

Jalal Toufic

The Resurrected Brother of Mary and Martha: A Human Who Resurrected God!

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“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!’” (John 12:1–7). Hearing this, the resurrected brother of Mary and Martha, who knew that when “some of the Pharisees and teachers of the law said to Jesus, ‘Teacher, we want to see a sign from you,’” Jesus 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), must have thought that Jesus would be buried alive¹ (and then lifted up to heaven three days and nights later: hadn’t Jesus said, “... when I am lifted up from the earth” [John 12:32]?), muttering, “Our Lord Jesus Christ will fall asleep dreamlessly, and then I’ll go to his tomb to wake him up.” Soon after, an acquaintance of his sent word to him, “The one you love has been sentenced to be crucified.” When he heard this, he promptly headed to Golgotha. In front of the cross on which Jesus Christ was crucified, the resurrected brother of Mary and Martha, the disciple whom Jesus loved,² soothed Jesus’ mother thus: “This crucifixion will not end in death.” But no sooner had he finished saying these words than he was confounded, for “when Jesus saw his mother there, and the disciple whom he loved standing nearby, he said to her, ‘Woman, here is your son,’ and to the disciple, ‘Here is your mother’” (John 19:26–27).³ What is impossible for Jesus Christ as one of the hypostases of the Holy Trinity? Is it to “cleanse those who have leprosy” and “drive out demons” (Matthew 10:8)? Is it to come down from the cross and save himself (“Those who passed by hurled insults at him, shaking their heads and saying, ‘You who are going to destroy the temple and build it in three days, save yourself! Come down from the cross, if you are the Son of God!’” [Matthew 27:39–41])? No. What is impossible for Jesus Christ as the life? Is it to “heal the sick” and “raise the dead” (Matthew 10:8)? No, such actions are possible for a God who is the life; therefore they are not miracles for him. What is impossible for Jesus Christ, the life,

is to die, so either, as the Qur'ân asserts ("They slew him [the Messiah, Jesus son of Mary, Allâh's messenger] not nor crucified him, but it appeared so unto them ..." [4:157]), he did not die on the cross, and the one who died on the cross was a simulacrum of him,⁴ or he could and did die on the cross only miraculously, by a miracle he performed and not as a result of the action of his ostensible executioners. The same way that, according to Rilke, "however much the farmer toils and sows, / never will he reach the transformation / of the seed into summer. Earth bestows,"⁵ however much the executioners of the life may torture him and however long they may crucify him, never will they reach the transformation of the life into death;⁶ it is the Christ who miraculously accomplishes and offers his death. Only a madman would have cried, "Whither is God? I will tell you. *We have killed him* – you and I,"⁷ in relation to the crucifixion of a God who was "the life." What most fits life is to resurrect the dead: Jesus Christ's resurrection of Lazarus (and two [or three?] others); and what is impossible for it, therefore what it can accomplish only miraculously, is to die: Jesus Christ's death on the cross. In relation to *life and death*, Jesus Christ, as the life, did what is possible for him in resurrecting Lazarus, and did, miraculously, what is impossible for him in dying (on the cross) – the latter was, strictly speaking, his one miracle. "About three in the afternoon Jesus cried out in a loud voice, '*Eli, Eli, lema sabachthani?*' (which means 'My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?').... And when Jesus had cried out again in a loud voice, he gave up his spirit" (Matthew 27:46–50; cf. Mark 15:34–37).⁸ Deeply moved in spirit and troubled, the resurrected brother of Mary and Martha exclaimed: "The Christ died, truly he died!" The brother of Mary and Martha underwent both nights of the world, the Hegelian one and the Nietzschean one. He underwent the Hegelian one insofar as he was a mortal before his resurrection by Jesus Christ, the life, that is, insofar as he was dead even while still physically alive, and, more unreservedly, when he died physically the first time, as an undead: "The human being is this Night, this empty nothing which contains everything in its simplicity – a wealth of infinitely many representations, images, none of which occur to it directly, and none of which are not present. This [is] the Night, the interior of [human] nature, existing here – *pure Self* – [and] in phantasmagoric representations it is night everywhere: here a bloody head suddenly shoots up and there another white shape, only to disappear as suddenly. We see this Night when we look a human being in the eye, looking into a Night which turns terrifying. [For from his eyes] the

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night of the world hangs out towards us⁹¹⁰; and he, like all those living then, underwent, whether aware of this or unawares, the Nietzschean one, which was foreshadowed by the unnatural night *in* the world that occurred while Jesus Christ was still alive on the cross ("From noon until three in the afternoon darkness came over all the land" [Matthew 27:45]) and that made some of those present then wonder, "Do we not need to light lanterns in the morning?" and which held sway between (the Son of) God's (miraculous) death on the cross and his resurrection. Jesus Christ's two cries in quick succession mark, respectively, the points when he first intuited and then when it became quite clear to him, who was then on the verge of dying miraculously, that if he were to be resurrected, it would not be through the direct action of God the Father. It is on hearing the words of Jesus' first cry on the cross, "*Eli, Eli, lema sabachthani?*" that the resurrected brother of Mary and Martha first had an uneasy inkling of his incredible task. Between (the Son of) God's (miraculous) death on the cross and his resurrection, his fate depended in an essential manner on a human, the resurrected brother of Mary and Martha. That was the incredible stake that was being played: the death of God in the figure of Jesus Christ could have proved to be irreparable, freeing humans from (one of the hypostases of) God,¹¹ or ushering in *the night of the world* (in a Nietzschean, if not a Hegelian sense: "Is not night continually closing in on us? Do we not need to light lanterns in the morning? ... God is dead! God remains dead!"¹²) in case they failed to become themselves gods (Nietzsche: "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?"¹³). God, who had incarnated to teach man (about) the miraculous, made the life of his Son depend on whether man would accomplish the miraculous, more specifically the resurrection of Him who made miracles possible and through whom miracles are possible, God. The resurrected brother of Mary and Martha did not at all consider burying the dead Jesus Christ – instead, he returned with Mary to his home in Bethany. Given that Jesus had instructed his followers to "let the dead bury their own dead" (Matthew 8:22), Jesus' burial had to be left to one who, as a mortal, was dead (while physically still alive). And so it was: Joseph of Arimathea (according to the Synoptic Gospels), assisted by Nicodemus (according to the Gospel of John), laid Jesus' body in a tomb.¹⁴ Thomas said to the ten other remaining, ostensible disciples, "Let us ... die with him." I assume that by this he meant: let us, recognizing that with the death of the life

we too have willy-nilly already died (symbolically), formalize this death instead of persisting in an ersatz life that is no more than a delay in the registration of our implied (symbolic) death. But the other, ostensible disciples, who had denied and/or abandoned Jesus when the latter was apprehended and crucified, dismissed his recommendation and dissuaded him from his undertaking. Thomas (also known as Didymus), who had an affinity to repetition and duplication since “*Thomas* (Aramaic) and *Didymus* (Greek) both mean *twin*,”¹⁵ had already said the same words on a previous occasion, as Jesus was on the point of heading to Lazarus’ tomb (John 11:16). Moreover, these repeated words had on that previous occasion a double meaning depending on who was referred to by “him.” If Thomas considered that Jesus Christ could be killed by humans, then, given that Jesus maintained his intention to return to Judea to resurrect his beloved disciple Lazarus “for God’s glory so that God’s Son may be glorified through it” (John 11:4) notwithstanding his ostensible disciples’ perplexed warning, “But Rabbi, a short while ago the Jews there tried to stone you, and yet you are going back?” (John 11:8), Thomas’ words would have had the aforementioned meaning: let us, recognizing that were the life to die we too would willy-nilly be dead (symbolically), not persist in an ersatz life that is no more than a delay in the registration of our imminent implied (symbolic) death. If Thomas thought that the life could not be killed by humans, then his words would have rather meant: let us die, then perhaps Jesus Christ, the life and the resurrection, who appears intent on resurrecting Lazarus, would resurrect us too and thus we would no longer be mortals, dead while alive, to become solely alive (given that Jesus’ other ostensible disciples did not follow his recommendation, indeed dissuaded him from doing so, could it be that Thomas was the only one of the Twelve who already understood that Jesus intended to resurrect the dead Lazarus? Or was it the case that the others did understand that Jesus intended to resurrect the dead Lazarus but did not care to be raised “with him” from death by the Christ?). Bethany was less than two miles from Jerusalem, and many Jews who knew that Jesus had not only “loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus” (John 11:5) but also resurrected the latter came to comfort not only Jesus’ mother but also the aforementioned three siblings in their loss. Three days and three nights after Jesus’ burial, the resurrected brother of Mary and Martha told his two sisters and Mary that he was going to visit Jesus’ tomb. Once in Jerusalem, he asked Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus, “Where have you laid him?” “Come and see,” they replied, supposing he was going to

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the tomb to mourn there. The resurrected brother of Mary and Martha came to the tomb, which was in a garden. A stone was laid across the entrance to the tomb. There was a bad odor, for Jesus had been in the tomb for three days and three nights. The resurrected brother of Mary and Martha wept. Then he was reminded of the words that his sister Martha told him Jesus had said to her at Lazarus’ own tomb, “Did I not tell you that if you believe, you will see the glory of God?” Now, to the resurrected brother of Mary and Martha, “if you believe ...” no longer meant, “if you believe in God ...” for God – in the hypostasis of the Son – was dead, but, “if you, who as a resurrected man exemplify a miracle, believe in the miraculous ...” The stone was too heavy for one man to displace. Given that Jesus had asserted, “Truly I tell you, if you have faith as small as a mustard seed, you can say to this mountain, ‘Move from here to there,’ and it will move. Nothing will be impossible for you” [Matthew 17:20]), could the resurrected brother of Mary and Martha, who had faith, have moved it? Yes, he could have. But he intuited that he should not even try to do so, for the miracle he had to do was a different one, a far greater one (one no angel could accomplish). He wondered, “Who will roll the stone away from the entrance of the tomb?” Then he saw two angels in white. “Take away the stone,” he said. So they rolled away the stone. The resurrected brother of Mary and Martha remembered Jesus Christ’s words: “Truly I tell you, if you have faith ... nothing will be impossible for you” (Matthew 17:20) and “Very truly I tell you, whoever believes in me will do the works I have been doing, and they will do even greater things than these And I will do whatever you ask in my name, so that the Father may be glorified in the Son. You may ask me for anything in my name, and I will do it” (John 14:12–14). Then, for the first time, the resurrected brother of Mary and Martha, who had until then, like his two sisters, always addressed Jesus as “Lord” (“‘Take away the stone,’ he [Jesus] said. ‘But, Lord,’ said Martha, the sister of the dead man, ‘by this time there is a bad odor, for he has been there four days’” [John 11:39] ...¹⁶), called him (in a loud voice) by his name: “Jesus, come out!” The one who was dead came out, his hands and feet wrapped with strips of linen, and a cloth around his face.¹⁷ The resurrected brother of Mary and Martha had called upon his name and given glory to the Lord.¹⁸ The two angels were astonished. The first Christian miracle by someone other than Jesus Christ was the resurrection of the dead Jesus Christ by the resurrected brother of Mary and Martha (Peter’s walk on water was not a miracle, but a momentary walk in the redeemed world).¹⁹ Notwithstanding their repeated descriptions of

themselves as witnesses of Jesus Christ's resurrection ("Peter stood up with the Eleven, raised his voice and addressed the crowd: ... 'God has raised this Jesus to life, and we are all witnesses of it'" [Acts 2:14–32]; Peter, "You killed the author of life, but God raised him from the dead. We are witnesses of this" [Acts 3:15]),²⁰ neither Peter nor any of the other ten ostensible disciples witnessed the resurrection itself, the act of the resurrection of Jesus Christ; only the resurrected brother of Mary and Martha did since he performed it. Lazarus' death was for "God's glory so that God's Son may be glorified through it" (John 11:4) not only because it would provide Jesus with the occasion to perform a resurrection (in the process confirming his assertion that Lazarus' "sickness will not end in death"), otherwise Jesus would have said the same thing about his resurrections of the young man from the town of Nain (Luke 7:11–16) and the only daughter of Jairus, a synagogue leader, a girl of about twelve (Luke 8:41–56); but also because the resurrected brother of Mary and Martha would resurrect the dead Jesus, who would thus have been "raised in glory" (1 Corinthians 15:43). How curious and anomalous it is for "Saint" Paul, who placed resurrection at the very core of Christianity ("And if Christ has not been raised, our preaching is useless and so is your faith" [1 Corinthians 15:14]), never to have mentioned Lazarus. And yet, when he wrote, "For if the dead are not raised, then Christ has not been raised either" (1 Corinthians 15:16), "Saint" Paul might have let slip something he intuited or knew but preferred not to declare, since it is one of those raised dead, the brother of Mary and Martha, who raised the Christ from death. The resurrected brother of Mary and Martha could feel that power had gone out from him and was exhausted as no human had ever been, incredibly exhausted (Jesus Christ, someone infinitely greater than him, felt that "power had gone out from him" when a woman was healed on touching his cloak ["A woman was there who had been subject to bleeding for twelve years.... she came up behind him in the crowd and touched his cloak Immediately her bleeding stopped and she felt in her body that she was freed from her suffering. At once Jesus realized that power had gone out from him" (Mark 5:24–30; cf. Matthew 9:20–21)], an infinitely lesser miracle than the one that the resurrected brother of Mary and Martha had just accomplished). Did he fall unconscious from his incredible exhaustion? At this point, *after* resurrecting (the Son of) God, he again very much needed the assistance of the two angels. They could and did intervene then and provide him with the requisite energy. Then the resurrected Jesus Christ ordered him "not to tell anyone what had happened" (the same

injunction he gave the parents of the girl of about twelve just after resurrecting her [Luke 8:56]). And so he told neither the eleven ostensible disciples, nor Mary, Jesus' (and now his) mother, nor his own two sisters. Like "many other signs," the resurrection of Jesus Christ by the resurrected brother of Mary and Martha is "not recorded in this book" (John 20:30). "Early on the first day of the week, while it was still dark, Mary Magdalene went to the tomb and saw that the stone had been removed from the entrance. So she came running to Simon Peter and the other disciple, the one Jesus loved, and said, 'They have taken the Lord out of the tomb, and we don't know where they have put him!' So Peter and the other disciple started for the tomb" (John 20:1–3). While it seems obvious why Peter would start for the tomb, why did the other disciple, the one Jesus loved, the resurrected brother of Mary and Martha, also do so? Once he was surrounded by those who were *human, all too human*, that *event*, about which the resurrected brother of Mary and Martha did not tell them anything, seemed incredible to him; indeed he could no longer believe that he could accomplish such a miracle, in a way the greatest miracle, so he, who had come to doubt that he could have resurrected someone, let alone (the Son of) God, ran to the tomb to check that what he remembered as an actual event was not some sort of hallucination. "Both were running, but the other disciple outran Peter and reached the tomb first. He bent over and looked in at the strips of linen lying there but did not go in" – for he was then sure, again, that he had actually resurrected Jesus Christ ... recently. "Then Simon Peter came along behind him and went straight into the tomb. He saw the strips of linen lying there, as well as the cloth that had been wrapped around Jesus' head" (John 20:4–7). When shortly after his resurrection, Jesus Christ appeared to his ostensible disciples, Thomas did not happen to be among them. When they reported this appearance to him, Thomas doubted their report. Why did Thomas (also known as Didymus [which means "twin" in Greek]) doubt that the one they witnessed is the resurrected Jesus Christ? Is it because while the one who performed the resurrection, the resurrected brother of Mary and Martha, was solely alive he was nonetheless not *the life* (in whose case alone one can be sure that the resurrected one is the one who died), with the consequence that one could not be sure that the one he resurrected was (the Son of) God, the Christ, and not some double of him, if not the Antichrist? Did he also reason that were the one that the other ten ostensible disciples beheld the Christ who, past his resurrection by the resurrected brother of Mary and Martha, was *glorified* by God the Father, they would have been

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destroyed by such witnessing, since to the resurrected Christ *in his glory* applied what applied to God (the Father) (“Then Moses said, ‘Now show me your glory.’ And the LORD said, ‘... you cannot see my face, for no one may see me and live.’ Then the LORD said, ‘... When my glory passes by, I will put you in a cleft in the rock and cover you with my hand until I have passed by. Then I will remove my hand and you will see my back; but my face must not be seen” (Exodus 33:18–23); cf. Qur’ân 7:143, “And when Moses came to Our appointed tryst and his Lord had spoken unto him, he 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! 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” (trans. Pickthall), and Qur’ân 2:55–56, “And when ye said: O Moses! We will not believe in thee till we see Allâh plainly; and even while ye gazed the lightning seized you”)?

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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), *‘Āshûrâ’: 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), *The Portrait of the Pubescent Girl: A Rite of Non-Passage* (2011), and *What Were You Thinking?* (2011). Many of his books, most of which were published by Forthcoming Books, are available for download as PDF files at his website: www.jalaltoufic.com. He is a participant in the 9th Shanghai Biennale, and, in 2011–2012, he was a participant in Documenta 13, the Sharjah Biennial 10, the 3rd Athens Biennale, “Meeting Points 6: Locus Agonistes—Practices and Logics of the Civic” (Beirut Art Center and Argos), “Art in the Auditorium III” (Whitechapel Gallery, GAmEC, Fundación Proa ...), and “Wunder” (Deichtorhallen Hamburg). In 2011, he was a guest of the Artists-in-Berlin Program of the DAAD.

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1
 Jalal Toufic: “‘Another disciple said to him, “Lord, first let me go and bury my father.” But Jesus told him, “Follow me, and let the dead bury their own dead”’ (Matthew 8:21–22). The grave problem with this is that very few dead people can legitimately assert: ‘I know when one is dead and when one lives’ (Shakespeare, *King Lear*, 5.3.261). The dead are far less proficient than the living at detecting whether someone is definitely dead, and hence tend on a substantial number of occasions to bury the living too. With the coming of Jesus Christ, many people became alive. Jesus Christ, ‘the resurrection and the life’ (John 11:25), made of burial alive at the moment of organic demise a fundamental condition. The two earliest examples are: Lazarus, since the latter, through his belief in Jesus, was alive (‘He who believes in me will live, even though he die’ [John 11:25]) when he was buried (‘Our friend Lazarus has fallen asleep; but I am going there to wake him up’ [John 11:11]); and, obviously as well as paradigmatically, Jesus Christ. ‘Jesus said, “This is a wicked generation. It asks for a miraculous sign, but none will be given it except the sign of Jonah. For as Jonah was a sign to the Ninevites, so also will the Son of Man be to this generation”’ (Luke 11:29–30; cf. Matthew 12:40: ‘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.’)” “Bury Me Dead,” in *Two or Three Things I’m Dying to Tell You* (Sausalito, CA: Post-Apollo Press, 2005; available for download as a PDF file at <http://www.jalaltoufic.com/downloads.htm>), 83–84.

2
 The Gospel of John refers several times to “the disciple whom Jesus loved,” for example in 21:20–23: “When Peter turned and saw that the disciple whom Jesus loved was following them ... he asked, ‘Lord, what about him?’ Jesus answered, ‘If I want him to remain alive until I return, what is that to you? ...’ Because of this, the rumor spread among the believers that this disciple would not die. But Jesus did not say that he would not die; he only said, ‘If I want him to remain alive until I return, what is that to you?’” This disciple is not named. Who was a disciple who, properly speaking, could not have been named and about whom rumors could, indeed did spread among the believers that he would not die? A disciple who was resurrected, thus who was fully alive, no longer a mortal, that is, no longer dead while alive, therefore no longer subject to over-turns: “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” (Jalal Toufic, *What Were You Thinking?* [Berlin: Berliner Künstlerprogramm/DAAD, 2011], 52–53; alternatively, see “The Resurrected Brother of Mary and Martha: A Human Who Lived then Died!” *e-flux journal*, no. 30 [12/2011], at <http://www.e-flux.com/journal/the-resurrected-brother-of-mary-and-martha-a-human-who-lived-then-died/>) – referring in John 12:1–2 to the *resurrected* brother of Mary and Martha by name, by the name he had while a mortal, was a mistake. The over-turn is both one of the conditions of possibility of the call and one of its conditions of impossibility. If we view the matter through the example of the mirror, then while the over-turn is what introduces the possibility to be called, since only those who are subject to over-turns do not naturally have their faces to themselves in the mirror (a condition that would do away with the need for the call), it is also what makes us cease calling since, by undoing the addressee’s turn to answer the call, it makes the caller come to the conclusion that he is mistaking the one who has his back to him with someone else who happens to have a very similar back. How come the image in the mirror that the dead or the schizophrenic (someone who died before dying) faced did not turn toward him? It was because the turn of the one in the mirror, a(n) (un)dead, to answer the *sous-entendu* call using his proper name was overturned by an over-turn; or because the one facing the mirror was then assuming other names, if not all the names of history as his name(s), and so called the one in the mirror by one of these other names, with the infelicitous consequence that the latter had no reason to turn, considered that it was another who was being called. Did Antonin Artaud at some point see himself with his back to himself in the mirror? Was it because he had at that point already died, as indicated in one of the letters of *Nouveaux Écrits de Rodez: Lettres au docteur Ferdière (1943-1946) et autres textes inédits, suivis de Six lettres à Marie Dubuc (1935-1937)* (1977), the one dated February 12, 1943 and signed by Antonin Nalpas: “Antonin Artaud est mort à la peine et de douleur à Ville-Évrard au mois d’Août 1939 et son cadavre a été sorti de Ville-Évrard pendant la durée d’une nuit blanche comme celles dont parle Dostoïevsky et qui occupent l’espace de plusieurs journées intercalaires mais non comprises dans le calendrier de ce monde-ci – quoi[que] vraies

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comme le jour d’ici” (Antonin Artaud died to trouble and of pain in Ville-Évrard in the month of August 1939 and his cadaver was removed from Ville-Évrard during a sleepless night like those Dostoevsky talks about and that occupy the span of several intercalary days that are not included in the calendar of this world – though they are true as the day from here)? How is it that the publisher, Gallimard, and the editor (“présentation et notes”), Pierre Chaleix, could so casually place as the epistolary book’s sole author Antonin Artaud notwithstanding that some of the letters, those from the period of February 12, 1943 to August 19, 1943, are signed by Antonin Nalpas (while Nalpas is the maiden name of Artaud’s mother, Artaud is clear that this is not why his surname became Nalpas: “Quant au nom de Nalpas, c’est comme je vous l’ai dit, le nom de jeune fille de ma mère ... Mais ce n’est pas pour cela que j’en ai parlé, et je m’étonne grandement de l’avoir fait. Car ce nom a d’autre part des origines Légendaires, Mystiques et sacrées ...”) [As for the name of Nalpas, it is, as I’ve told you, the maiden name of my mother ... But that’s not why I spoke of it, and I am greatly surprised that I did. Because this name has, on the other hand, Legendary, Mystic and sacred origins ...]? The book should have been published as coauthored by Antonin Artaud and Antonin Nalpas. The change from the first name to the second followed the death of Antonin Artaud. What happened so that the later letters of the book are signed once again “Antonin Artaud”? Was Antonin Artaud resurrected (by the Christ, whom he keeps invoking in the letters [and did the latter then tell him not to disclose that he was resurrected by him?])? If so, then, given that the resurrected is nameless, either he improperly reassumed the name he had while a mortal, or that name was thenceforth strictly a pen name.

3
 Notwithstanding Matthew 26:26–27, according to which “while they were eating, Jesus took bread, ... broke it and gave it to his disciples, saying, ‘Take and eat; this is my body.’ Then he took a cup, ... gave it to them, saying, ‘Drink from it, all of you. This is my blood of the covenant,’” Jesus’ words at the Last Supper were addressed mainly – exclusively? – to the disciple to whom he would say on the cross while referring to his own mother, “Here is your mother” (John 19:26–27), and who, also according to the Gospel of John, was present at that supper, indeed “was reclining next to him [Jesus].”

4
 If, as the Qur’ân asserts, “they slew him [the Messiah, Jesus son of Mary, Allâh’s messenger] not nor crucified him, but it appeared so unto them” (4:157),

then, fatefully, the one who was crucified in Palestine in place of Jesus Christ on a day in which “the curtain of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom” and “the earth shook” (Matthew 27:51) was someone who tried his utmost not to remain *human*, *all too human*; announced in a September 14, AD 1888 letter to Paul Deussen “an immeasurably difficult and decisive task which, *when it is understood*, will split humanity into two halves”; wrote in an October 18, AD 1888 letter to Franz Overbeck, “That the first book of the transvaluation of all values is finished, ready for press, I announce to you with a feeling for which I have no words. There will be *four* books ... I am afraid that I am shooting the history of mankind into two halves”; reiterated in a December 6, AD 1888 letter to Georg Brandes, “I am readying an event, which it is highly likely will break history in two halves”; and shortly after signed some of his final (known) letters with, “The Crucified,” Friedrich Nietzsche (see footnote 41 in my book *‘Āshûrâ’: This Blood Spilled in My Veins* [Beirut, Lebanon: Forthcoming Books, 2005; available for download as a PDF file at: <http://www.jalaltoufic.com/downloads.htm>]).

5
 Rainer Maria Rilke, *Selected Poems*, trans. Susan Ranson and Marielle Sutherland, edited with an introduction and notes by Robert Vilain (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), 195.

6
 “‘The Son of Man is going to be delivered into the hands of men. They will kill him, and after three days he will rise.’ But they did not understand what he [Jesus] meant and were afraid to ask him about it” (Mark 9:31–32); “again he [Jesus] took the Twelve aside and told them what was going to happen to him. ‘We are going up to Jerusalem,’ he said, ‘and the Son of Man will be delivered over to the chief priests and the teachers of the law. They will condemn him to death and will hand him over to the Gentiles, who will mock him and spit on him, flog him and kill him” (Mark 10:32–34); “From that time on Jesus began to explain to his disciples that he must go to Jerusalem and suffer many things at the hands of the elders, the chief priests and the teachers of the law, and that he must be killed and on the third day be raised to life” (Matthew 16:21). How mistaken were the authors of the Gospels of Mark and Matthew! – properly speaking, Jesus Christ, the life, cannot be killed. And yet concerning the ones who crucified Jesus Christ, the following can be asserted: act as if you are murdering the life, and you will be treated as if you did!

7
 Friedrich Nietzsche, *The Gay Science, With a Prelude in Rhymes and an Appendix of*

Songs, translated, with commentary, by Walter Kaufmann (New York: Vintage, 1974; the first German edition was published in 1882), 181.

8

The death (on the cross) of Jesus Christ, the Son of God, one of the hypostases of the divine Trinity, could have functioned as a step toward returning to a strict monotheism; did the Holy Spirit also die, and if so in what circumstances?

9

Hegel's words, "The human being is this Night, this empty nothing which contains everything in its simplicity – a wealth of infinitely many representations, images ... here a bloody head suddenly shoots up and there another white shape, only to disappear as suddenly. We see this Night when we look a human being in the eye, looking into a Night which turns terrifying. [For from his eyes] the night of the world hangs out towards us," apply to human beings as mortals, thus as dead even while still physically alive. Thus, Hegel's aforementioned words apply neither to the resurrected brother of Mary and Martha, who was no longer a mortal, nor to Jesus Christ, who was never a mortal. "And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden [including the tree of life] thou mayest freely eat: But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die" (Genesis 2:16–17). If the God who gave the command was the Living, then he would have expected that man would either comply with his advice not to eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil or ... eat of it only after eating from the tree of life. Mortality, not knowledge of good and evil, was the unsuspected temptation, and non-mortal man (the Hebrew 'adam) and woman fell for it! An unexpected, Gnostic disaster happened as man perversely chose not to eat first from the tree of life before eating from the mortality-causing tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thus introducing and unleashing a mortality that is not based on life, therefore a mortality of which God was unaware. If we can possibly understand that someone may choose mortality as such over life, it is because we are already fallen, mortal.... If Iblis is a disbeliever, he is so first of all in the incredible perversity of man (and woman) – he incited man to eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, but did not specify the order in which the latter opted to do so ..." (Jalal Toufic, *Vampires: An Uneasy Essay on the Undead in Film*, revised and expanded edition [Sausalito, CA: Post-Apollo Press, 2003; available for download as a PDF file at: <http://www.jalaltoufic.com/downloads.htm>], 213–214).

The incarnation of the Son of God required that were men to be given the occasion to choose again, and notwithstanding the calamity of Adam and the resultant compulsion to repeat the latter's choice, some man would opt to partake of the tree of life before or without partaking of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. Such a man would not be a mortal, that is, would not be dead even while physically alive. Jesus proved to be that man (does the circumstance that Jesus made a different choice imply that God made him alone of all humans relive that primordial choice before his earthly birth? No; it implies rather that, prior to their earthly birth, all humans, including Lazarus, were given the chance to choose again, but they made the same choice as Adam, to become mortals, to be dead while alive). Even when he miraculously died physically, and even in the tomb, Jesus Christ, the life, was not a mortal and therefore was not open to *jouissance* and did not contain a night of the world in the Hegelian sense. Jesus Christ had no knowledge of Good and Evil (he had knowledge of good and bad), so when he was questioned about evil, he was reduced to quoting mortals' words about it in the Old Testament and paraphrasing the words about it uttered by the mortals he encountered.

10

Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel, *Hegel and the Human Spirit, A Translation of the Jena Lectures on the Philosophy of Spirit (1805–6) with Commentary*, translation with commentary by Leo Rauch (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1983), 87.

11

A thorough death of the God of Christianity would involve at least three deaths: of the Son, which took place on the cross; of the Holy Spirit; and of the Father.

12

Friedrich Nietzsche, *The Gay Science*, 180.

13

Ibid.

14

Given that "Joseph took the body [of the dead Jesus Christ] ... and placed it in his own new tomb" (Matthew 27:59–60), he must have remained himself without burial – did he encounter the resurrected Jesus Christ and the latter resurrected him, i.e., made him, who was, as a mortal, dead while alive, fully alive, with the consequence that to him too applied Jesus Christ's response to Peter regarding the resurrected brother of Mary and Martha (the disciple he loved), "If I want him to remain alive until I return, what is that to you?"

15

We are informed about this twice by the footnotes to John 11:16 and 20:24 in the New International Version translation of the New Testament!

16

Cf. "Martha ... came to him and asked, 'Lord, don't you care that my sister has left me to do the work by myself?'" (Luke 10:40); "So the sisters sent word to Jesus, 'Lord, the one you love is sick'" (John 11:3); "'Lord,' Martha said to Jesus, 'if you had been here, my brother would not have died'" (John 11:21); "When Mary reached the place where Jesus was and saw him, she fell at his feet and said, 'Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died'" (John 11:32).

17

There is an insistence in Acts (Acts 2:22–24: "Fellow Israelites ... you, with the help of wicked men, put him [Jesus of Nazareth] to death by nailing him to the cross. But God raised him from the dead"; Acts 2:32: "This Jesus hath God raised up, of which we are all witnesses" ...) and in the Epistles of Paul (1 Thessalonians 1:10: "... his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead – Jesus ..."; Galatians 1:1: "Paul, an apostle – sent not from men nor by a man, but by Jesus Christ and God the Father, who raised him from the dead – ...") that God raised His Son from the dead. Given that God the Father did not raise his Son from the dead, at least not directly – the resurrected brother of Mary and Martha did – the author of Acts and Paul "are then found to be false witnesses about God, for we have testified about God that he raised Christ from the dead" (1 Corinthians 15:15).

18

Cf. Psalm 104:1: "Give glory to the Lord, and call upon his name."

19

"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 with 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?" (footnote 30 in my book *What Were You Thinking?* [Berlin: Berliner Künstlerprogramm/DAAD, 2011]).

20

Can someone who contributed in no small measure to the death of two people and who condoned their burial by youths from his fledgling community ("Now a man named Ananias, together with his wife Sapphira, also sold a piece of property. With his wife's full knowledge he kept back part of the money for himself, but brought the rest and put it at the apostles' feet. Then Peter said, 'Ananias, how is it that Satan has so filled your heart that you have lied to the Holy Spirit ...' When Ananias heard this, he fell down and died.... Then some young men came forward, wrapped up his body, and carried him out and buried him. About three hours later his wife came in, not knowing what had happened.... Peter said to her, 'How could you conspire to test the Spirit of the Lord? Listen! The feet of the men who buried your husband are at the door, and they will carry you out also.' At that moment she fell down at his feet and died. Then the young men came in and, finding her dead, carried her out and buried her beside her husband" [Acts 5:1–10]) be considered a Christian? No; Peter is no Christian, that is, he is not a disciple of the life, who on the three occasions he encountered physically dead people characteristically resurrected them and who taught others to "let the dead bury their own dead" (Matthew 8:22).

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The Resurrected Brother of Mary and Martha: A Human Who Resurrected God!