VISUAL CULTURES AS WORLD-FORMING
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AMOR FATI

A CONVERSATION BETWEEN
ADNAN MADANI AND JEAN-PAUL MARTINON

Jean-Paul Martinon

Before we address the issue of art and visual cultures, I thought it might be a good thing to start with our different approaches to the issue of world-forming and globalization. Reading them, I was struck by the fact that you and I are a little "chalk and cheese" with regards to these issues: one honing in to a bodily event (my attempt to expose how twenty-three bodies create the worlding of a world), the other, zooming out to a global perspective (your attempt to question Nancy's overwhelmingly Western-centric approach to both worlding and globalization). I think this divergence is a fundamental issue, perhaps two sides of the same coin. I will try to unpick this difference through three instances in your text.

The first one is your remark that Nancy basically insists on the present moment and that ultimately his understanding of future and past are basically anthropological constructs. I think this is a fundamental problem with the vast majority of poststructuralist thought of Nancy's generation: this absolutization of the present to the detriment of any particularization of the past through inheritances or extrapolations of the future through specific worldviews. It is as if Nancy operates in the vacuum of the present, untainted by the nasty leftovers of the past or the delusions brought on by delirious visions of the future. You even go as far as saying that Nancy deliberately refuses to allow any historical fact to become a predictor or template for any future or for any understanding of what happens next. This refusal, as you rightly say, is explained by the fact that Nancy is only interested in *his* present, and that *his* present is the one that matters to philosophy since it contains the past that we want to think

from. Now, my first question to you is therefore this: Can we do otherwise? If history is an often-fictional narrative that is eminently questionable and if the future is always already a projection from these false or truncated narratives, then from where can we depart? As you can see, I side here with Nancy. You cannot do anything other than start from your own present. Hence my attempt to start from what is closest to me, the Department of Visual Cultures. Can you do otherwise? Isn't the present the moment from which you yourself start?

This leads me to the second instance in your text where the difference in our approaches is abundantly clear: you pitch yourself as a Muslim, who on Nancy's account has been forced to progressively become Christian and therefore globalized. In doing so, you rightly question Nancy's overwhelmingly Western-centric approach to the problem of globalization. Although it is true that Nancy deconstructs Christianity specifically, isn't his point overall that it is the intertwinement of Abrahamic and Greek thought with its *offsprings* that is responsible for globalization? If this is the case, then you cannot be a mere supplement in a remote East. Your destinal trajectory, that is, your thrownness, is as constitutive of globalization as Nancy's Greco-Abrahamic hegemonic path. In this way, as a Greco-Abrahamic person, and not merely a Muslim from Pakistan, you basically embody both the worlding of the world and globalization, no? This does not subsume everything under a Greco-Christian heritage; it simply highlights a world hegemonic movement that has three specific historical origins: Jerusalem, Athens, Mecca. Perceived in this way, there is no clash of civilizations or religions, and no centers or margins, but the hegemonic domination of "the Holy One, blessed be He," that is, of an excluded Absolute Value (typical of monotheism however much it is encapsulated in a relational Trinitarian logic) from and out of which all political, cultural and socioeconomic traffic operates.

Thirdly and finally, there is the issue of otherness. At one point in your text, you accuse Nancy of "undercutting the very notion of otherness." You also accuse him of "a colossal ethnocentric arrogance" in the way he "erodes the sovereign space of otherness." It's not my intention to defend Nancy. I think for the most part you are right. There is an extraordinary refusal to address this other. My feeling is that he probably does this because he is a philosopher and as such, for good or bad, he needs to take on a universal approach. It's the classic flaw of philosophy: assuming a universality where none in fact exists. But this also makes me wonder whether when one addresses the issue of the worlding of the world, when one tackles the problem of globalization, one can do nothing but take on a universal approach. This is not an attempt to conflate the local and the global (thus creating the

"glocal," for example) or to rescue the hegemonic universality of Greek thought from which philosophy supposedly originates, but to rethink universality from the premise of what precisely exposes us, as worldings, to the unknown, to what we cannot yet fathom. If, following Nietzsche, there is no longer any God, if we are only left with the leftovers of religious beliefs but no otherworldliness, if we struggle in an increasingly predominant secular world lost in its own alienation, then we need to take on this world as ours. We are it. We are the ones facing tomorrow alone, all of us, without any "other" further down the line. There is perhaps, therefore, no ethnocentric arrogance or erosion of the other, only the taking place of the worlding of the world. If you agree on this, then the "other" is no longer conceived spatially, but temporally: that which we cannot imagine coming, not in the sense of an absolutization of the present as Nancy suggests, but as an openness to the mystery.

Adnan Madani

Let me begin by agreeing with your observation that you think worlding outward through bodies, and I start from an idea of the global, undercutting it with the particular.

My contention is that everyone, including Nancy, cannot help but have a kind of futural projection or global project embedded in their approach, no matter how committed this approach might be to a here and a now. I think you will grant this—and crucially, you add that "history is an often-fictional narrative that is eminently questionable and […] the future is always already a projection from these false or truncated narratives […]. You cannot do anything other than start from your own present."

This perhaps differentiates my point of departure from yours. I agree that history is a kind of narrative and that we project futures from these fictions, but I cannot immediately admit that this leads us with no place to start but our own present. If we are constituted historically through narratives that have the flexibility of the fictive, then we are even less constrained by our role as protagonists within them.

The various writers who have contributed to what is sometimes called the "return of the religious," have developed the idea that the most philosophically egregious of metanarratives are still part of the deep lifeworld that constitutes us and our world. I have discussed Islam, Nancy talks about Christianity, Talal Asad speaks of the secular as precisely such an environment (rather than as the simple obverse of the religious). The suspicion of grand narratives has led to the collapse of only one aspect of the cultural project of globalization: that which attached itself to some notion of inevitability, proof, rationalism,

and so on. What has survived, and reemerged even more strongly (and at times dangerously), is an understanding of humanity as historically embedded forms of life in enduring relations to texts, objects, and historical and cosmological fictions that are impervious to philosophical or scienific doubt simply because they inhabit a different epistemological field, that is, one that "hinges" differently to some basic beliefs.

I am staking a lot on an idea of "form of life" or "lifeworld" here, as I see it as being fundamental to the work of someone like Asad. I also think Nancy's concept of world takes something from these Wittgensteinian notions, and while he never makes the explicit connection, his references to the *Tractatus* throughout his work on the deconstruction of Christianity lead me to suspect that there is a genealogical link and a continued resonance between their "worlds."

So what I am suggesting is the possibility that we can move beyond our own fictive, subjective, historical positions to speak of the world from a perspective that is not anchored to a "here and now" that we can consider proper to ourselves (I'm suddenly aware of the Derridean echo of this "proper" as I write it now). However, I am not invoking in place of this rootedness a universal, neutral perspective (no matter how provisional or dialectical) but rather, an attempt to speak as an-other. Now, I realize this sounds willfully provocative or even destructive: in the postcolonial world, are we not surrounded by such extravagant appropriations of the identities of marginalized peoples? White actors playing Asian characters in Hollywood films comes to mind; what could be less ethical, less resistant to the cultural hegemony of globalized Euro-Christianity as Nancy describes it?

To distinguish my idea of the "as-another" I'll give the example of Louis Massignon, that fascinating figure who immersed himself in the Arab Muslim world, becoming a kind of Christian Muslim (where he "converted" violently and suddenly to the religion of his birth under the influence of the culture and scholarship of Islam) and developing the complex ethical system known as *badaliyya*, or substitution. (Incidentally, Derrida is the only major thinker I know of who has remarked on the profound and unexplored influence of Massignon on Levinas). Massignon's great historical work was on the equally fascinating tenth-century Muslim mystic and poet Mansur al-Hallaj, who was executed for his blasphemous teachings and for his peculiar mission to mirror the person and destiny of Christ (Nancy refers briefly but tellingly to Hallaj in a short text as well).[1] Other such fascinating figures from European intellectual history include Richard Burton, the nineteenth-century traveler who disguised himself as a Persian pilgrim in order to visit Mecca, to the extent of being circumcised. These

are deeply unfashionable figures today, after the now-canonical condemnation of Orientalist scholarship, but they help me develop my argument that *all* ethical thinking engages in this kind of substitution of subjectivities. To put it another way, I am proposing that we can move between lifeworlds and approach the most radically other (the not-here and not-now), but only through intensive practices, disciplines of the self that first shatter the self. This shattering comes up again and again: Nancy's text "Shattered Love,"[2] Wittgenstein's remark on the inadequacy of explanation to one "broken up by love," the Sufi practices that lead to *fana'a*, or annihilation of the self.

To summarize a bit, I think Nancy opens up the possibility of this gesture of thinking oneself as another (to use the title of one of Paul Ricoeur's books), but then retreats when he declares himself to be a European humanist, writing from the edges of his vanishing civilization. But as Rey Chow says in "The Age of the World Target": "Generations of non-European academics have simply taken subjective multiplicity for granted in their use of theory"[3]—and I include myself in their ranks.

"The other is the one we cannot see coming": I am completely in agreement with this, and with the re-conception of otherness as temporal rather than spatial, a future that one does not know. Does this mean that one should not attempt to know, or rather to prepare for this arrival or nonarrival? Love, as a paradigmatic relationship of others, is not just acceptance and letting-be; is it not also the wild desire to enclose the other, their future, their secrets that are secret to themselves? I suspect that art, philosophy, and psychoanalysis have just such an irrational desire to foreclose the future or radical otherness, but that paradoxically this desire allows otherness to flourish. Perhaps I have in mind as a target the stultifying multiculturalism of a just-passed era, and am straining to see an alternative. Your precise testing of Nancy's idea of worlding in the microcosm of our department has given me much to think about, and I think there is a distinct ethics (your own, more than Nancy's) that I am excited to hear you elucidate further: The world is what it is, and therefore it is our world, we must make it. How do we fit historicity or historical being into this? Can we extend this Nancyian contingency in a way that does away with the need for a concept of "otherness" or "interiority," except as psychological relics?

I am very conscious of the fact that I have not begun to answer your very perceptive questions, and I'm looking forward to being held to account for this in your response!

JPM

I completely agree with you about the place from which one starts. We can only indeed start from already constituted histories and from a perspective that is not anchored to a "here and now." In a way, as Friedrich Schlegel and later Jacques Derrida rightly say, we can only really start in the middle. As far as I am concerned, I can say, for example, that my middle is indeed a set of already constituted narratives that make up who I am (American, Parisian, Uruguayan, Londoner—to take only geographical markers as constitutive of metanarratives). Another middle, for example, would be the microcosm that I have identified as the Department of Visual Cultures, inasmuch as this group of people can only be made sense of through historical narratives and fictions. And these, as you rightly say, constitute embedded forms of life that are, to be sure, impervious to philosophical doubt or questioning because they inhabit unquestionable epistemological fields. In a way, they constitute a facticity that is indeed hardly questionable.

And you are also right to say that Nancy's starting premise is to some extent a delusion, the remnants of metaphysical and ontological understandings of the present emptied of all presence, the vestige of a pseudo-religious apprehension of time that effectively doesn't exist because it can never be pinned down. Nancy's take on both worlding and globalization really stems from a monological apperception of time that mistakenly equates time with thought itself. This equation is unfortunately as old as philosophy: it can be found, for example, already in Aristotle, who says that "it is impossible for there to be time if there is no mind,"[4] clearly emphasizing the mutuality between the two. Closer to us, even Heidegger asserts that "time and the 'I think' […] are the same."[5] It is as if the entire history of Western thought has been authorized by the extraordinary right of this equation. This is what allows philosophers like Nancy to make these grandiose claims about the worlding of the world and globalization. Perhaps the real culprit behind this dangerous equation is the division between ontology and the ontic sciences (these sciences that ground these histories and embedded forms of life from which you claim to hail: ethnology, sociology, geography, etc.), but you cannot blame Nancy for following a very long tradition.

The questions, for me, are therefore these: How is one to conceive an approach to the issue of the worlding of the world and globalization that is not entirely dictated by this monologic equation that structures all poststructuralist approaches to this topic? In other words, can one think the worlding of the world and globalization together without falling for this philosophically authorized non-time, this ontological and universal present without presence from which Nancy and others philosophize?

To some extent, I think that you answer these questions when you say that you want to "speak as another." You also claim that this can be done by engaging a kind of "substitution of subjectivity." And you refer to Massignon and Burton, who both engaged in this kind of substitution of subjectivities that shatter the self. I like all this, but I am also wary of the dangers that come with it. On the one hand, I can understand how speaking as another and how substituting subjectivities might avoid Nancy's monological and presentist approach to the topic, but on the other hand, as you rightly highlight, it also opens the path for dangerous misappropriations. Who indeed hasn't cringed in horror at Western thinkers—ethnologists and anthropologists first in line—who adopt non-Western ideas as if they owned them? Inversely, who hasn't been startled at non-Western, and specifically African authors who casually adopt Hegelian perspectives as if they were self-evident and free of dangers? So I say yes to speaking as another, to substituting subjectivities, but only on the condition that it truly stems from a type of hardcore Nietzschean desire to radically think against oneself, as when he says, for example, "Make it a rule never to withhold or conceal from yourself anything that may be thought against your own thoughts. Vow it! This is the essential requirement of honest thinking. You must undertake such a campaign against yourself every day."[6] Or (and this "or" is heavy with worldly/global implications!) it stems, as you say, from *intensive practices* that shatter the self, or from the Sufi *practices* that lead to fana'a. I think this is a rather different approach than that taken by Nietzsche, Nancy, or Wittgenstein. For these authors, to think against themselves is precisely to reach this ontological non-time from which they are able to do philosophy. It is a kind of suppression of all particularization of inheritances in order to emphasize this absolutization of the present that renders them as neutral and universal as God Himself. But when you mention "intensive practices" or "Sufi practices" then—correct me if I am wrong—I think you are referring to practices that aims at an intrinsic unity between the mind, God, and all that exists, whereby one becomes unaware of oneself or the material world around us. This implies a *spiritual* work to be accomplished, one that may perhaps only be attained by constant meditation and contemplation of God. I don't think the two can be conflated, even if they both necessarily call for a suppression of historically embedded forms. Can you say more on these intensive practices? This is something that truly interests me, because I think they are precisely the kinds of actions that can allow us to overcome the dead end that Nancy's abstract, universal, monological thought leaves us.

AM

As I see it, for Nancy world-forming is the ontological ground for existence, and globalization is the contemporary name for a certain intensity of the expansion of the West across the face of the planet. But we have no philosophical ground from which to oppose this process and the supposed homogeneity it brings about: world, as withness, precedes the individual components of the world, or rather they are inextricably bound up. And there is no reason to suppose that a language, a nation, a race, or a person can preserve their authenticity by subtracting themselves from what simply takes place: world-forming is just what is, notwithstanding Brexit, ISIS, Trump, or whatever. Am I right in thinking this is how you see it?

My claim is that any form of rootedness can be changed in the course of philosophical and artistic life, that what is attempted in these enterprises is not just a grasping of the world, but a marking of a stance within and toward it, one that has corollaries that are ethical and intellectual. It is in this sense that I take world-forming, the ceaseless forming of worlds, as essentially creative. In my previous readings of Nancy, I have taken his depiction of globalization as Western/Christian (as already defined) to mean that a "culture" of the Occident has been exported everywhere, and that its mythos is being installed as logos; that is, its very particular habits and customs of thought have come to be seen as universally applicable.

But Nancy says in an essay on identity that what the West has exported, as globalization, is not a culture at all (fast food, comic books, and so on) but a habitus.[7] I find this to be crucial, and an exciting opening because we no longer have to think of world-forming as exclusively between nations, cultures, languages, but rather as either the creation of new forms of habitus, or the replication of old ones. Now, habitus, classically and in contemporary thought, is such a well-known concept that I won't describe it more than is necessary for our discussion. But briefly, it is comprised of both bodily practices and theoretical frameworks in a mutually reinforcing structure. For Foucault, for example, practices of the body (such as Zen meditation, which he experimented with in Japan and also wrote about) could bring about a kind of radical break from his world, presumably from the Western epistemic tradition he continued to operate within. The anthropologist Saba Mahmood has shown how some Muslim women learn, through an encounter with a certain corpus of teaching, to instil in themselves bodily and affective practices associated with values such as modesty or piety, demonstrating by this that the traffic between abstract

thought and embodied custom works both ways. Is this a kind of stepping across worlds that Nancy (as well as Foucault) allows but doesn't risk? Sufi practices, which I spoke about before, are naturally on this spectrum naturally—they break or reshape existing affiliations, open new universalities perhaps by extinguishing old ones, starting often with the body, with everyday rhythms and practices. Barthes in his course on "the neutral" speaks of the Japanese concept of *satori*,[8] the moment of illumination which is experienced as a break, and while it seems deeply unfashionable today to think of "Eastern" practices as transformative or political, I see no a priori reason to think we have exhausted the value of ways of being that could prevent a certain globalized habitus from congealing.

Barthes also points out, incidentally, that Western philosophy has a tough time with intensities: he cites Baudelaire's example of a perfume that in sufficient strength makes one nauseous, or a foul odor that in the subtlest hint, can be pleasant.

Can our place in the "world" then be thought as an intensity rather than as solid ground? This would allow us to think, perhaps, of our relation to an underlying idea of "world" (and especially to the question of whether this is underlying at all), whether we seek to love world-forming (as what takes place, as the world worlding), to accept it, to defy it, to hate it at the level of politics, ethics, or art. After all, must we love or accept the given (like Nietzsche extolling *amor fati*, love of fate)? As Adorno points out in a beautifully suggestive aphorism in *Minima Moralia*, to love what is given, the brute reality of the world that is, is no less a form of idolatry than the Christianity Nietzsche held in contempt for its idea of truth as "that which is hoped for."[9]

I am suggesting that the Europeanness of Nancy and his thought represent a mutable "stance." The question of how to change a stance might require us to think in new ways (but following Barthes, perhaps they are new only in the sense of a different intensity in the same field), but it might also require us to change how we speak, dress, love, travel: and this is what I think of art as allowing. Or at least this is what interests me in art! As a thinker of the curatorial and of curatorial knowledge, you might see it very differently; perhaps we can think of some examples in the art world where our ideas might hold?

JPM

Thanks for suggesting ways of "going beyond" Nancy and finding ways of embodying the worlding of the world so as to counteract the processes of globalization. And I also think your focus on habitus as a bodily and theoretical praxis to interrupt a certain globalized mode of

acting is spot on, especially the (Zen, Sufi, or other) idea of starting most simply with the body, with everyday rhythms and practices. By inventing different habitus, one indeed alters, slowly but efficiently, what afflicts us all today, and in the process one potentially creates a new world, one that no longer recognizes itself in the horrors and sufferings of today.

The question, as always, is how? How does one adopt a new habitus, how is one to change a stance so widely adaptable to our needs, how is one to opt for a different intensity than that of global capital? You ask me to think of artistic or curatorial examples that might indeed offer ways of altering this global habitus, this obsessive rhythmic stance, thus offering new intensities for today? The problem with such a suggestion is that choosing an example (an artist, an artwork, a curatorial endeavor or platform, for example) is to provide a representation of a change in habitus or intensity and we all know that representation only manages to fix things, petrifying them into something that can only be immediately questionable, thus rendering the example utterly pointless. I realize I am far too reductive here. This is indeed a fault of mine, one that refuses theory the pleasure of "using" art to exemplify anything. I think that the only way, for me, to exemplify an alteration of habitus or a shift in intensity is to provide a personal example, something that is not—I hope—questionable.

In order to do so, I will pick up the issue of love and, using your own vocabulary, I will ask (myself) the blunt question: how do I "love world-forming"? How do I participate in the worlding of the world in such a way that it alters my habitus? How do I create different intensities against the overwhelmingly intricate and self-inducing flows of global capital? Nietzsche's amor fati is indeed crucial here, because it requires us to love something (fate) that is, as you say, "given": the brute reality of the world with its insufferable ugliness (Trump) or its intolerable violence (ISIS), to pick up two of your examples. How indeed do I love that which is thus far mostly intolerable, absurd, or too much to bear?

In order to implicate myself entirely and thus, in the process, hopefully illustrate how one can love the worlding of the world and alter the habitus of globalization, I think I need to first define the two words of Nietzsche's expression "amor fati." Let me start with *fati*, fate. Contrary to what is usually understood, fati does not mean fate in the sense of fatalism or determinism. If "fate" is understood in this sense, then we are addressing a teleological structure whereby we love "our lot," knowing that everything is already predetermined: past, present, and future having already been envisaged. But Nietzsche, on the contrary, says that "fate" means "necessity." The aim is indeed to love "what is necessary."[10] Now what is

necessary is, as you yourself said, what is given. The "given" of our world is what is necessary. It is what we face every day: the necessity of our world. We indeed have to put up with it, endure its violent march, bear the daily grind of our lives. As such, "fate" can only be understood as what can be witnessed here, now, today, as necessarily taking place. Cinderella, for example, is not the president of the United States; Donald Trump is. This is what necessarily takes place, even if we don't like it. As you can see, this is not fatalism. This is simply the realization that what is before me—what I understand by globalization, in what concerns us here specifically—is a *necessary* fact, a contingent necessity and, for better or for worse, I am part of it. In this way, fate is therefore not an "object" that I can seek out and change—let alone love! It is what is always already underway as a concrete but contingent factual happenstance that implicates me every moment of time.

Now what about love? What does love mean when it is aimed at something that cannot be loved? What kind of love can I address to fate, to what is necessary? In a nutshell, there are two general ways of understanding love (at least from a Judeo-Christian perspective). Either it is understood in a platonic sense (*eros*), in which case love is motivated by the value of its object (the beauty of the object of affection, for example), or in a Christian sense (*agape*), in which case love is bestowed as a value on its object (the object might not be beautiful, but my love gives it an exceptional value). Considering that it is impossible to love a negative and destructive object such as our currently rather ugly fate, this global habitus, this necessary fact, it is therefore clear that platonic love must be discarded. The world is just too ugly to be loved in that way. This leaves us, then, with love in a Christian sense—that is, as a process of valuation, valuing our fate, endowing with value what is necessary.[11] The crucial thing about this love is that it does not know the ultimate value that needs to be ascribed to this fate, this necessity. To love—in an agapic sense—what is necessary won't add, let alone, increase its value because there can be no ultimate value to this fate. So the love that Nietzsche talks about when he mentions amor fati is very much a gratuitous gesture towards something (what is necessary) that can have no final value, that can only be always already excluded from the realm of values.

So how can I then love this fate? How can I value our world, this given, this necessary fact that has neither beauty nor value? The only way I can think of doing so is to remove from this love all form of volition. As Kant already said, "Love is a matter of feeling, not of will or volition, and I cannot love because I will to do so, still less because I ought."[12] To love a "given" that has no ascribable value must therefore exclude all forms of willpower. It

cannot call for any form of pursuit, affirmation, or willfulness precisely because there is no conceptually quantifiable value to be sought out. The task is indeed about bestowing love, not seeking knowledge or implementing a concept. Free from willfulness, the love in question in amor fati requires therefore from us to effectively *surrender* to what is necessary, to "let it be." As such, to love our fate can indeed be neither an active nor passive gesture; it has to come to me, as I love it. The reason for this letting be is simply that I cannot detach myself from what I love. The love I bestow does not indeed grant me an *empowering* bird's-eye view; it only allows me to realize I am part of the love itself. In other words, I need to be both the agent of love and—to some extent—the recipient of this love. After all, I am part of the world, this given.

This means that amor fati can only therefore be a transformative or transfiguring process that affects me as well as the world. Isn't this exactly how one falls in love: one loves a person while realizing that one effectively also "falls" in love *at the same time*? Love befalls us as much as we love our object of affection. This is the only possible scenario in a situation in which I cannot project a specific valuable content onto this necessity. This is the reason why Nietzsche says that amor fati represents his "inmost nature."[13] By saying this, he is effectively highlighting the impossibility of distinguishing between the given—what is necessary—and himself, his own nature. In this way, to love fate, that is, to love the worlding of the world, to use Nancy's vocabulary, one can only genuinely start from a love of self, one that knows no volition or conceptual determination. Now, I realize this is on the verge of sounding cheesy, but think about it: any attempt to construe the given as reason, any attempt to force what is necessary into a willful predetermined vision does not love the world; it only imposes a vision onto it (whether good or bad, forcefully or disinterestedly matters little here). In this way, the only way to love the world in the sense of amor fati is to participate in its taking place without ascribing or projecting anything onto it.

Now, I said that I will address this issue by rendering it personal because no representation can accurately exemplify this type of love. So how I do love what is necessary? How do I love this fate without projecting onto it any willful concept or value? How indeed do I love what is most intolerable, absurd, too much to bear—that is, the world today? The only way I can think of doing this is to describe a personal transformative or transfiguring moment in my life where love played a key role. The following deliberately echoes a little the way Nietzsche himself describes the process of amor fati in *Ecce Homo*.

While I was curating an exhibition appropriately titled “The Look of Love,” I was going through a very turbulent period in my life. This was 1997. I was both physically and emotionally undergoing a protracted and intense suffering. This was not just an annoying hindrance to daily life. This was a profound suffering that was beyond my control. I will not give context or symptoms; what matters in this suffering was the fact that no amount of medicine or therapy was able to lift me out of it. I was doomed. The only exit from such a suffering was suicide. And yet, such a seemingly unrescuable suffering made me realize that although I could not alter the pain, I was nonetheless able to influence the manner in which I lived this suffering. Suffering was not just an agonizing event; it was also a way to sober up from the perilous world of fantasy that made me take the world for granted. In other words, through suffering, I was able to open up to what matters most in life and discard the unnecessary. Such slow-forming and painful epiphany reinforced my strength and therefore my capacity not to endure pain, but to move beyond it. This did not diminish the pain, both physical and emotional, but it at least allowed me to *transfigure* the issue, to love my experience of suffering *as fated*, not in the sense of a fatality but in the sense of *a given that I could no longer do without*.

And this is what love in the sense of amor fati is, I think, all about. It is a type of love that exposes a sense of gratitude for being alive, *not* for being well, but for *being* as such. This is a love that transforms the negative, the horror of pain, the distress of suffering not into a positive, but simply as a fact I am part of. Through love, I regain a certain amount of equilibrium and composure, giving me a sense of gratitude towards life, thus pulling me away from the worst, the end of life. As such, to love what is necessary, what is given, what cannot be willfully transformed (here the most atrocious suffering) helps not only me, but also, however strange this might seem, the world itself. It indeed helps the world because I am no longer a pain *in* the world. Through amor fati, I help the world move along a more auspicious path—in this case, an exhibition about love. The crucial thing about this period of my life is that nothing could have prepared me for it. I did not see this suffering coming. Suffering and love both happen without me playing any specific part, except that of being a part of the world. My necessity suddenly became the necessity of the world and through it, I was able to witness, with the utmost clarity, the worlding of the world, experiencing it in the instant, that is, in all eternity.

Of course, I’m sure you will tell me: Big deal. This doesn’t change the world. This is just a way of transfiguring a pain into something else. This does not alter the habitus of the

world and this does not change the suffering of others. There is no doubt that experiencing suffering and then sharing this pain neither helps the world nor commits me to loving the suffering of others. I am not denying this. However, can there be another way of illustrating amor fati than by recalling a first-person narrative of love of fate? This first-person narrative is not self-love. On the contrary, it is the love that is the only suitable response to what is necessary, that is, to what befalls us, to what makes the world "be" world. No number of artworks—and no artwork in my exhibition specifically—is able to show how to love the world, this given. Only the transformative power of suffering was able to show me how to love *not* myself, but what never gives a return in this life or another. The equilibrium and composure that I experienced through the epiphany of suffering helped the world in ways that neither resignation nor rebellion and neither anger nor despair could ever bring about. It opened me up to a type of love that knows no "why," that seeks neither alleviation of pain nor satisfaction. Again, it just happened, like falling in love.

Apologies for taking this in an entirely different direction and, yet again, for not including any art, only tangentially through a past experience. I realize this perhaps does not help us move beyond Nancy, change the habitus of the world, or fight against so-called globalization. But I hope that, somehow, it exposes how the embodying of the worlding of the world may have taken place that fateful summer of 1997 and how the habitus that I endured was altered in order to create, if not a new world, at least a different set of intensities.

AM

I will start by addressing the end of your last reply: where you talk about a moment in your life (you give it a date, 1997) that brought you such intense suffering that you were left with two choices: to exit from this world of suffering, this "vale of tears"—or to live that suffering in a way that *transfigured* your very relation to the world. You chose the latter option, "opening up" to those relations which you considered most important to life, shedding those you considered (and perhaps still consider) to be unnecessary.

I have hesitated with my response, partially because of the delicacy of the subject, but also because you preempt a reaction from me, where I say that this "self" and its transfiguration is no big deal, and that changing one's own disposition towards suffering will not change the world. So I will start by saying that I am in fact coming from the opposite direction—I am suspicious of ways of changing the world that do not include the subject who enunciates, exposes, and inhabits the world. This is largely because my working definition of

"world" is simply the very exposure, inhabitation, and enunciation that Nancy might say occur at the edges of singularities (as world-forming). In this case, your example of suffering is not merely instructive but allows me to think of our conversation as meeting at an agreement I had not seen before.

Without reducing your moment of suffering, an event in the true sense of the word (transformative, irruptive, unforeseeable, unrepeatable), to another, I was led to think both of myself and of other instances of suffering/transformation in the theoretical literature we have in common. Of the latter there are too many examples to even begin to enumerate, beyond noting the obvious connection to a certain Christian thematic that I already touched upon in the reference to the "vale of tears." The one that seems particularly relevant in this case, perhaps because it has come up increasingly in seminars lately (a signal of our general distress) is F. Scott Fitzgerald's essay "The Crack-Up" and Gilles Deleuze's treatment of it in *The Logic of Sense*. As you know, Fitzgerald describes a "crack-up," or break, that he experiences sometime around his fortieth year, after the vitality that accompanied his early years of success has faded. He is suicidal and recognizes that he has been living his life to fulfill certain normative expectations, in a kind of dull automatism. In short, he cannot go on. He is comforted by a friend who tells him that if she were in his place she would not accept that the crack was within her at all—she would say instead that the crack was in the Grand Canyon! Now, Fitzgerald (after snidely asking her if she "et up all her Spinoza"—early mansplaining!) realizes that he cannot, by virtue of his temperament, ever *naturally* be someone like his friend; but he does realize that he can go away, holding himself "very carefully like cracked crockery, and go away into the world of bitterness […] making a home with such materials as are found there."[14]

Now, Deleuze appreciates that this essay (sometimes derided today as the birth of confessional culture) is in fact a philosophical one as much as it is a cold description of mental anguish—he cites with great approval Fitzgerald's opening declaration: "Of course all life is a process of breaking down."[15] Indeed, Deleuze goes on to suggest that the artist must risk deepening this crack in some way (since it leads to the Grand Canyon presumably, to the outside-of-the-self that he prizes so greatly), without cracking up completely. In other words, the feathery superficial cracks must become ones that threaten the integrity of the self: "Or should we go a short way further to see for ourselves, be a little alcoholic, a little crazy, a little suicidal, a little of a guerrilla—just enough to extend the crack, but not enough to deepen it irremedially?"[16]

Of course, this might seem like a strange manifesto for living in our times, surrounded as we are by not only mental illness (mostly manifesting as anxiety) but also by the industries that surround and exploit it. But I take Deleuze to mean that there is an ethics proper to art and thought that is not necessarily available or desirable to all humanity. To the artist, health as an imaginary equilibrium amounts to a kind of hygiene, a denial of originary violence that comes to us as the possibility of our suicide. He says: "If one asks why health does not suffice, why the crack is desirable, it is perhaps because only by means of the crack and at its edges thought occurs, that anything that is good and great in humanity enters and exits through it, in people ready to destroy themselves—better death than the health which we are given."[17]

Naturally this cannot be true for *everyone*, or for what I wish for others: "better death than the health we are given." I cannot wish for you to say this any more than I can want this moral principle to govern the lives of my friends, family, partners, and so on. It is the kind of ethical maxim that only makes sense when wielded by an "I": by Fitzgerald (who did not commit suicide), by Deleuze (who did). From this I think we can deduce a distinction between the ethical orders of art and non-art.

Let us stay with this transfiguration and your reading of amor fati as a love of the given (or is it of *givenness*?), in the Christian sense of a love that is not demanded by the lovability of its object. Now it is in non-equivalence that we see something like Nancy's ethics connect to his ontology: if world-forming is the circulation and formation of sense at the edges of singularities (where sense is not meaning but something more like touching), then being true to the world means allowing this touching to take place. It means not reducing any one sense to one great sense (monotheism, metaphysics) or reducing all sense to a general equivalence (capitalism). This still leaves us with a form of the question I asked (Must we love world-forming?), restated as "Must we be true to the world?" Yet, my own sense now is that this is a question that does not admit an answer, since it is at bottom the question of ethics itself, perpetually restaged in new guises. As a question it is perhaps the same as "Must I stay alive?" where any answer that removes the possibility of my suicide or anyone else's conceals the grounds from which the dilemma emerges, and from which the decision (whichever one) is taken.

In the events Fitzgerald describes, he hardens into a professional writer who sheds meaningless social obligations, the desire to be all things to all people. Similarly, you describe your transfiguration as *productive*: you curate an important exhibition, putting into

circulation a sense of the world and of your world. It is not a case of shaping the world in your image or of changing the world, but of changing your relationship to the world and then seeing what happens: you put something into motion, accepting the finitude of such a task and its sheer fortuity.

But what I want to add here is that the shock of the transformative event can come from things that are substantially less savage than war or matters of love—and can make us weaker or less powerful too. What I take from your example and Fitzgerald's is the idea that the changed self must be reinserted within the world and *not set against it*. In my own case, this might mean accepting my status as a traveler, a migrant, the surveilled as a new site of productivity and production of sense. Or something else entirely that I am not yet in control of.

Can such a process of transfiguration of habitus happen within the field of art? I think it is fair to say that at the moment there is a suspicious relationship between the contemporary art world and its reception not just in the wider world, but in the worlds of its allies such as philosophy and literature. In other words, the kind of smart, "critical" practices that dominate the global landscape of biennials and art fairs are generally met with bemusement by philosophers. This is especially the case when art works "perform" theory in some way, leaving very little work for the roles of judgment, interpretation, or even affect in their exhibition. We can see this as the result of a gradual loosening of the strictures of form, disciplinary boundaries and so on, as I imagine most practicing artists do. We can also see another process at work, where following the breakdown of disciplinary boundaries, modern art survived by opening itself up to a demonstration of its own historical condition, that is, to its contingency. But today this strategy is exhausted: art often aspires to be something more "open" to the world outside itself, and we see this in the preeminence or rather ubiquity of film, video, documentary forms and so on.

Look at any major "global" exhibition to see the extent to which this shift has occurred: art no longer has a disciplinary home to call its own, and must feed off the perceived security of anthropology, cinema, political theory. I will withhold comment on whether this is a good or a bad thing for now, and instead try and see it in terms of the questions of sense we have been discussing.

Putting it another way, in European secular modernity we have had succeeding definitions of art that have looked to accommodate the perceived change in the practices of

art, and in the world that affords it a particular form. We have had the following definitions, that have been effectively globalized:

1. Art = values based in historical conditions
2. Art = that which is legitimated by institutions

You can replace these definitions with others, but always by changing the right-hand side of the formula. Now, the field you and I happen to be engaged in, and the name of the department we work in, is "visual cultures." As I see it, this is an attempt to radically rework, for the first time, the *left-hand side* of the equation in the definition of art; or rather, an attempt to replace the concept of art altogether with something called "visual culture" which is irreducible to either art history or to institutional legitimation. As such it is presumably an attempt to rescue the singularity/multiplicity of practices and approaches from a blockage of sense, from an unworld created by the tyrannies of art history or indeed of the very idea of art.

You said that your coming to terms with the world, learning to love it in some sense was also the process of leaving a fantasy. Can we extend this transformation of the self to an entire field like philosophy or visual culture, and say that they represent an attempt to move beyond the fantasy of art of art history without installing some other grounds in its place?

And if so, can we say that it has succeeded? I am returning us somewhat awkwardly, as you can see, to the idea of visual culture that you started from so precisely in your first essay, and asking (rather more muddily) how it opens to the world in your eyes. Can it account for a globality of sense, or has its object vanished from its sight? What place is there in critical practices and curatorial knowledge for the artistic deepening of cracks, of transfiguration? And are we looking over fences into other people's disciplines or can we think of a "discipline" that has no home or boundaries, except for our colleagues, offices, students—our world?

JPM

I agree. No one can indeed admit to answering the question "Must I love world-forming?" When it comes to amor fati, "to love" is to join the necessity of the world, joining what is already self-evidently taking place. Love can only be here an added force to this necessity, to this imperative. The pleonasm created by the question indeed erases the possibility of an

answer. As such, the answer can only be, as you rightly say, the same for "Must I stay alive?" for which the decision of "staying alive" can only add to the imperative ruling world-forming. As with love, "staying alive" is also an insistence, a persistence that it is worth continuing a little longer, that suicide is indeed not an option. Here again, the pleonasm created by the question erases the need for an answer. As such, the equivalence between the two questions and the impossibility of answering them clearly shows how we manage to move beyond Nancy, how we exceed his thought through living/loving, this strange, unreciprocated necessity that empties out the need for an answer. I cannot admit answering the question because I cannot *not* continue to live/love life/world. One "must" and there is nothing else to it. But it's a funny kind of "must" (a funny kind of life/love) because it knows no coercion, no compulsion, no pressure. The factuality of being alive or in love means nothing else than the letting-be of what must take place. Indeed, the ground from which the dilemma emerges in either question ("must I (live/love)? / must I not (live/love)?") conceals itself at every turn.

And yet, something crucial is here also highlighted, something important that shows that this pleonasm has a reason, that the intertwinement imperative and life/love has a purpose, that the pointlessness of addressing the question without needing to answer it is justified. What does the pleonasm express? What can the juxtaposition necessity ("must") and life/love reveal that is so important to us? In this short attempt at a conclusion to our discussion, I would like to highlight this crucial aspect of what we have explored through the work of Jean-Luc Nancy and his take on world-forming. Highlighting this crucial aspect of the necessity of world-forming will, no doubt, displease those who seek a quick fix or require an easy solution to the ills of the world. This crucial aspect of world-forming and our love of it, concerns overall a particular gait, not an attitude or a position, not a way of thinking or feeling, and certainly not a behavior or a mode of being, but the adoption of a particular way of moving, of going about things. I realize you used the Nancyian expression "stance" earlier. But I think there is something more to staying alive and loving, and this involves a certain gait. Because space is limited, I will restrict myself to what chiefly concerns us, namely, visual culture. Overall, this last argument will be that in order for visual culture to move forward today, it needs to abandon what is at its core, what appears to make it whole, and adopt a new and challenging gait. How is this at all possible?

You rightly highlight that the breakdown of disciplinary boundaries has led to the erosion of what is understood by art, and that visual cultures has emerged as a way of

opening up to the world beyond. You also rightly point to the ubiquity of film, video, and documentary forms and, I would add, to a whole range of installations mixing all these forms and trying hard to embody this move from "art" to "visual culture." There is no vulgarity in such generalization, I don't think. It is a fact; it is what takes place here and now in what we still call "the art world." The expanded field has indeed reached such surprisingly confused horizons that it is no longer possible to talk of a remit, a boundary, or a circumscription. The left-hand side of your equation (art) has indeed been replaced by this oxymoron (visual culture), this lost child of modernism's ocular-centrism. The disciplines that once propped art (art history, art theory, aesthetics, etc.) have been eviscerated, the institutional legitimation that justified art has equally been eroded to the point where institutions (museums in particular) are now just lost ships of experiences without anchor (performance, theater, film, dance, etc., all taking place in the once hallowed galleries dedicated to one discipline: art).

And yet, I don't think it is wise to see in this supposed transmutation (or "democratization") of art into visual culture a real attempt to move beyond the fantasy of art. On the contrary, I strongly believe that visual culture still harbors an incredible fantasy that is as strong and as palpable as that which underpinned "art" for over two hundred years. If art is a metaphysical floating signifier that creates fantasies and delusions (beauty, for one), visual culture equally holds a metaphysical floating signifier at its core that creates fantasies and delusions. The floating signifier at its heart is nothing other than "practice." "Practice" has replaced "art" as visual culture's metaphysical prop. Think about it. Practice is simply the application or the use of an idea, belief, or method. It implies the activity of carrying out a task. As such, the word "practice" stands for an action that can take any form whatsoever. It is applicable to art (an art practice), but also to any other activity. Don't we talk, for example, of "a dental practice," "a lawyer's practice," "a medical practice," "a good teaching practice," "sound business practice," "child-rearing practices," etc. As these examples show, a practice refers not to a particular skill, but to an action or set of actions that achieve(s) something *within* a particular context (or discipline, as was once the case with art). In its haughty dismissal of all things disciplinary, visual culture, unfortunately, lost that context, forcing it in the process to desperately hang onto the only thing it can: practice.

Of course, practice is usually—and to my mind, stupidly—opposed to theory. I've lost count the number of times I've heard colleagues claim the importance of "practice" (without realizing that they were only echoing the insecurity of artists in the Art Department)! To this stubborn emphasis on practice, I can only say one thing: I, myself,

"practice" philosophy. I have a philosophical practice. Like my dentist or my GP, every day I sit down and start practicing. In saying this, I evacuate the grounds on which this false contrast between theory and practice is based. Everybody practices something or other because everybody thinks and acts, everybody works, which means nothing other that allying act and thought, praxis in a Marxist sense. This means that when visual culture desperately hangs on to practice, it does nothing else but to call—in an un-Marxist way—for an empty floating signifier to justify its existence. It is a floating signifier because once visual culture freed itself from all disciplines (or amateurishly espoused all disciplines, which amounts to the same thing), it can rest on nothing else but itself: practice signifying as practice, the perfect floating signifier, the perfect anchoring tautology. So visual culture cannot fool itself for long. It might not think or operate within the singularity of a discipline, it might have evacuated all malodorous references to art (and everything that went with it; the "good eye," for example), it might not seek refuge amid a set of theoretical or historical apparatuses, but it still operates exactly like art before, namely in the name of a floating metaphysical signifier, a tautology, this time called "practice."

So going back to your equation: yes, we might have begun to alter the left-hand side of the equation, but we still secretly harbor the hope that with so-called visual culture, something transcendental can still be reached with this practice, the Holy Grail of the "implicated" visual culturist. Inevitably the question is this: If the aim is not some elusive metaphysical emotion à la art, then what can be reached by visual culture with its empty floating signifier "practice"? The answer is, as always, a false "plenitude of presence." What else can visual culture indeed aim at in this "practice" context, but an embodied immanental moment that calls only for its reiteration? There is indeed nothing left in visual culture but a general equivalence of embodied experiences, endless economic exchanges among "practictioners" who always want more, because practice never manages to satisfy. The number of curating and curatorial courses that put themselves forward as "practice-led," for example, do precisely nothing other than continue this fantasy of plenitude, namely the feeling that the visual culturist has reached an elsewhere, only to realize that it is still in the same place. Practice-based visual culture is only the expression of a vacant, always-reiterated embodiment, the perfect emblem for the mechanisms of exchange in a neoliberal market.

So whence visual culture? What future is indeed left for this practice that leads to nothing but more practice? I would like to suggest here—rather boldly, I admit—to rethink in its most abstract and succinct formulation, a potential new purpose for visual culture. In order

to revisit this purpose, I think it is necessary to abandon this reference to practice, because without doing so, we will continue the endless reiteration of meaningless exchanges. I have suggested above to opt for a new type of gait. Once again, this is not a new position or stance, a cool new way of thinking or feeling, a new genre of behavior, or a mode of being. And it is obviously not a way of replacing the dreaded word "practice," because contrary to practice, which secretly aims at a never achievable goal, a gait is simply a way of moving, *of going about* things in visual culture. In a gait there is no potential tautological grounding. A gait simply implies that something or someone is moving in a particular way. The difficulty in thinking this gait as a new departure for visual culture is that it must be brought back to the very happenstance of the body. If, at its most reductive, visual culture is nothing other than the (visual) performance of the body, then its gait is of paramount importance. The gait of visual culture is the body as it (visually) exposes itself to others.

In order to show this, it is necessary for me to return to the main thematic of our discussion, namely the factuality of world-forming, that is, the necessity (this "must") of carrying on living, of loving the world, but this time through the prism of visual culture understood not as practice, but as gait, the visual gait of world-forming. To expose this gait, I would like to return to a well-known poem by T. S. Elliot, "The Hollow Men" (1925). Its fragmentary nature prevents me from exploring the many different meanings attached to this famous work. I will therefore limit myself to the way the poem emphasizes how poetry and therefore creativity understood broadly should take place. The poem is divided into five parts and consists of 98 lines. I give only the ones that concerns us here:

Between the idea
And the reality
Between the motion
And the act
Falls the Shadow
For Thine is the Kingdom

Between the conception
And the creation
Between the emotion
And the response

Falls the Shadow

Life is very long

Between the desire
And the spasm
Between the potency
And the existence
Between the essence
And the descent
Falls the Shadow

For Thine is the Kingdom.[18]

The key words here, of course, are "falls the shadow." As is well known, Elliot was a monist. Like Spinoza and closer to him, F. R. Bradley, he believed that reality was a non-relational entity, which means that there is nothing transcendent and that the only way "to see" is to create creases, folds, ridges, or furrows in the "one" reality. In this poem, there is therefore no longer any subject-object relation. The eyes see only in as much as the body creates a crease, fold, ridge, or furrow in the fabric of reality. Hence "falls the shadow." The act of creation is not the moment when, a brush is applied to the canvas or a pen begins to write, but the prior moment when the shadow of the hand falls onto paper or canvas. The falling of the shadow is therefore the mark of an event, a disruption of the "one" reality, a ripple in the fabric of the universe, a disturbance in the interconnectedness of all things. The shadow thus marks the appearance of what is absolutely other to the "one" reality, not as an external entity bumping into reality (a transcendental verticality falling onto an immanental horizon, for example), but as the elusive marking of a moment of (visual) creation amid the "one" reality. The shadow stands thus for "my death," not as the "other of life," but as a future event manifesting itself here and now as shadow, the ephemeral penumbra that marks my passing, the billow that exposes the act of creation, my worlding of the world. As such, the falling of the shadow exposes what doesn't even qualify as presence and yet is the only creative act worthy of the name.

With this poem, my argument is therefore that it is at the moment of death that visual culture ought to take place, right when the shadow falls. It is only when visual culture manages to lift itself up from all pretenses, when it frees itself from the shackles of the

trading of commodified culture, when it raises itself above all easy posturing, that it can begin in all earnestness to fall as the world falls, that is, as the world worlds itself. It is only with and as this casting of the shadow, that visual culture will finally cease to reference a vacuous "practice." It is only when it finally embodies this falling of the shadow, a falling without prop or safety net, that it will be able "to be" all disciplines with the safety and assurance that it is truthful to them all. Which visual culturist does this? No one yet because no one dares creating *as if their lives were at stake*, because no one has the guts to ignore fake urgencies or is brave enough to let go of the latest trend or sound bite. To be with the shadow as it falls is to write poetry or create visual culture in a way that leaves no space for any of this. It is to let oneself fall, that is, allow the future unforeseeable to take place, to let one's propensity to create miracles and this without any divine, mystical, spiritual, or extraordinary agency. Creating right when the shadow falls, that is, right when there is nothing left to lose: this is visual culture potential new gait, a strange kind of gait because it involves no prop, crutch, anchor, or support.

Of course, this does not mean living and creating recklessly, casting the dice and letting chance decide every action. To create by letting the shadow fall is to create fully conscious of the impact of our actions onto the "one" reality. It stands for an eminently ethical gesture because it is the gesture that is conscious of how the shadow affects the other, how it alters reality irrevocably. And this is why it is a gait, not so much in the sense of walking, but in the sense of comportment. The gait of visual culture is the one that acknowledges the shadowy effect of creativity onto the other, the fact that no ephemeral penumbra on earth can pass without causing an unrepairable disruption to the "one" reality. The gait in question is thus one that turns a struggle for mastery and domination into an attention toward the other, towards whoever might be cast under the shadow. It is the only gesture that finally concedes that the other is *more* important than mastering the current game of always securing a place in the sun. Visual culture really needs to shift its focal point from preserving its own self-relation (and self-interests) through a tautological "practice" towards a responsible gait, treating others right when the "I" no longer matters, when the inevitability of the shadow casts no one in darkness. Only then, as Elliot says elsewhere in the same poem, will we be able to avoid being "hollow men," "stuffed men," "empty men," "sightless and unseen," without form, without color, paralyzed. Only then, will we be able to "cross with direct eyes, to death's other Kingdom." Only then, will we be able *to love* world-forming without floating signifiers, without even feeling the necessity of the world.

[1] Jean-Luc Nancy, trans. Pascale-Anne Brault, in *Noli Me Tangere: On the Raising of the Body* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2008), 98.

[2] Jean-Luc Nancy, "Shattered Love," in *The Inoperative Community* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1991), 82–109.

[3] Rey Chow, *The Age of the World Target: Self-Referentiality in War, Theory, and Comparative Work* (Durham; NC: Duke University Press, 2006).

[4] Aristotle, *Physics*, trans. Robin Waterfield (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996), 223a21.

[5] Martin Heidegger, *Kant and the Problem of Metaphysics*, trans. Richard Taft (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1997), §34.

[6] Friedrich Nietzsche, *The Dawn of Day*, trans. John McFarland Kennedy (New York: MacMillan Company, 1911), §370.

[7] Jean-Luc Nancy, *Identity: Fragments, Frankness*, trans. François Raffoul (New York: Fordham University Press, 2015), 34.

[8] Roland Barthes, *The Neutral*, trans. Rosalind E. Krauss and Denis Hollier (New York: Columbia University Press, 2005), 113.

[9] Theodor Adorno, *Minima Moralia: Reflections from Damaged Life*, trans. E. F. N. Jephcott (London: Verso, 2005), 98.

[10] Friedrich Nietzsche, *The Gay Science*, trans. Josefine Nauckhoff (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), §276; and Nietzsche, *Ecce Homo*, trans. Judith Norman (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 99.

[11] This entry in the correspondence was greatly helped by a reading of Béatrice Han-Pile's remarkable essay, "Nietzsche and *Amor Fati*." I am very indebted to her lucid analysis of this term. There is, however, one major difference between our readings of Nietzsche's amor fati*:* Unlike Han-Pile's reading of the word fati as a Stoic-style inescapable sequence of causes, I understand fati in the same way that Nancy interprets Nietzsche's use of the expression "physics." See Nietzsche, *The Gay Science*, §335 ("Long Live Physics!"); Jean-Luc Nancy, "'Our Probity!' On Truth in the Moral Sense in Nietzsche," trans. Peter Connor, in *Looking after Nietzsche*, ed. Laurence A. Rickels (New York: State University of New York Press, 1990), 68; and Béatrice Han-Pile's very comprehensive essay "Nietzsche and Amor Fati," *The European Journal of Philosophy* 14, no. 3 (2006): 373–403.

[12] Immanuel Kant, *The Metaphysics of Morals*, ed. and trans. Mary Gregor (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 6:402 ("The Love of Human Beings").

[13] Nietzsche, *Ecce Homo*, 143.

[14] F. Scott Fitzgerald, *The Crack-Up*, ed. Edmund Wilson (New York: New Directions, 2009), 62.

[15] Fitzgerald, 57.

[16] Gilles Deleuze, *The Logic of Sense*, trans. Mark Lester (London: Continuum, 2004), 157.

[17] Deleuze, 182.

[18] T. S. Elliot, "The Hollow Men," in *Complete Poems and Plays* (London: Faber & Faber, 2004), 85.