prince Hamlet actually King Hamlet’s son? In Shakespeare’s play, Prince Hamlet says: “To be, or not to be: that is the question: / Whether ’tis nobler in the mind to suffer / The slings and arrows of outrageous fortune ... ?” (3.1). What is this outrageous fortune? It is to be an illegitimate child. If Hamlet refrains for so long from taking revenge on Claudius for killing the previous king, and Claudius refrains for so long from arranging for the murder of Hamlet notwithstanding that, according to Claudius, “His liberty is full of threats to all,” it is because Claudius knows that he is Hamlet’s real, biological father and because Hamlet intuitively feels that he is Claudius’ illegitimate son. That is also why Claudius makes Hamlet his crown prince: “We pray you, throw to earth / This unprevailing woe, and think of us / As of a father: for let the world take note, / You are the most immediate to our throne; / And with no less nobility of love / Than that which dearest father bears his son, / Do I impart toward you. For your intent / In going back to school in Wittenberg, / It is most retrograde to our desire: / And we

- beseech you, bend you to remain / Here, in the cheer and comfort of our eye, / Our chiefest courtier, cousin, and our son” (1.2)—this is not just or simply a gesture of palliating Prince Hamlet. Queen Gertrude will later say concerning Claudius: “Hamlet, thou hast thy father much offended” (3.4). Gertrude and Claudius had sexual intercourse during “the heyday,” while still youths, when “the blood” was not “tame and humble” and did not “wait upon the judgment” (3.4). Yorick, the king’s jester died the same year Hamlet was born. Is this just a coincidence? Or did he, like the king’s jester in *King Lear* (*King Lear*: “Take heed, sirrah; the whip.” Fool: “Truth’s a dog must to kennel; he must be whipped / out ... I marvel what kin thou and thy daughters are [one can very well replace “thy daughters” with “thy son” in *Hamlet*]: / they’ll have me whipped for speaking true, thou’lt / have me whipped for lying; and sometimes I am / whipped for holding my peace. I had rather be any / kind o’ thing than a fool: and yet I would not be / thee, nuncle” [1.4]), tell King Hamlet the truth of the matter: that his purported baby was born through the adultery of his wife with his brother? Yorick was murdered by King Hamlet for revealing the truth about the latter’s purported son. Were Prince Hamlet King Hamlet’s son, wouldn’t it be odd that when the ghost of King Hamlet concludes his account of his treacherous murder by his brother, he does not include his purported son among the things and people he was deprived of as a result of his murder: “Thus was I, sleeping, by a brother’s hand / Of life, of crown, of queen at once dispatched” (1.5)? When the ghost demands from Prince Hamlet, “Let not the royal bed of Denmark be / A couch for luxury and damned incest” (1.5), is he not asking him to die in the process of killing his biological father, Claudius, since were he, Prince Hamlet, the product of damned incest, to ascend to the throne, then the royal bed of Denmark would continue to be “a couch for ... damned incest”? Is it then at all surprising that Hamlet soon after contemplates suicide or that he ends up being killed along with Claudius and Gertrude?
- 16 In this sense, love, especially mad love, is to be included among creative activities; only a creator can be truly in love, let alone madly in love.

- 17 A tradition traced back to the prophet Muḥammad, but where God is the speaker.
- 18 Every artist or writer who works to construct a universe that doesn't fall apart two days later cannot but admire this universe that has not fallen apart even after 13.7 billion years—notwithstanding the presence in it, or rather at its borders, of the other universes constructed by artworks, novels (including some of the ones Philip K. Dick wrote) and thoughtful works.
- 19 Many museums and biennials include both artworks that present each “a universe that doesn't fall apart two days later” and others that have already fallen apart before they are framed, indeed “before thy gaze returns to thee” (Qur'ān 27:40)—how lacking in discernment is the museum director or the curator who places these two sorts of works together!
- 20 Bram Stoker, *Dracula*, revised edition (London: Penguin Books, 2007), 32.
- 21 *Ibid.*, 21.
- 22 The vampire most often does not experience a distance however close it may be, but rather the opposite, a kind of overwhelming encroachment of objects, particularly the sun.
- 23 Walter Benjamin, *Illuminations*, ed. and introd. Hannah Arendt, trans. Harry Zohn (London: Pimlico, 1999), 216.
- 24 Nick Huggett, “Zeno's Paradoxes,” *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy (Summer 2009 Edition)*, ed. Edward N. Zalta, <http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/sum2009/entries/paradox-zeno>.
- 25 Leonard Susskind, “Black Holes and the Information Paradox,” *Scientific American* 276, no. 4 (April 1997): 55. Nietzsche writes in the “Preface for the Second Edition,” *The Gay Science*: “Oh, those Greeks! They knew how to live. What is required for that is to stop courageously at the surface, the fold, the skin, to adore appearance, to believe in forms, tones, words, in the whole Olympus of appearance. Those Greeks were superficial—*out of profundity*.” Modern science was reluctant to accept black holes (see for example Einstein's 1939-paper “On a Stationary System with Spherical Symmetry Consisting of Many Gravitating Masses,” where he

attempted to prove that black holes are impossible), indeed appears to be appalled by the deduced singularity at the center of a black hole, where, as Kip Thorne puts it, according to quantum gravity as it is currently understood, “time ceases to exist” (“no longer can we say that ‘this thing happens before that one’”), and space becomes “a random, probabilistic froth,” or “—according to the laws of general relativity—the curvature of spacetime becomes infinitely large, and spacetime ceases to exist.” Kip Thorne: “The prospects are good to study one singularity—the birth of the universe. But is there any hope ever to find and study, or make and study, singularities in the present-day universe—*naked singularities*? The physics ‘establishment’ is epitomized by Roger Penrose ... and Stephen Hawking. The establishment's viewpoint on naked singularities is firm and unequivocal: naked singularities are forbidden. You will never find them and can never make them; there is no hope of ever studying them in the laboratory. This assertion is embodied in Roger's *cosmic censorship conjecture*, which says that all singularities except the Big Bang are hidden inside black holes—that is, they are clothed by horizons” (*The Future of Theoretical Physics and Cosmology: Celebrating Stephen Hawking's 60th Birthday*, ed. G. W. Gibbons, E. P. S. Shellard, and S. J. Rankin [Cambridge, UK; New York: Cambridge University Press, 2003], 96). Jacob D. Bekenstein: “By studying the mysterious properties of black holes, physicists have deduced absolute limits on how much information a region of space or a quantity of matter and energy can hold. Related results suggest that our universe, which we perceive to have three spatial dimensions, might instead be ‘written’ on a two-dimensional surface, like a hologram” (“Information in the Holographic Universe,” *Scientific American* 289, no. 2 [August 2003]: 60). Leonard Susskind: “String Theory, if you take it seriously, ... places every bit of information, whether in black holes or black newsprint, at the outer edges of the universe, or at ‘infinity’ if the universe has no end.... shortly before I left Utrecht for home, Gerard [’t Hooft] said something that startled me. He said that if we could look at the microscopic Planck-sized details on the walls of his office, in principle they would contain

- every bit of information about the interior of the room. I don't recall him using the word *hologram* ... The three-dimensional world of ordinary experience—the universe filled with galaxies, stars, planets, houses, boulders, and people—is a hologram, an image of reality coded on a distant two-dimensional surface. This new law of physics, known as the Holographic Principle, asserts that everything inside a region of space can be described by bits of information restricted to the boundary” (*The Black Hole War: My Battle with Stephen Hawking to Make the World Safe for Quantum Mechanics* [New York: Little, Brown, 2008], 294–298). Can we not say then: Those scientists of black holes and their singularities, who knew that they should not calculate the event horizon's radius “by the standard method of dividing the circumference by  $2\pi$ ” since “space can be so extremely warped near the singularity that the chaotic region might be millions of kilometers in radius though only a fraction of a centimeter in circumference ...” (Kip S. Thorne, *Black Holes and Time Warps: Einstein's Outrageous Legacy* [New York: W. W. Norton, 1994], 30–31), and who moved on to devise the Holographic Principle were superficial—*out of profundity*?
- 26 *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, Book 61, no. 3634 (Beirut, Lebanon: Dār al-Kutub al-‘Ilmiyya, 2002), 662; cf. *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* (Beirut, Lebanon: Dār al-Jīl, 2005), 995–996/ <http://www.usc.edu/schools/college/crcc/engagement/resources/texts/muslim/hadith/muslim/031.smt.html#031.6006>.
- 27 Jalal Toufic, *Over-Sensitivity*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (Forthcoming Books, 2009; available for download as a PDF file at <http://www.jalaltoufic.com/downloads.htm>), 236–237 (endnote 254); cf. “Kneeling Angel with Mountainous Wings (aka Toward a Title for a Gibran Watercolor Left Untitled),” in Jalal Toufic, (*Vampires*): *An Uneasy Essay on the Undead in Film*, revised and expanded edition.
- 28 “While they were eating, Jesus took bread, gave thanks and broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying, ‘Take and eat; this is my body.’ Then he took the cup, gave thanks and offered it to them, saying, ‘Drink from it, all of you. This is my blood of the covenant’” (Matthew 26:26–28). Is it not another indication of his aura when

- Jesus offers wine and bread as his blood and body—that is, offers a second body that can be near, even touched, indeed incorporated—while his body remains the realm of an aura, untouchable, let alone open to incorporation?
- 29 Muslims believe in the aura of Jesus, therefore they did not consider that others, notwithstanding the latter's assertions to the contrary, could come close enough to him to crucify him—so, it was another who was crucified: “they slew him [the Messiah, Jesus son of Mary, Allāh's messenger] not nor crucified him, but it appeared so unto them” (Qur'ān 4:157).
- 30 Nietzsche wrote, “Nothing is less Christian than the *ecclesiastical crudity* ... of a ‘kingdom of God’ that is *yet to come*, a ‘kingdom of heaven’ in the *beyond* ...” and, “The evangel was precisely the existence, the fulfillment, the *actuality* of this ‘kingdom.’” Nietzsche's words have to be qualified: Jesus Christ, who had a double nature, divine and human, belonged conjointly to an unredeemed world and to a redeemed one. In the unredeemed world, where one could encounter people possessed by demons, he sometimes performed miracles (“When evening came, many who were demon-possessed were brought to him, and he drove out the spirits with a word” [Matthew 8:16]); but in the redeemed world, he did not perform miracles—what most if not all others viewed as miraculous transgressions of natural laws should rather have been viewed by them as a vision of how the redeemed world is. “During the fourth watch of the night Jesus went out to them, walking on the lake ... Then Peter got down out of the boat, walked on the water and came toward Jesus. But when he saw the wind, he was afraid and, beginning to sink, cried out, ‘Lord, save me!’” (Matthew 14:25 and 14:30). For the interlude before seeing the wind and instinctively panicking or becoming apprehensive that he was back in the unredeemed world, Peter was already walking in the redeemed world. “Immediately Jesus reached out his hand and caught him. ‘Why did you doubt?’” (Matthew 14:31)—that “the kingdom of heaven has come near” (Matthew 3:2, 4:17 and 10:7), indeed that you are walking in it?

- 31 Is this text of mine also forthcoming, though for an additional reason?
- 32 This applies, in terms of its reception, even to the art that constructs and/or presents universes in which the signals from anything are not necessarily forthcoming, where people perceive the present, not the past.
- 33 “Profile: Ole Roemer and the Speed of Light,” excerpt from *Cosmic Horizons: Astronomy at the Cutting Edge*, ed. Steven Soter and Neil deGrasse Tyson (New York: New Press: Distributed by W. W. Norton & Co., 2001), [http://www.amnh.org/education/resources/rfl/web/essaybooks/cosmic/p\\_roemer.html](http://www.amnh.org/education/resources/rfl/web/essaybooks/cosmic/p_roemer.html).
- 34 Things bombard us at a quicker and quicker pace, but, given that light has a finite speed of 299,792,458 meters per second in a vacuum and that ostensibly no other signal can be faster than the speed of light, they continue nonetheless to be forthcoming, however minimal the delay.
- 35 In this respect, and with the exception of entangled subatomic particles, everything has aura before the full presence of the messiah.
- 36 Jean Baudrillard, *Fragments: Conversations with François L’Yvonnet*, trans. Chris Turner (London; New York: Routledge, 2004).
- 37 See “*You Said ‘Stay,’ So I Stayed*” in my book *Forthcoming*.
- 38 In one of his letters from prison, Antonio Gramsci writes of “the pessimism of the intellect and the optimism of the will” (*Selections from Prison Notebooks* [London: Lawrence and Wishart, 1971]; Gramsci attributes these words to Romain Rolland). Unfortunately we already have intellect but we do not yet have the will, which can be achieved only if we one day reach its condition of possibility, the experience of countless recurrence.
- 39 Can an event that is willed to recur eternally be repeated? Rather, one day some people are going, through virtual emulations or time travel to very similar branches of the multiverse, to repeat or to be subjected to repetition until they will the event, i.e., will it to recur eternally. Once the epochal will has become an actuality, God creates, every instant, events that are willed to recur eternally, never repeating any of His self-disclosures (Ibn ‘Arabī: “The Real does not disclose Himself in a form twice”).

- 40 The withdrawal of tradition, and of the messiah or Mahdī as part of tradition, seems to happen not on the worst day but subsequently.
- 41 *Moon in a Dewdrop: Writings of Zen Master Dōgen*, ed. Kazuaki Tanahashi; trans. Robert Aitken et al. (San Francisco: North Point Press, 1985), 145–147.
- 42 See “Variable Speed of Light,” [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Variable\\_speed\\_of\\_light](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Variable_speed_of_light), more specifically this quote by John Barrow: “[An] important lesson we learn from the way that pure numbers like  $\alpha$  define the world is what it really means for worlds to be different. The pure number we call the fine structure constant and denote by  $\alpha$  is a combination of the electron charge,  $e$ , the speed of light,  $c$ , and Planck’s constant,  $h$ . At first we might be tempted to think that a world in which the speed of light was slower would be a different world. But this would be a mistake. If  $c$ ,  $h$ , and  $e$  were all changed so that the values they have in metric (or any other) units were different when we looked them up in our tables of physical constants, but the value of  $\alpha$  remained the same, this new world would be *observationally indistinguishable* from our world. The only thing that counts in the definition of worlds are the values of the dimensionless constants of Nature. If all masses were doubled in value [including the Planck mass  $m_p$ ] you cannot tell because all the pure numbers defined by the ratios of any pair of masses are unchanged” (John D. Barrow, *The Constants of Nature; From Alpha to Omega—The Numbers that Encode the Deepest Secrets of the Universe* [New York: Pantheon Books, 2002]).
- 43 In so far as they are in a state of entanglement, do subatomic particles already belong to the world of the messiah?
- 44 While the vampire is not found where he “is,” as shown by the mirror at the location, he is “found” where he is not—he haunts.
- 45 A thorough filmmaker would have subsequently made a film in which the words “See me now!” would be unproblematic. Might this essay prompt Coppola to make such a sequel? I very much doubt it since this essay is most probably forthcoming, including in relation to him.
- 46 Friedrich Nietzsche, *Thus Spoke Zarathustra: A Book for All and*

*None*, ed. Adrian Del Caro and Robert B. Pippin; trans. Adrian Del Caro (Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 111.

47 Jacques Derrida, *On Cosmopolitanism and Forgiveness*, trans. Mark Dooley and Michael Hughes (London; New York: Routledge, 2001), 37. “Anyone who speaks a word against the Son of Man will be forgiven, but anyone who speaks against the Holy Spirit will not be forgiven, either in this age or in the age to come” (Matthew 12:32). One might interpret these words as implying that speaking a word against the Son of Man is forgivable. But that is not necessarily the case; rather, if we consider these words while keeping in mind those of Derrida on forgiveness, we can view them as indicating that speaking a word against the Son of Man is unforgivable and that by forgiving it God accomplishes the impossible. Between the first part and the second part of the aforementioned sentence in Matthew 12:32, there is going to be the pivotal event of the appearance of the will. While the God of the first part of the sentence has no will yet, the God of the second part of the sentence has will and so it makes no sense for him to forgive anyone who speaks against the Holy Spirit, because speaking against the Holy Spirit is not going to be part of the willed world, indeed is going never to have existed since it cannot be willed to return eternally.

48 Ibid., 32.

49

Jalal Toufic  
February 7, 2005

Very dear Lyn [Hejinian]:

I hope that the rise of Iraqi Twelver Shi‘ites is going to be accompanied within Twelver Shi‘ism itself, and unlike in Iran and Lebanon, by an emancipation of its esoteric tendencies from the long-reigning stultifying, exoteric ones. If Iraq cannot become one day one of the secular sites of research into and development of the coming technological singularity, which is going to be able to manipulate the laws of physics, then may the nihilistic lawlessness of present day Iraq, in large part the work of Sunni rural fundamentalists, be replaced one day by the antinomianism of some genuinely (Twelver

Shi‘ite) messianic era, one à la (Nizārī Shi‘ite) Great Resurrection of Alamut from 1164 to 1210.

50 Friedrich Nietzsche: “I beware of speaking of chemical ‘laws’: that savors of morality” (*The Will to Power*, trans. Walter Kaufmann and R. J. Hollingdale [New York: Random House, 1968], 630).

51 According to the theory of relativity, when we believe that things pass, we are mistaken (it may be that the sense of unreality one experiences in death is in part a consequence of the circumstance that the time one undergoes there is not that of the block universe of relativity, but, humorously, what most living people mistakenly consider their time to be: a fleeting time, the past vanishing irremediably moment by moment). How to make what does not pass do so? One way of doing this is by exhausting it (that’s what we have in the Many-Worlds interpretation of quantum physics, according to which all the possibilities are actualized in different branches of the multiverse). Not to be fooled by their seeming passage into failing to explore and exhaust things in order to make them really pass. Yes, the great attempt of exhaustive people is, paradoxically, to make that which they are exhausting at long last pass.

52 It should go without saying that “eternity in heaven” does not mean necessarily that the one in heaven is going to be there for eternity, moving from one joy to another; it means essentially that he or she has an eternal relation to everything that happens to him or her there, that he or she wills the eternal recurrence of everything that happens to him or her there, that he or she blesses each thing that happens there thus: “I will you to recur eternally.”

53 Contrariwise, many events that are presently considered the hallucinations of schizophrenics and the insubstantial visions of mystics (at least some of these eliciting from the one undergoing them a description in terms of eternity) are going to be considered then part of the willed, redeemed world.

54 Friedrich Nietzsche, *The Anti-Christ, Ecce Homo, Twilight of the Idols, and Other Writings*, ed. Aaron Ridley and Judith Norman; trans. Judith Norman (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 97.

- 55 Regarding the appearance of a messianic figure in a generation from which all evil has been abolished, read “*You Said ‘Stay,’ So I Stayed*” in my book *Forthcoming*.
- 56 By what twisted “devilish” reversal did people come to consider hell, actually the state of suffering of that highly spiritual being, Iblīs (“I tell you the truth: Among those born of women there has not risen anyone greater than John the Baptist; yet he who is least in the kingdom of heaven [which included the fallen angel Satan] is greater than he” [Matthew 11:11]), as the abode of the sinful, the base, the cowardly, etc.?! This reversal is a sign of the debased state to which the vast majority of humans have fallen as a consequence of Iblīs’ attempt to forget the hellish suffering of being banished from God.
- 57 Jalal Toufic, *Undying Love, or Love Dies* (Sausalito, CA: Post-Apollo Press, 2002; available for download as a PDF file at <http://www.jalaltoufic.com/downloads.htm>), 23–24.
- 58 *Ibid.*, 30–34. Are there at least two figures of the awaited redeemer: an exemplary lover of God, who tries to show that hell, which is not a locus of suffering for debased humans but the unbearable suffering of being banished from God, can be endured (at the highest spiritual level), and thus spare Iblīs succumbing to the temptation of trying to forget, and consequently do away with the need for the continuing existence of the debased states as a manner of forgetting the disaster of being banished from the Beloved, God; and the overman who goes through countless recurrence and ends up, across many suicides, willing the eternal recurrence of various events, thus making actual the epochal will, which abrogates the laws of the unwilled, unredeemed world, including the “laws” of nature, so that the ones still there then would no longer be living in the block universe of spacetime of relativity, in which all is preserved, even what is Evil, even what is unforgivable, even what cannot be willed to recur eternally, but would be living in a universe where things are transient but subsist only because they are willed to eternally recur?
- 59 On the greatest exile, refer to “And Yet the Messiah Is Not Late” in this book as well as to pages 22–34 in my book *Undying Love, or Love Dies*.

- 60 “Die before you die” (in Islam these words are attributed to the prophet Muḥammad) is not to be taken as implying that if you do not do so you will be solely alive until you die, but is rather to be understood to mean: do so in order to become aware that you are a mortal, that you are anyway dead while alive whatever you do.
- 61 *Al-ghurba al-ṣuḡhrá*—modeled on Twelver Shi‘ites’ Lesser Occultation (*al-ghayba al-ṣuḡhrá*).
- 62 *Al-ghurba al-kubrá*—modeled on Twelver Shi‘ites’ Greater Occultation (*al-ghayba al-kubrá*).
- 63 Since he is mentioned in the statement of the organizer of the seminar at the Jeu de Paume in which I participated (Ali Akay: “... *ces exilés intellectuels, lié depuis la seconde moitié du XXe siècle à la situation postcoloniale et postmigratoire, que le séminaire explore en particulier, dans le prolongement notamment de l’ouvrage d’Edward Saïd, Réflexions sur l’exil et autres essais* [Arles, Actes Sud, 2008]” [... these intellectual exiles, linked since the second half of the twentieth century to the postcolonial and post-migratory situation, which the seminar explores in particular, in line notably with Edward Saïd’s book *Reflections on Exile and Other Literary and Cultural Essays*]), I will note here one or two of the reasons for my contempt for Edward Saïd: he was concerned with and wrote badly on only the lesser exile.
- 64 Jalal Toufic, (*Vampires*): *An Uneasy Essay on the Undead in Film*, revised and expanded edition, 254.
- 65 *Autobiography of a Schizophrenic Girl*, with an analytical interpretation by Marguerite Sechehaye (New York: Grune & Stratton, 1979), 37.
- 66 Martin Heidegger, *The Fundamental Concepts of Metaphysics: World, Finitude, Solitude*, trans. William McNeill and Nicholas Walker (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1995), 271.
- 67 *Ibid.*
- 68 Jalal Toufic, (*Vampires*): *An Uneasy Essay on the Undead in Film*, revised and expanded edition, 27.
- 69 Martin Heidegger, *The Fundamental Concepts of Metaphysics*, 176.
- 70 *Ibid.*, 196.

- 71 Edward W. Said: “Is it not true that the views of exile in literature and, moreover, in religion obscure what is truly horrendous: that exile is irremediably secular and unbearably historical; that it is produced by human beings for other human beings; and that, like death but without death’s ultimate mercy, it has torn millions of people from the nourishment of tradition, family and geography?” (*Reflections on Exile and Other Literary and Cultural Essays* [London: Granta, 2001], 174). No, it is not true that the views of (the greater) exile in literature (for example in Blanchot’s fiction) and, moreover, in (mystical and esoteric) religion obscure what is truly horrendous; and no again, it is not true that the views of (the lesser) exile in literature obscure what is truly horrendous. What obscures what is truly horrendous is to misapprehend what it is to be a mortal—prattling about “death’s ultimate mercy”—and act as if one were conjointly *human, all too human* and *mundane, all too mundane*.
- 72 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.
- 73 Martin Heidegger, *The Fundamental Concepts of Metaphysics*, 204.
- 74 Ibid.
- 75 Aside from the small vignettes illustrating the *Book of the Dead*, during the New Kingdom the walls of the burial chamber were decorated with scenes of craftsmen making and using various sorts of equipment, as well of fish in marshes and ponds, trees, birds, sundry animals ... The ancient Egyptians thus surrounded the dead with a world, which could be activated magically once the mummy

- had gone through the Opening of the Mouth ceremony.
- 76 What had Jesus to accomplish in order to turn clay in the likeness of a bird into a living bird (“And [I] will make him [the Messiah, Jesus, son of Mary] a messenger unto the Children of Israel, [saying]: Lo! I come unto you with a sign from your Lord. Lo! I fashion for you out of clay the likeness of a bird, and I breathe into it and it is a bird, by Allāh’s leave” [Qur’ān 3:49])? Jesus had not only to bestow life on the clay in the form of a bird, but also to change it from worldless to poor in world, give it a deprivation of world!
- 77 For a version of what Lazarus’ subsequent existence would have been like had he been given back his self and life but not a world, one can read Leonid N. Andreyev’s “Lazarus” (1906).
- 78 From Friedrich Nietzsche’s 5 January 1889 letter to Jakob Burckhardt, in *Selected Letters of Friedrich Nietzsche*, ed. and trans. Christopher Middleton (Indianapolis, Indiana: Hackett Publishing Company, 1996), 347.
- 79 Friedrich Nietzsche: “The wisest men in every age have reached the same conclusion about life: *it’s no good* ... Always and everywhere, you hear the same sound from their mouths,—a sound ... full of exhaustion with life, full of resistance *to life*” (*The Anti-Christ, Ecce Homo, Twilight of the Idols, and Other Writings*, 162).
- 80 One can go beyond Good and Evil in at least two other manners: by achieving the will, which eliminates one of the two terms, Evil (in the sense of what cannot be willed to recur eternally—even by the redeemer)—and eradicates death; and by having a Last Judgment. The Last Judgment is, paradoxically, God’s way of implementing Artaud’s program: to have done with the Judgment of God (*pour en finir avec le jugement de dieu* [the title of his cancelled, 1947 radio broadcast]), since beyond the Last Judgment there is no longer Good and Evil given that these would still be judgments. Since there can be Good and Evil until the Last Judgment but not beyond it, Heaven and Hell are beyond Good and Evil. There’s a General Judgment (aka Last Judgment) following the individual judgment, which is related to each of us as specific if not unique, because the General Judgment is one where everyone exclaims: “Every name in history is I.” The

- General Judgment is a sort of Buddhist complement to Islam and Christianity, their Zen moment.
- 81 Friedrich Nietzsche, *The Anti-Christ, Ecce Homo, Twilight of the Idols, and Other Writings*, 162.
- 82 And if we go along with the Moslem accusation that the Gospels have altered and suppressed some of what Jesus Christ actually said and did, might it not be that Jesus Christ's call to the physically dead Lazarus, "Lazarus, come out!" was preceded by these words that are absent from the New Testament: "Call not those who are slain in the way of Allāh 'dead.' Nay, they are living, only ye perceive not" (Qur'ān 3:169)?
- 83 "The world was made through him [the Son]" (John 1:10).
- 84 Friedrich Nietzsche, *Thus Spoke Zarathustra: A Book for Everyone and Nobody*, translated with an introduction and notes by Graham Parkes (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005), 54.
- 85 That in the New Testament the resurrected brother of Mary and Martha is not asked what he saw to the other side of death indicates that the New Testament revolves around life.
- 86 Once the Holy Spirit gives him, who is then only alive and therefore really solely an animal, spirit, and God the world-creator creates a world and bestows it on him, the resurrected brother of Mary and Martha, insofar as he did not dream but *always* had a relationship to objects as such, was very different from animals.
- 87 Deleuze and Guattari comment: "You cannot go further in life than this sentence by James" (Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*, translation and foreword by Brian Massumi, 197. We are notified by Massumi in the corresponding note that the reported quote from James is actually his English translation of the French translation used by Deleuze and Guattari; the actual words in James' text are: "She knew at last so much that she had quite lost her earlier sense of merely guessing. There were no different shades of distinctions—it all bounded out"). And indeed, who has gone "further in life" than the New Testament's resurrected brother of Mary and Martha?
- 88 Friedrich Nietzsche, *The Anti-Christ, Ecce Homo, Twilight of the*

- Idols, and Other Writings*, 35.
- 89 Jalal Toufic, *Graziella: The Corrected Edition* (Forthcoming Books, 2009; available for download as a PDF file at <http://www.jalaltoufic.com/downloads.htm>), 67–68.
- 90 Those who consider that the Christ, the life, was resurrected must consider that his prior dying was his greatest miracle. Which is far more extraordinary in the era ushered in by the Christ, the life: dying or resurrection? In the case of a Christian, who is alive through Jesus Christ, the life and the resurrection, it is death, rather than resurrection, that should be accompanied by wonders. Indeed, according to the accounts of the Gospels, when Jesus was purportedly resurrected no signs and wonders appeared in the world, but when he died, "the curtain of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom. The earth shook and the rocks split" (Matthew 27:51).
- 91 Alexandre Kojève, *Introduction to the Reading of Hegel: Lectures on the Phenomenology of Spirit*, assembled by Raymond Queneau; edited by Allan Bloom; translated from the French by James H. Nichols, Jr. (New York: Basic Books, 1969), 6–7.
- 92 Diogenes Laertius, *Lives of Eminent Philosophers*.
- 93 Similarly to how in Zen Buddhism the one who attains Buddha nature (*bushō*) though satori or zazen "already" had/is Buddha nature ("All sentient beings without exception have the Buddha nature" [*Nirvāna Sūtra*]; the Sixth Patriarch of Zen Buddhism, Hui-neng, is reported to have responded to Shen-hsiu's "The body is the Bodhi tree / The mind is like a clear mirror's stand / At all times strive to polish it / And let no dust collect" with "Originally there is no tree of enlightenment / Nor is there a stand with a clear mirror / From the beginning not a single thing exists / Where is there for dust to collect?"), I died before dying in 1989, Artaud died before dying in 1934 and Nietzsche died before dying in 1889, and yet the three of us were already, prior to these dates, as mortals, dead while alive.
- 94 In a way, we have one version of an encounter between the Hegelian master and *the last man* in Leonid N. Andreyev's "Lazarus," the former in the guise of the recognized master *par excellence* of that time (outside of China, etc.), the Caesar in Rome, and the latter in

- the form of the brother of Mary and Martha resurrected seemingly by someone other than the Christ, the life.
- 95 Jalal Toufic, (*Vampires*): *An Uneasy Essay on the Undead in Film*, revised and expanded edition, 170–171 and footnote 215.
  - 96 From Friedrich Nietzsche's 5 January 1889 letter to Jakob Burckhardt, in *Selected Letters of Friedrich Nietzsche*, 347.
  - 97 My lecture at the conference "Courage!!!" organized by Chantal Pontbriand was titled "Mortal Courage: No(-thing Doing) Turning Back."
  - 98 The entry *sīn fā' rā'* in Edward William Lane, *An Arabic-English Lexicon*, 8 vol. (Beirut, Lebanon: Librairie du Liban, 1980).
  - 99 Ṣadr al-Dīn Muḥammad ibn Ibrāhīm al-Shīrāzī, aka al-Mullā Ṣadrā, *Asrār al-Ayāt*, edited with an introduction by Muḥammad Khawājawa (Beirut, Lebanon: Dār al-Ṣafwa, 1993), 219.
  - 100 One finds in Philip K. Dick's *Eye in the Sky* various examples of Gilles Deleuze's "If you are caught in someone else's dream, you are done for (*foutu*)" ("What Is the Creative Act?" 17 May 1987).
  - 101 In Islam, it is not the body that tempts one to debasement but *al-naḥs al-ammāra*, the lower self—the body, a *shay'*, a thing, is constantly hymning God: "The seven heavens and the earth and all that is therein praise Him, and there is not a thing but hymneth His praise; but ye understand not their praise" (Qur'ān 17:44).
  - 102 Abū Bakr al-Kalābādhī's *The Doctrine of the Ṣūfīs*, trans. Arthur John Arberry (Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press, 1935), 80.
  - 103 Friedrich Nietzsche, *The Anti-Christ, Ecce Homo, Twilight of the Idols, and Other Writings*, 74–75.
  - 104 *Selected Letters of Friedrich Nietzsche*, 347–348. Sigmund Freud: "The avoidance of the name of a dead person is as a rule enforced with extreme severity.... the dangers involved have given rise to a whole number of methods of evasion ... Thus the Masai in East Africa resort to the device of changing the dead man's name immediately after his death ..." (*Totem and Taboo*). Such a precautionary measure is resorted to by at least some of those who died before dying (physically), for example Nietzsche ("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 myself"), whose posthumous name became Lesseps, Chambige, etc: "I am Prado, I am also Prado's father, I venture to say that I am also Lesseps.... I am also Chambige ..."
- 105 Friedrich Nietzsche, *The Will To Power*, 3.
  - 106 Pierre-André Boutang, *L'Abécédaire de Gilles Deleuze* (with Claire Parnet), 1997. The quote was translated by Timothy S. Murphy.
  - 107 Jalal Toufic, *Undeserving Lebanon* (Forthcoming Books, 2007; available for download as a PDF file at <http://www.jalaltoufic.com/downloads.htm>), 13–14.
  - 108 The states underwent by the murdered one-night wives of King Shahrayār of *The Thousand and One Nights*, for example theft of thought; association of words on their own, according to affinities of sound; speechlessness, as happens sometimes when waking up from a nightmare, etc., were so incapacitating that it was extremely difficult if not well-nigh impossible for them to describe them, let alone to integrate them into a narrative, and so Shahrazād had to do so in an untimely collaboration with them. This untimely collaboration is all the more fitting that these dead women, on whose death Shahrazād is drawing in her narration, must have exclaimed in the (un)death realm, "Every name in history [which includes *Shahrazād*] is I," if not, "I am Dunyazād, I am Shahrazād ... every name in history is I"—in this sense Shahrazād would through this detour be collaborating, in an untimely manner, with "herself" (as other).
  - 109 Friedrich Nietzsche, *The Gay Science*, ed. Walter Kaufmann (New York: Vintage, 1974; the first German edition was published in 1882), 181–82.
  - 110 *Ibid.*, 167.
  - 111 Friedrich Nietzsche, *The Gay Science: With a Prelude in German Rhymes and an Appendix of Songs*, edited by Bernard Williams; translated by Josefine Nauckhoff; poems translated by Adrian Del Caro (Cambridge, UK; New York: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 157.
  - 112 *Selected Letters of Friedrich Nietzsche*, 346. Notwithstanding that

monotheism replaced the multiple gods of paganism with one God, the latter's death is multiple; one of these deaths took place on August 25, 1900.

- 113 Friedrich Nietzsche, *Beyond Good and Evil: Prelude to a Philosophy of the Future*, trans. R. J. Hollingdale; with an introduction by Michael Tanner, #103.
- 114 Jean Baudrillard, *Cool Memories*, trans. Chris Turner (London; New York: Verso, 1990), 3.
- 115 From Rabih Mroué <[redacted]>  
to Jalal Toufic <jtoufic@gmail.com>,  
Tuesday, December 25, 2007 at 6:30 PM  
Subject: Missing You

Dear Jalal,

Thank you so much for this very dear gift, *Undeserving Lebanon*, a new book by Jalal Toufic. Missing you in Beirut and always thinking of you; in every event we would think of your reaction, your opinion and your thoughts. I believe that you gave us a lot while we disappointed you in one way and another. I don't know what to tell you, what to say ... just thank you for writing; it means a lot to us ...

Congratulation to you and Graziella.

I wish you all the best. I hope we will meet soon.

Big hug.

Rabih

From Jalal Toufic jtoufic@gmail.com  
To Rabih Mroué <[redacted]>,  
Thursday, December 27, 2007 at 6:44 PM  
Subject: Re: Missing You

Dear Rabih: Thank you for your email. And thank you for making possible the one trip I had to take before I die, to Japan, and without which I might have returned, as a symptom of the resultant unfinished business, as a ghost—in some Noh play. Perhaps one day you'll make

possible the other trip that matters greatly to me: to Iran.

Thank you for your provocative work.

I hope to see you this summer in Beirut. Please relay my greetings to Lina.

As always, sincerely

Jalal

- 116 I find it hard to believe that I, part of this universe, am required to have a visa to enter Britain or the United Arab Emirates, while paintings or films that each *envelops* and presents a universe that doesn't fall apart two days later don't.
- 117 November 8, 2007, Istanbul. While heading to the Şişli metro stop to go to Taksim, I noticed a double-decker bus, no. 202, with the sign Taksim-Mecidiyeköy. I took it on the spur of the moment. Shortly after I was amazed to see the Ortaköy Mosque (Büyük Mecidiye Camii). What an exhilarating view as we drove over the Bosphorus Bridge! A simple mistake while heading to a cafe—the bus was going not to Taksim but to Bostanci—and I found myself in Asia instead of in Europe. After several visas that were not granted in time for the journey abroad, here in Istanbul I can so easily, without any visa, and for the paltry price of 1.25 NTL (\$1) cross daily from Asia to Europe.
- 118 While regarding Iran, one of the most pertinent questions to ask is, “Have you explored it in ‘*ālam al-mithāl* (the World of Archetypal Form), aka ‘*ālam al-khayāl* (the Imaginal World)?” regarding Japan, one of the most pertinent questions to ask is: “Have you encountered it as your fantasy exteriorized?” or, at least, “Have you encountered it as your fantasy exteriorized?” I have seen in Tokyo conjointly everything (under the sun [of the Japanese flag?]) and nothing—more or less, to wit, I witnessed in Tokyo more than everything and less than nothing (a *nothing to get excited about*), my fantasy externalized. If for me Japan is vertiginous, this has partly to do with encountering what is purported to be the most intimate, my fantasy, outside (was I, who was witnessing in Japan my fantasy exteriorized, apprehensive then that I may undergo *thought broadcasting* [We can

- discern that Shakespeare's Hamlet is not actually mad, but putting on "an antic disposition," from the fact that he can still have asides, that he does not suffer from *thought broadcasting*—in relation to the other characters]?).
- 119 Cf. Jalal Toufic, *Undying Love, or Love Dies*, 2–3: "When single, one explores a city, its museums, cafes, and bookstores with a future lover in mind as a companion. Having found her, for a while one takes her to some of these places. But then, soon enough, love gives rise to a tendency to seclusion with the beloved away from everything else."
- 120 Administrative district.
- 121 Were China to become the superpower in the second half of the twenty first century, are the Turks going to change once more their alphabet, to Chinese (this time invoking their origin in Central Asia)? What would happen to their post-1928 written tradition? Would it again become unreadable to future generations (if humans more or less as we know them presently still exist at that time)?
- 122 Geoffrey Lewis, *The Turkish Language Reform: A Catastrophic Success* (Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press, 1999), 37–38. This loss that Arabic underwent with the switch of the script from the Arabic one to the Latin one took place not only in Turkey but also in several of the Turkic republics.
- 123 Koray Degirmenci, "On the Pursuit of a Nation: The Construction of Folk and Folk Music in the Founding Decades of the Turkish Republic," *International Review of the Aesthetics and Sociology of Music* 37, no. 1 (June 2006): 58.
- 124 Geoffrey Lewis, *The Turkish Language Reform: A Catastrophic Success*, 158.
- 125 Frieda Schaechter, "The Language of the Voices," in *Language Behavior in Schizophrenia: Selected Readings in Research and Theory*, comp. and ed. Harold J. Vetter (Springfield, Ill.: Thomas, 1968), 151.
- 126 Walter Benjamin, *Illuminations*, 216.
- 127 An artist builds a universe that doesn't fall apart "two days" later and/or disperses such a universe (it is inaccurate to speak of "the art world": there is *the art scene*, which is not a world, and then there

- is not one art world but many art worlds or universes, since many a painting, film and video has built "a universe that doesn't fall apart two days later" [Philip K. Dick]; and/or resurrects what withdrew past a surpassing disaster (often after revealing such a withdrawal in the first place); and/or accompanies the one who is in a state of depersonalization (for example, Nietzsche, who accompanied art in many if not all of his books, and who began as a professor, a social person, then was "6000 thousand feet beyond people and time" when he had the thought of eternal recurrence in August 1881, thus a solitary man, and then underwent depersonalization [from his 5 January 1889 letter to Jakob Burckhardt: "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"]), a state that is estimate to each one of us in so far as, mortals, we are dead even while we live ("Most 'writers' and 'filmmakers' address the social person in us; a small number address the solitary person; but there are others still, rare, who address the one who, for whatever circumstances, is in a state of depersonalization—they accompany someone even when he has deserted himself. Since these instances of depersonalization are rare, and since one often does not wish to be reminded of them, the latter writers and filmmakers, books and films are not popular" [Jalal Toufic, *Forthcoming*, 240–241]), etc. If we take into consideration the aforementioned tasks of artists, tasks that are exceptional from the point of view of culture, then it is hard to believe that there are artists at all given how difficult if not ostensibly impossible these tasks are. Godard: "Culture is the norm, art is the exception"; "the art scene," whose agenda is presently largely set by curators, museum directors, emirs and mayors, collectors, gallerists and auction houses, and which includes academia's proliferating Art, Visual Studies and Visual Cultures departments and Curatorial Studies programs and centers as well as thousands upon thousands of famous and not so famous so-called artists, is at best a subculture, therefore still only exceptionally affined to the exceptional tasks of artists.
- 128 Friedrich Nietzsche, *The Anti-Christ, Ecce Homo, Twilight of the Idols, and Other Writings*, 140. Nietzsche also wrote: "The fact that

the stronger races of northern Europe failed to reject the Christian God does not say very much for their skill in religion, not to mention their taste. They really *should* have been able to cope with this sort of diseased and decrepit monster of decadence.... they brought sickness, age, and contradiction into all of their instincts ... I confess it, these Germans are *my* enemies ... they have on their conscience all the half-hearted (three-eighths-hearted!) measures that Europe is *sick* from [my italics] ...” (Ibid., 19 and 65).

- 129 Friedrich Nietzsche, *The Will To Power*, 3.
- 130 William S. Burroughs, *The Western Lands* (New York: Penguin Books, 1987), 3.
- 131 Friedrich Nietzsche, *The Anti-Christ, Ecce Homo, Twilight of the Idols, and Other Writings*, 76.
- 132 Naomi Klein: “In one of his most influential essays, [Milton] Friedman articulated ... what I have come to understand as the shock doctrine. He observed that ‘only a crisis—actual or perceived—produces real change. When the crisis occurs, the actions that are taken depend on the ideas that are lying around. That, I believe, is our basic function: to develop alternatives to existing policies, to keep them alive and available until the politically impossible becomes politically inevitable.’ ... And once a crisis has struck, the University of Chicago professor was convinced that it was crucial to act swiftly, to impose rapid and irreversible change before the crisis-racked society slipped back into the ‘tyranny of the status quo’” (*The Shock Doctrine: The Rise of Disaster Capitalism* [New York: Metropolitan Books/Henry Holt, 2007], 6–7). It is regretful and curious that Klein misses one of the greatest avant la lettre examples of the shock doctrine she explores in her book by the same title (a doctrine that should not be limited to disaster capitalism [“I call ... orchestrated raids on the public sphere in the wake of catastrophic events, combined with the treatment of disasters as exciting market opportunities, ‘disaster capitalism’” [Ibid., 6]): what took place in Turkey in the 1920s and 1930s, to wit, the implementation, following a series of military defeats that saw hundreds of thousands of Turks displaced from the Balkans; the defeat in World War I; the

occupation of the capital of the Ottoman Empire, Constantinople (present-day Istanbul), by the Triple Entente (Great Britain, France and Russia) from November 13, 1918 to September 23, 1923, etc., of a stupefying series of swift, sweeping and ostensibly irreversible changes: the abolition of the sultanate (1922) and of the caliphate (1924); the replacement of Istanbul by Ankara, a provincial town in Anatolia, as the country’s capital (1923), of the Sharī‘a by the Swiss civil code (1926), of the Arabic script by the Latin one (1928) ...

- 133 Jalal Toufic, *Forthcoming*, 76–98.
- 134 “Minor” is being used here along the lines of its use in “minor occultation.”
- 135 Friedrich Nietzsche, *The Anti-Christ, Ecce Homo, Twilight of the Idols, and Other Writings*, 66.
- 136 Pierre-André Boutang, *L’Abécédaire de Gilles Deleuze*.
- 137 Slavoj Žižek, *Welcome to the Desert of the Real!: Five Essays on September 11 and Related Dates* (London; New York: Verso, 2002), 58.
- 138 Orhan Tekelioglu, “Modernizing Reforms and Turkish Music in the 1930s,” *Turkish Studies* 2, no. 1 (Spring 2001): 95.
- 139 Martin Stokes, *The Arabesk Debate: Music and Musicians in Modern Turkey* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1992), 36. “Unable to hear music that they enjoyed,” people “either turned off their sets ... or tuned in to Egyptian radio” (Ibid., 93).
- 140 Koray Degirmenci, “On the Pursuit of a Nation: The Construction of Folk and Folk Music in the Founding Decades of the Turkish Republic,” *International Review of the Aesthetics and Sociology of Music* 37, no. 1 (June 2006): 58.
- 141 The title of a great book by Thomas Bernhard whose diegesis revolves around music.
- 142 It is available for download as a PDF file at <http://www.jalaltoufic.com/downloads.htm>.
- 143 *Indicated by Signs: Contested Public Space, Gendered Bodies, and Hidden Sites of Trauma in Contemporary Visual Art Practices*, ed. HAMZAMOLNAR (Aleya Hamza and Edit Molnár) and Lina Attalah (Bonn: Bonner Kunstverein, 2010), 178–195.

- 144 *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud*, volume IV (1900), *The Interpretation of Dreams* (First Part), translated from the German under the general editorship of James Strachey, in collaboration with Anna Freud, assisted by Alix Strachey and Alan Tyson (London: Vintage, the Hogarth Press and the Institute of Psycho-Analysis, 2001), 165.
- 145 Some titles ought not be given to one book or one film or one painting. *My Irruptions of the Real* is such a title; indeed, it is the title of a trilogy of my short videos: *The Sleep of Reason: This Blood Spilled in My Veins* (2002), *Saving Face* (2003), and *Mother and Son; or, That Obscure Object of Desire (Scenes from an Anamorphic Double Feature)*, 2006. *Phantom Beirut* is another such title; it should be either the explicit title if not of the collected works of a writer or filmmaker or painter, then at least of a diptych or triptych or trilogy; or the title of an anthology or film or video program of works by various authors, filmmakers, or videomakers (one of the special issues that I edited for the American journal *Discourse* has such a title: *Mortals to Death*); or the esoteric title that functions as the strange attractor of a fragmentary and/or dispersive and/or occulted book or film/video composed by a virtual montage of sections from several books or shots and scenes from several films or videos. To give the title *Phantom Beirut* to a single book or film is to either act presumptuously, or else usurp the esoteric title of the occulted or dispersed book or film/video of another video/film maker or writer—Jalal Toufic? Anyway, *Zomboid Beirut* would be a more fitting title for Salhab's first feature film as well as his most recent, 2006 feature film, for which he misappropriated the Blanchot title *The Last Man*. What applies to *Phantom Beirut* applies also to my titles *Two or Three Things I'm Dying to Tell You* and *Forthcoming*: for example, the latter, messianic title applies to at least two of my books, the book thus titled explicitly and published in 2000 and 'Āshūrā': *This Blood Spilled in My Veins* (2005), as well as to my three videos around the Twelver Shi'ite event 'Āshūrā': *'Āshūrā': This Blood Spilled in My Veins* (80 minutes, 2002), *The Lamentations Series: The Ninth Night and Day* (60 minutes, 2005), and *Lebanese Performance Art; Circle:*

- Ecstatic; Class: Marginalized; Excerpt 3* (5 minutes, 2007).
- 146 If I paid a tribute to Ghassan Salhab in the subtitle of one of my 2002-videos, it was for his short video *La Rose de personne* (a title appropriated from Celan's fourth volume of poetry), 2000, in which various shots of moving cars and walking people in Hamra street in Beirut are superimposed on a shot from a car driving from one end to the other of the same street. Would I renew my tribute in 2007? Yes, but strictly for another superimposition, which happens toward the end of his video *Poſthumous*, 2007: over a frozen image of a man on a motorcycle near blocks of concrete obstructing one of the roads of the southern suburb of Beirut in the aftermath of the most recent Israeli war on Lebanon, in which the bridges in that suburb (as well in many other areas in Lebanon) were extensively damaged, a moving shot from a car advancing on an open road is superimposed; through this superimposition, Salhab allows that frozen motorcyclist as well as any potential cars moving in the direction of those concrete blocks to nonetheless proceed past the latter. Reconstruction has to happen materially but also artistically—how easy it is to remove these physical obstructions compared to doing it artistically—Salhab has contributed as a videomaker to the reconstruction of Beirut's southern suburb. Oh, if only he would work on creating the universe that has an affinity with and makes possible these superimpositions rather than meddling, often spuriously, pretentiously and derivatively, in many other, incongruous matters.
- 147 How different are these two uncanny interviews from Ghassan Salhab's embarrassing *A Brief Encounter with Jean-Luc Godard*, a video that uses extracts from Godard's *Our Music* in which the latter discourses on the shot and reverse shot, then shows two stills—one of a man and the other of a woman—from a Hawks film, then asserts that they are actually *the same thing twice*, i.e., ostensibly not a shot-reverse shot, because the director was incapable of seeing the difference between a man and a woman—notwithstanding Godard's simplistic generalization, failing to see the difference between two women as a result of following thoroughly the suggestive logic of the close-up (Deleuze: "Ordinarily, three roles of the face are

recognizable: it is individuating [it distinguishes or characterizes each person]; it is socializing [it manifests a social role]; it is relational or communicating [it ensures not only communication between two people, but also, in a single person, the internal agreement between his character and his role]. Now the face, which effectively presents these aspects in the cinema as elsewhere, loses all three in the case of close-up.... The facial close-up is both the face and its effacement” [*Cinema 1: The Movement-Image*, translated by Hugh Tomlinson and Barbara Habberjam (London: Athlone Press, 1986), 101–102]) is the occasion for one of the greatest shot-reverse shot scenes in the history of cinema: the scene in Bergman’s *Persona* in which Alma’s removal of a snapshot of Elisabet’s son from under his mother’s hand and her narration to the latter regarding her relation to her son is shown twice, once with the camera on Elisabet, a second time with the camera on Alma (while it is a standard procedure when filming angle/reverse angle scenes to shoot with the camera first on one actor, then on the other, then to intercut the two set-ups, here the two takes, from opposite angles, are not intercut but added), so we get “the same thing twice”—on the way to getting the same nothing twice in a close-up composed of what was prior to this series of close-ups half the face of Alma and the complementary half of the face of Elisabet. Did Salhab achieve a reverse shot to the shot of Godard indulging in a monologue during which he repeatedly interrupts the ineffectual interjections of the videomaker qua interviewer, who remains off-screen, his questions barely audible? No; for that a different video is required, one that does not consist of the “same thing twice”: the form and mannerisms, such as the recurrent black screen, the intertitles, which are mostly quotes from Godard’s films, for example *Histoire(s) du cinéma* (“The Cinema Alone,” “Alone” [Godard in this video?], “The Cinema”), of *A Brief Encounter with Jean-Luc Godard* are Godardian. The video’s coda, following the credits and a black screen, in which Salhab asks off-screen, “So you don’t like dialogue?” only to get for answer, “Dialogue? Only Socrates loved dialogue. He was asked to poison himself, because of that, by dint of poisoning people ...”, reminded me of this aphorism from E. M.

Cioran’s *Anathemas and Admirations*, “The essential often appears at the end of a long conversation. The great truths are spoken on the doorstep”—except that the “truth” of this “interview” is definitely not a great one. An attentive spectator who had watched Godard’s *Meetin’ WA*, 1986 (in which Godard interviews Woody Allen), and *2 x 50 Years of French Cinema*, 1995 (in parts of which Godard interviews Michel Piccoli), where it is flagrant how little Godard listens to others, prior to watching his *Sauve qui peut (la vie)*, 1980, would be wary of considering the repeated reference of some of the latter film’s secondary characters to a music that they hear but that remains inaudible to the protagonist as a diegetic music that can be accessed only telepathically, in the -over mode—indeed in the final scene of the film, as the protagonist ends up hearing this music while lying on the ground after being hit by a car, it is revealed by a camera pan that the music is issuing from a mundane orchestra nearby.

- 148 The original broadcast of Artaud’s radio play was cancelled by Wladimir Porché, the director of the French Radio, the day before its scheduled airing on 2 February 1948.
- 149 Robert Graves, *The Greek Myths*, vol. 1 (Penguin, 1960), 286–287.
- 150 Jalal Toufic, *Forthcoming*, 180.
- 151 Ibn ‘Arabī, *Les Illuminations de la Mecque*, ed. Michel Chodkiewicz (Paris: Albin Michel, 1997), 157–158.
- 152 *Ibid.*, 311 (my translation).
- 153 *American Heritage Dictionary*, 4<sup>th</sup> Edition, 2002.
- 154 John Corbett, *Extended Play: Sounding off from John Cage to Dr. Funkenstein* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1994), 181–191.
- 155 Walīd Ra’d, “*Bidāyāt ‘ajā’ibiyya—miswadda* (Miraculous Beginnings—A Draft),” trans. Ṭūnī Shakar, *Al-Ādāb* (January–February 2001): 64–67. The document in question appears on page 65.
- 156 Since rarity is not inexistence, and setting aside here the difference between criticism and thought (see pp. 33–42 of the second edition of my book *Distraction* on this difference), when Godard asserts in Ghassan Salhab’s *A Brief Encounter with Jean-Luc Godard*, “Cinema criticism? It’s been a long time now since there’s been

any,” he shamelessly reveals his pretentious ignorance—at least in this matter.

157 Replacing it with: *you can't judge a book by its title*.

158 Robert Bresson, *Notes on the Cinematographer*, translated from the French by Jonathan Griffin; with an introduction by J. M. G. Le Clézio (Los Angeles: Green Integer, 1997), 139.

159 “*Sanction* n. Middle English, *enactment of a law*, from Old French, *ecclesiastical decree*, from Latin *sānctiō*, *sānctiōn-*, *binding law, penal sanction*, from *sānctus*, *holy*; see *sanctify*” (*American Heritage Dictionary*, 4th ed.). The UN sanctions imposed on Iraq covered dual-use items. Yet is not the word *sanctions* itself a dual-use one, a late example of Freud’s “antithetical meaning of primal words”? “Occasionally, a word can have contradictory meanings. Such a case is represented by *sanction*, which can mean both ‘to allow, encourage’ and ‘to punish so as to deter.’ It is a borrowing from the Latin word *sānctiō*, meaning ‘a law or decree that is sacred or inviolable.’ In English, the word is first recorded in the mid–1500s in the meaning ‘law, decree,’ but not long after, in about 1635, it refers to ‘the penalty enacted to cause one to obey a law or decree.’ Thus from the beginning two fundamental notions of law were wrapped up in it: law as something that permits or approves and law that forbids by punishing. From the noun, a verb *sanction* was created in the 18th century meaning ‘to allow by law,’ but it wasn’t until the second half of the 20th century that it began to mean ‘to punish (for breaking a law)’” (Ibid.). Can a memorial to a surpassing disaster, for example Iraq in the past four decades, not be problematic, a dual-use one? Might not what has no dual use, if there is such a thing, be the most dangerous?



JALAL TOUFIC is a thinker and a mortal to death. He was born in 1962 in Beirut or Baghdad and died before dying in 1989 in Evanston, Illinois. He is the author of *Distracted* (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), *Undeserving Lebanon* (2007), *The Withdrawal of Tradition Past a Surpassing Disaster* (2009), *Graziella: The Corrected Edition* (2009), *What Is the Sum of Recurrently?* (2010), and *The Portrait of the Pubescent Girl: A Rite of Non-Passage* (2011). Many of his books, most of which were published by Forthcoming Books, are available for download as PDF files at his website: <http://www.jalaltoufic.com>. He is presently a guest for the year 2011 of the Artists-in-Berlin Program of the DAAD.

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