

The Startling Encounter with Infinite Nothingness (Edit)

-The Remembering of the Recollected Self-

Oct 7, 2023

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#mystical #Nihiltheism , #nothingness

"Why does evolution, as we ascend the ladder of life, foster instead of diminishing the capacity for useless mental anguish, for long, dull torment, bitter grief?" Underhill

"One simply lacks any reason for convincing oneself that there is a true world." Nietzsche

"How is such an experience possible if the ultimate is that which transcends all possible experience?"
Tillich

"It grasps the mind with terrifying and fascinating power. It breaks into the ordinary reality, shakes it and drives it beyond itself in an ecstatic way." Tillich

"It is the emotion of a creature, submerged and overwhelmed by its own nothingness in contrast to that which is supreme above all creatures." Otto

"This is no doubt why modern life, weary of positivism and disillusioned by it, but possessed of neither the strength nor the desire to go beyond the boundaries it has established, has made such a fierce attack upon the work of the mystics." Shestov

"The initial revelation of any monastery: everything is nothing. Thus begin all mysticisms. It is less than one step from nothing to God, for God is the positive expression of nothingness." Cioran

"The last step towards nihilism is the disappearance into divinity." Cioran

"This is a practical philosophy that needs to be applied experientially to be known." Swami Rama

Is there some form of empirical data that coincides with the suggestion that the Nihilistic experience has both a Naturalistic and a Transcendent component? How, then, is Nihilism with its Transcendental interpretation to be, in any substantial sense, distinguished from Naturalism? Is Nihilism necessarily to be reduced to naturalism? Are there characteristics of Nihilism that separates itself from, and go beyond, naturalism? Is there any way to 'touch' the Transcendent aspect of Nihilism or are we stuck in the situation of naturalism that Underhill summarizes so succinctly:

"It says in effect: The room in which we find ourselves is fairly comfortable. Draw the curtains, for the night is dark: and let us devote ourselves to describing the furniture."

Is this our reality? Even with all the strong descriptions of Nihilism that are found within a Tillich, a Cioran, a Heisman, a Kierkegaard, and so forth, there seems to be something missing. Was Nietzsche right when he stated that there was no reason to convince oneself of a 'true world'? Would, or should, Heisman have blown his brains out all over the Harvard library steps if he encountered something more within Nihilism? Maybe. Maybe not.

The claim is that the Nihilistic experience is in part 'mystical'. The groundwork for a wholly Transcendent experience is laid within in the experience of the Nothing of the world which allows for the further possibility of an 'opening up' of the Other. The experience of Nothingness within (and of) the world does not bring forth any 'concrete' forms of the Other. However, an inexplicable, haunting sensation lingers within, creating a suspicion, intensifying to the point of a "pushing", for one to confront the Other by a 'clearing of the path', a renunciation of the distractions of the world, a pursuit and participation with the Nothingness.

"since i will not die right away, nor regain my innocence, going through the same routine motions every day is sheer madness. banality must be overcome at all costs and the way cleared for transfiguration. how sad to see men bypass themselves, neglect their own destiny instead of rekindling the light they carry within them or getting drunk on their abysmal darkness!" Cioran

"If we truly want to follow God we must seek to be other-worldly." Tozer

What is lacking from its seemingly omnipotent character, is that the Naturalistic (World) interpretation of Nihilism is the 'fuller'/'concrete' expression of that suspicious echo, which is heard, yet has no message to interpret. Allowing for only the looming of a suspicion that will not seem to completely fade. The descriptions found in even the most 'profound thinkers' is what we may refer to as the 'diminished' or Worldly versions of Nihilism, i.e. the Nothing of the world.

There is another aspect of the Nihilistic experience that is seemingly 'beyond', but one is not in a position to say whether this suspicious whisper exists solely within, or whether it is incoherent with, or something totally separate and unrelated from the Worldly form of Nihilism. Regardless of the ascendant nature of the 'other half' (?) of the experience, this form is even still subsumed by the Nothing of the world. In other words, the 'deeper' experiences of Nihilism that may or may not be entirely worldly are as rarely explored or experienced as its Naturalistic counterpart. With that said, there is a 'wider' experience of Nihilism, there is a more direct confrontation to be had. This is found in what is normally referred to as the psychedelic experience.

(I need to rewrite the above paragraph, as it mentions/describes "too much" or goes too far, as it almost foreshadows the consequences of the Transcendent experience, before it has even happened)

The psychedelic experience can be mystical. What is a 'mystical experience'? Broadly stated, the mystical experience eradicates the ego. The worldly 'I' is erased from its entirety, yet there is something that remains. There is a disconnect from the worldly flesh-body that is experienced as wholly incorporeal. While there is no ego to be found, this 'something' that resembles a 'you' remains; yet this different sort of 'you' is not all there is either. There is a 'bigger something'; there is a meeting with.

Nihilism in its fully Transcendent forms is experienced in such a way that it can be described as an Augmented version of experiencing the Nothing of the world. The Nothing of the world and the Transcendent experiences of Nihilism are simply variants of each other. The Transcendent form of Nihilism coincides with what is normally labeled as 'mystical'. This Augmented form of Nihilism is a true 'opening up' of the Transcendent. There is close similarity in the comparison to the 'two-sided' experiences of Nihilism, as Transcendent and as Naturalistic, as is found within human consciousness as the divided-self as part Transcendent and part Natural. The 'external' appearance of Transcendent Nihilism is one that is indeed taken as an encounter with the Other, while the naturalistic aspect of Nihilism is one that 'hears a 'message' that is coming 'from me and beyond me', yet within the world. And although they differ in pure experience, they are not in conflict with one another; they lend themselves to each other in a cohesive fashion.

"It is a mistake to suppose that mysticism derives from a softening of the instincts, from a compromised vitality...To get a sense of them, imagine a Hernando Cortez in the middle of an invisible geography. The German mystics were conquerors too." Cioran

"Quietism": the difference between the tense stillness of the athlete and the limp passivity of the sluggard, who is really lazy, though he looks resigned. True "Quiet" is a means, not an end: is actively embraced, not passively endured. It is a phase in the self's growth in contemplation; a bridge which leads from its old and uncoordinated life of activity to its new unified life of deep action--the real "mystic life" of man."

Underhill

"He calls suffering the "gymnastic of eternity," the "terrible initiative caress of God"; recognizing in it a quality for which the disagreeable rearrangement of nerve molecules cannot account. Sometimes, in the excess of his optimism, he puts to the test of practice this theory with all its implications. Refusing to be deluded by the pleasures of the sense world, he accepts instead of avoiding pain, and becomes an ascetic; a puzzling type for the convinced naturalist, who, falling back upon contempt—that favourite resource of the frustrated reason—can only regard him as diseased." Underhill

"Believe me, children, one who would know much about these high matters would often have to keep his bed, for his bodily frame could not support it." Tauler

The Transcendent aspect of the Nihilistic experience stays mostly hidden due to a lack of participation or pursued confrontation with the Other. Many don't even know that it exists; or if they do, they have misconceptions about it due to the babble from people who have never experienced it themselves. Most 'spiritual' journeys consists of meditation, contemplation, various mortifications, and so on. Yet, even

though these practices are performed with the aim of attaining a mystical experience, most fail at ever achieving this end (at least in such an awe-inspiring fashion).

“In order to go into it, man must empty himself of all the finite contents of his ordinary life; he must surrender all preliminary concerns for the sake of the ultimate concern. He must transcend the division of existence...The ultimate is beyond this division, and he who wants to reach the ultimate must overcome this division in himself by meditation, contemplation and ecstasy.” Tillich

“First Bach fugues, a bore...But training changes the structure of our spiritual experiences. In due course, contact with an obscurely beautiful poem, an elaborate piece of counterpoint or of mathematical reasoning, causes us to feel direct intuitions of beauty and significance.” Huxley

These traditional practices need not be necessarily ridiculed as either inefficient nor as hindrances; these practices are seemingly beneficial. But is there something more? Is there another way that 'guarantees' a confrontation with the Other? We believe there is a way and that it does not take years of study, ritual, and practice in order to achieve this state (although these practices cannot be ignored as they are useful tools for the experience, even if they do not, in themselves, produce an encounter).

The psychedelic journey is one that, if properly prepared for, can open up the abyss of existence in which no words, thoughts, systems, religions, and so forth, can prepare one for.

If one one wants to pursue, if one wants to confront and participate with the Other, with Transcendent Nihilism, then one only needs a few grams of psilocybin for their worldview to be irreconcilably disrupted.

For those who have experienced this Mystical Nothingness, there is an unthinking enthusiasm involved which pushes one into a frenzy of confusion due to the uncanny and terrifying nature that is like nothing found within the world. As with the 'Temporal' forms of Nihilism, there is still a strong motivation to proclaim the unreality of the experience of the Transcendent. And, again, in the form of retreating back into the world, and taking the meaningless as meaningful, to cover up the horrid experience of Nothingness.

This 'moving past' is the birth of all confusion and discord. When one grasps and misuses finite language as a literal description of the Wholly-Other the experience of Nihilism is inevitably obfuscated. One must speak to oneself when discussing the Other. Finite human language is necessarily symbolic in nature with regards to speaking of the Other.

“...any experience, no matter how spiritual, could only yield us an It.” Buber

These words are only a distraction, worthless nothings which are only written out of cowardice to confront the Other. I begged to be 'kept' where I was as I experienced a timeless, Ultimate unity; I felt 'at home' and infinitely satisfied. With that said, it has been over a year and I have not been able to push myself into another encounter; terrifying bliss like nothing I have ever experienced before. I feel both unworthy of 'Its'

presence and I also cannot escape the pathetic, naturalistic side of my divided-self from being paralyzed with fear from another encounter.

What if one does 'meet' this Other and yet is still not convinced? What if one meets this Other and still does not know what to do? The real question is this: what if one 'meets' this Other and still cannot hold to any delusion set forth by other humans who have supposedly gone through this experience, nor develop any symbols that show relevance to the Other? All concrete symbols of Transcendence are dead.

What do we say about this unspeakable world? Is it purely illusory? A misinterpretation of a trick that is played on us by our mind? For one who has not experienced, this may pass off as an 'explanation'. For those who have experienced the Transcendent forms of Nihilism, it cannot be dismissed so easily. There is a something that one encounters within this Transcendent experience of Nihilism. One may rush to call it 'God'. Others may dismiss it as the workings of the 'subconscious'. Whatever the explanation, it is peculiar that the Nothingness found within the world is magnified to unmeasurable heights when in the face of this Other, this 'something'. This Other world is experienced as more real than the mundane, everyday world. The 'true' illusion becomes what all consider the 'real' or 'only' world.

"Mescaline opens up the way of Mary, but shuts the door on that of Martha. It gives access to contemplation— but to a contemplation that is incompatible with action and even with the will to action, the very thought of action. In the intervals between his revelations the mescaline taker is apt to feel that, though in one way everything is supremely as it should be, in another there is something wrong. His problem is essentially the same as that which confronts the quietest..." Huxley

There is a terrifying bliss that surrounds your entire Being, without you being who you are. There is a dissolution of the ego, the worldly self that is concerned with security, money, relationships, and so on. All human aspects of worldly-consciousness drop out; they do not simply become insignificant, as with experiencing the Nothing of the world, rather they utterly dissipate, they are no where to be found.

"Absence, extinction, and unoccupancy--these are not the Buddhist conception of emptiness. Buddhists' Emptiness is not on the plane of relativity. It is Absolute Emptiness transcending all forms of mutual relationship, of subject and object, birth and death, God and the world, something and nothing, yes and no, affirmation and negation. In Buddhist Emptiness there is no time, no space, no becoming, no-thingness; it is what makes all these things possible; it is a zero full of infinite possibilities, it is a void of inexhaustible contents." Suzuki

To confront, there must be a dissolution of the 'I' or of the ego; this is what psilocybin does with utter ease. There must be renunciation. The Other demands that we renounce. If you do not reduce yourself into as pure a form of humility as one can achieve, if you do not renounce the ego, the self, if you hold on, well, then, you will bring a nightmare upon yourself like never experienced before. The preparation of renunciation begins with the experiencing the Nothing of the world. One must give up holding onto the deadness of the world. The transitory nature of all things within the world are nothing but distractions that deflect the Other. What is it to experience oneself as Nothing, if it is not a dissolution of the ego? To renounce worldly desires, ambitions, and any other form of illusion, is to embrace the Nothing of the world, which allows for a 'clearer' experience of the Other. The dissolution of the 'I' brings forth the

greatest sensation of Unity. A feeling of pure consciousness that is One with all of existence; it is pure existence.

"To the extent that there is attachment to 'I,' 'Me,' 'Mine,' there is no attachment to, and therefore no unitive knowledge of, the divine Ground." Huxley

"The ultimate abandonment of one's role is not to have a self as a fixed point of reference; it is the freedom to manifest God through one's own uniqueness. This monk had hit bottom. But the bottom in the spiritual journey is also the top. To be no one is to be everyone. To be no self is to be the true Self. To be nothing is to be everything. In a sense, it is to be God." Keating

"...it would seem that there is within each of us an enemy which we tolerate at our peril. Jesus called it "life" and "self," or as we would say, the self-life. Its chief characteristic is its possessiveness: the words "gain" and "profit" suggest this. To allow this enemy to live is in the end to lose everything." Tozer

"The void- myself without me- is the liquidation of the adventure of the 'I'- it is being without any trace of being, a blessed engulfment, an incomparable disaster." Cioran

"I am sorry sometimes that God no longer fills us with dread. If only we could feel again the primordial quiver of dread in front of the unknown!" Cioran

When is one truly ready to confront something Infinite, something wholly Other? This is not a 'meeting' with another object within the world, this is a confrontation with Existence itself, in the fullest sense of the term. This confrontation is so different that it can easily push one into a state of panic that will be unrecognizable. The naturalistic side of the divided-self, the side that pulls us down into the world, turns produces a fear that is unimaginable. The 'Hellish' confrontation with the Other, the terrifying bliss of the experience, is something that cannot be boxed away within human language or dismissed as illusory or 'natural'.

"Some people talk as if meeting the gaze of absolute goodness would be fun. They need to think again." C. S. Lewis

"...terror fraught with an inward shuddering such as not even the most menacing and overpowering created thing can instil." Otto

"The infinite depth repels and horrifies me; the infinite height attracts and satisfies me." Tolstoy

"Although this painful martyrdom of horrible desolation and passive purgation be so tremendous, that with reason it has gotten the name of Hell amongst mystick Divines, (because it seems impossible to be able to live a moment with so grievous a torment; so that with great reason it may be said, that he that suffers it, lives dying, and dying lives a lingering death) yet know, that it is necessary to endure it, to arrive

at the sweet, joyous and abundant riches of high contemplation and loving union: and there has been no holy Soul, which has not passed through this spiritual martyrdom and painful torment.” Molinos

“Mysticism revolves around the passion for ecstasy and a horror of the void. One cannot know one without the other...Once it has totally rejected the world, the soul is ripe for a long-term and fecund emptiness...One sees nothing except nothingness. And the latter has become

everything. Ecstasy is plenitude in a void, a full void. It is an overwhelming frisson which convulses nothingness, an invasion of being in absolute emptiness.” Cioran

Is there a way to 'guide' oneself through this confrontation? Music, with its abstract nature, is suited best for such a journey. For assistance with the death of the 'I', to release from the naturalistic side of the self, the abstract nature of music, with its strange use of plucking sounds from 'nowhere' with the equally important 'rests' in between each note, as a form of language, allows one to more-fully dispense with the natural-self. Music without words will do best, since any human voice may cause a distraction and pull one down and away from the Other. Bach's organ music, a God-like instrument with God-like tones, will guide one through the journey with the Other. Bach's organ works express fully his meditations on death. Focus on the bass/pedal notes, let the highs and mids come at you, and allow for the Bach, who speaks fluently the 'language of God', to show you the Other.

“...and yet it does not matter that he's all in bits. The whole is disorganized. But each individual fragment is in order, is a representative of a Higher Order. The Highest Order prevails even in the disintegration. The totality is present even in the broken pieces. More clearly present, perhaps, than in a completely coherent work. At least you aren't lulled into a sense of false security by some merely human, merely fabricated order. You have to rely on your immediate perception of the ultimate order. So in a certain sense disintegration may have its advantages. But of course it's dangerous, horribly dangerous. Suppose you couldn't get back, out of the chaos...” Huxley

“...the Schopenhauerian theory in majorem musicae gloriam [for the greater glory of music] - that is to say, by means of the sovereignty of music, as Schopenhauer understood it; music abstracted from and opposed to all the other arts, music as the independent art-in-itself, not like the other arts, affording reflections of the phenomenal world, but rather the language of the will itself, speaking straight out of the "abyss" as its most personal, original, and direct manifestation.” Nietzsche

“Bach's music is the medium of heavenly transfiguration.” Cioran

“...Bach often meditated on death...Handel compared to Bach, is of this world. Bach is divine...” Cioran

“Listening to Bach, one sees God come into being. His music generates divinity. After a Bach...one feels that God must exist. Otherwise, Bach's music would be only heartrending illusion. Theologians and philosophers wasted so many days and nights searching for proofs of his existence, ignoring the only valid one: Bach.” Cioran

"If humans are emotion machines, then music must work, in some sense, like a machine. Music could be a form of emotional technology to control my own behavior intelligently. In other words, if emotions are the products of material processes, then art could be viewed as a form of technology. From the standpoint of this musical materialism, as one of the most extreme implications of an unadulterated materialism, lay a possible solution to dominance of my own analytic and objective tendency to materialize everything. I began to listen to music, especially German music (and especially Wagner and Bach), as a form of technology to counter my own tendencies to view everything as material or technology." Heisman

"Bach is ground from outside of myself that makes up for the nihilistic lack of ground within myself. Bach counters my material self-consistency and its tendency towards self-decomposition with a form of holistic-mind order." Heisman

Plato describes Transcendent Nihilism and the seemingly 'true' mindset to have in the face of this Nothing:

"...the entire soul is pierced and maddened and pained, and at the recollection of beauty is again delighted. And from both of them together the soul is oppressed at the strangeness of her condition, and is in a great strait and excitement, and in her madness can neither sleep by night nor abide in her place by day. And wherever she thinks that she will behold the beautiful one, thither in her desire she runs. And when she has seen him, and bathed herself in the waters of beauty, her constraint is loosened, and she is refreshed, and has no more pangs and pains; and this is the sweetest of all pleasures at the time, and is the reason why the soul of the lover will never forsake his beautiful one, whom he esteems above all; he has forgotten mother and brethren and companions, and he thinks nothing of the neglect and loss of his property; the rules and proprieties of life, on which he formerly prided himself, he now despises, and is ready to sleep like a servant, wherever he is allowed, as near as he can to his desired one, who is the object of his worship, and the physician who can alone assuage the greatness of his pain."

At the same time, two-thousand years ago, Plato describes the divided-self, and the fleeing into the world of constant distraction, of the human condition as if he is speaking of one of our contemporaries: "Now he who is not newly initiated or who has become corrupted, does not easily rise out of this world to the sight of true beauty in the other; he looks only at her earthly namesake, and instead of being awed at the sight of her, he is given over to pleasure, and like a brutish beast he rushes on to enjoy and beget; he consorts with wantonness, and is not afraid or ashamed of pursuing pleasure in violation of nature."

As has been said, the Nihilist cannot turn to the dead world of distractions. Everything has died. How does one begin to interpret this experience that no words can grasp? The world's religions may be of some help, but they can never settle the issue. Is there some language that can be developed in order to help one properly address the Nothing? Huxley sums up this need quite well:

“...the ultimate Reality is not clearly and immediately apprehended, except by those who have made themselves loving, pure in heart and poor in spirit. This being so, it is hardly surprising that a theology based upon the experience of nice, ordinary, unregenerate people should carry so little conviction. This kind of empirical theology is on precisely the same footing as an empirical astronomy, based upon the experience of naked-eye observers.”

Philosophy, or conceptual thinking, seems to help pave the way to allow for a better 'understanding' of the ineffable, but, even still, there is no new 'knowledge' gained. The universe will dissipate before your very eyes. The flow of 'information' will come at you at an infinite rate. You will be demanded to renounce, to let go, to show true humility. The non-movement as a result of a total lack of values, of an utter insignificance of the human world, goes hand in hand with a Quietist contemplative existence within the Nothing of the world. Why is it that the psychedelic experience is one which ushers in a mystical experience that confirms the meaninglessness of the world?

“...whilst in that state of abstraction rising higher, perceiving there is a place beyond any bodily condition, adding still and persevering further in practising wisdom, rejecting this fourth dhyâna, firmly resolved to persevere in the search, still contriving to put away every desire after form, gradually from every pore of the body there is perceived a feeling of empty release, and in the end this extends to every solid part, so that the whole is perfected in an apprehension of emptiness. In brief, perceiving no limits to this emptiness, there is opened to the view boundless knowledge. Endowed with inward rest and peace, the idea of 'I' departs, and the object of 'I'—clearly discriminating the non-existence of matter, this is the condition of immaterial life.” Buddha

If one wishes to rush to a 'conclusion' and attempt to wrap up the infinite within one of the worldly religions, in order to live in the world, in order to 'make sense' of such a confrontation, then one is only fleeing from Nihilism and ultimately doing a disservice to the 'something' that one meets on the psychedelic journey. This is not about belief or developing a system or trying to box in Nihilism. One must accept the utter mystery behind Nihilism as something too 'powerful' to be confined in the finite. There is only the Infinite Conclusion.

One encounters Nothingness in the Transcendent experience of Nihilism.

“Therewith, they learn that It is the Cause of all things and yet Itself is nothing, because It super-essentially transcends them all.” Pseudo-Dionysius

“In statements such as Eckhart's, God is equated with nothing.” Huxley

Huxley further goes on to confirm the Nihilist's experience of the Nothing of oneself:

“Cheap,” I commented. “Trivial. Like things in a five-and-ten.” And all this shoddiness existed in a closed, cramped universe. “It’s as though one were below decks in a ship,” I said. “A five-and-ten-cent ship.” And as I looked, it became very clear that this five-and-ten-cent ship was in some way connected with human pretensions, with the portrait of Cézanne, with A.B. among the Dolomites overacting his favorite character

in fiction. This suffocating interior of a dime-store ship was my own personal self; these gimcrack mobiles of tin and plastic were my personal contributions to the universe."

Why is this important? The 'truth' of the experience is one that is confirmed by those separated by time, space, culture, and so on. A repeating of the words of Huxley can be found in the mystic St. Molinos: "Knowing that thou art nothing, that thou canst do nothing, and art worth just nothing, thou wilt quietly embrace passive drynesses, thou wilt endure horrible desolations; thou wilt undergo spiritual martyrdoms and inward torments. By means of this Nothing thou must die in thy self, many ways, at all times, and all hours, Keeping thy self in Nothing, thou wilt bar the door against every thing that is not God". Molinos further states: "But the happy Soul which is gotten to this holy hatred of it self, lives overwhelmed, drowned and swallowed up in the depth of its own Nothing."

Within mystical experiences human truth, better put, human rationality is no longer a concern. There are 'things' that are brought forth that no human language can describe, that no human being can fully comprehend. The experience is one that must be dealt with subjectively.

"In life, man proposes, God disposes." Huxley

Smith describes his encounter with the Other as such: "The world into which I was ushered was strange, weird, uncanny, significant, and terrifying beyond belief." Smith, describing his experience himself in a Transcendental manner, also declares: "Revelations can be terrifying." The mystical experience is not like anything of this world.

Huxley describes a part of his psychedelic experience as follows: "And then there is the horror of infinity...I found myself all at once on the brink of panic. This, I suddenly felt, was going too far. Too far, even though the going was into intenser beauty, deeper significance. The fear, as I analyze it in retrospect, was of being overwhelmed, of disintegrating under a pressure of reality greater than a mind, accustomed to living most of the time in a cosy world of symbols, could possibly bear. The literature of religious experience abounds in references to the pains and terrors overwhelming those who have come, too suddenly, face to face with some manifestation of the *Mysterium tremendum*. In theological language, this fear is due to the incompatibility between man's egotism and the divine purity, between man's self-aggravated separateness and the infinity of God."

"Quite naturally, then, almost no one figures their time to be ill-spent in bickering about some point of scripture or a psycho-philosophical poser rather than in sizing up some superlative individuals who have called into question what we are or what we might be aside from slaves of our egos." Ligotti

Is there any better explanation for why philosophers and theologians have 'missed the mark' in their sand-trap of pursuing 'rationality' instead of direct experience? Is there any better reason one could give for the seemingly endless stagnation and frustration that ensues from the 'intellectualizing' of these issues? Is there any doubt as to why the dogmas of the naturalist and of the worldly 'religious' are trapped in a stalemate with their attempts to 'convince' one another with reason and rationality? Reason and rationality have their place, but if there is not an attempt to go beyond, then one necessarily can only obtain a constrained portion of the human condition.

Huxley sums it up with a question: "How many philosophers, how many theologians, how many professional educators have had the curiosity to open this Door in the Wall? The answer, for all practical purposes, is, None."

There is no need for a concern over 'spookiness' in any 'supernatural' or 'new age' sense. The particular mystical-type experiences that I have briefly mentioned are not anything special. By 'special', I mean that these experiences can be induced into any one willing to undertake such a task. There is no worry of any 'new age' or 'supernatural' powers underlying any of the claims made here. Any person in the proper set (psychological preparation) and setting (proper surroundings and environment), along with a definite intention for the pursuit is welcome to 'test' the results of such an experience for themselves. There is no need for years of meditation, chanting, yoga, or any other traditional 'religious' interlocutors; although these methods, and others, can be used in correlation with psychedelics which may bring out a fuller and deeper experience.

One is now simply left to interpret said experience. Is it wholly naturalistic? Is there anything veritcal about the psychedelic experience? Does the encounter with an Infinite Presence relate to an objective reality? What can be stated, in an emphatic manner, is that the entheogenic induced experience that one is thrown into, as unimaginable and other-worldly as something could be, it somehow not only doesn't contradict with the philosophy and insights of Nihilism (as laid out in these pages), but rather provides an affirmation, with a persuasiveness that is complete and omnipotent.

Still, this does not prove anything. While one is tempted to refer to the psychedelic experience as an encounter with the Other, with all its Transcendent, noetic, and paradoxical qualities, there is no explicit contradiction in reducing the experience down to a naturalist interpretation of a confusion of neurons and chemicals, and an 'other' that is the revealings of my subconscious unknown.

Regardless of what one holds about the Transcendent form of Nihilism, we get reduced back to our normal state of consciousness, left with the Nothing of the world. St. Theresa laments: "Oh, what a distress it is for my soul to have to return to hold commerce with this world after having had its conversation in heaven! To have to play a part in the sad farce of this earthly life!"

"This, however, is the sublime melancholy of our lot that every You must become an It in our world. However exclusively present it may have been in the direct relationship- as soon as the relationship has run its course or is permeated by means, the You becomes an object among objects, possibly the noblest one and yet one of them, assigned its measure and boundary." The actualization of the work involves a loss of actuality. Genuine contemplation never lasts long; the natural being that only now revealed itself to me in the mystery of reciprocity has again become describable, analyzable, classifiable- the point in which manifold systems of laws intersect." Buber

"How, in other words, can one be a saint and still organize scientific movements of world-historical importance? How does one lean on God and give over everything to Him and still stand on his own feet as a passionate human being? These are not rhetorical questions, they are real ones that go right to the heart of the problem of 'how to be a man'- a problem that no one can satisfactorily advise anyone else on, as the wise William James knew. The whole thing is loaded with ambiguity impossible to resolve." Becker

Extra Notes and Quotes

Things to add/expand upon-

1. "Soma" from Hindu traditions- do research
2. In your section on Transcendent experiences, you could propose that Nihilism's existential emptiness or meaninglessness is not an endpoint but rather a mirroring or earthly reflection of a higher, more unified state of consciousness described in Vedanta. This void or emptiness could be conceived as a form of 'Maya' (illusion), a state to be transcended, as proposed in Vedantic tradition, to reach the oneness of 'Brahman'. The journey from Nihilism's existential emptiness to Vedanta's concept of 'Brahman' could be seen as a metaphysical progression, one that both broadens and deepens the concept of Nihiltheism.
3. Vivekananda, an ardent proponent of Vedanta, emphasized the universality of these experiences, which can harmonize with your aim to reconcile different philosophical and religious traditions under the umbrella of Nihiltheism. By introducing these Vedantic ideas, your exploration of the Transcendent nature of Nihilistic experiences becomes more nuanced and globally inclusive.
4. The "Nihiltheism Summaries" have some good descriptions of the 'clearing of the path' after the Worldly experience of Nihilism, but before the Transcendent experience of Nihilism; make sure to review and incorporate what I feel works.
5. Make sure the phenomenology of the "Worldly"/diminished" and the "Transcendent/augmented" experiences is further drawn out with much more detail.
6. Narrate the idea of being 'dropped back down into the world': Explore the transition alongside the psychological disorientation after such Transcendent experiences. Delve into the feeling of having witnessed something extraordinary, and wanting to stay. Yet the Nothing of the world takes back over, and the irremovable doubt sets back in. Use these quotes probably here: These two quotes play into the difficulties of coming back into the Worldly Nothing, and the unending doubt that comes along with it: " _When we have tasted the sweetness of the Spirit, all that is flesh becomes insipid; that is, it profits us no more, and the ways of sense are no longer pleasing." _
7. Theresa of Avila- says the same thing- "Oh, what a distress it is for my soul to have to return to hold commerce with this world after having had its conversation in heaven! To have to play a part in the sad farce of this earthly life!" _
8. An importance of the sense of the 'Infinite' was that it was a Nothingness, it wasn't any thing, yet is was literally everything.
9. Investigate the idea of Transcendent being a part of the subconscious mind: Postulate on how the evolution of human consciousness over millions of years might be wired for this - and that these experiences could be innate parts of ourselves we encounter very rarely. Give substance to this concept by confronting how it might alter our perception of Transcendence and deepen our understanding of the self.
10. Explore explicitly a feeling of a sense of familiarity: Even beside its strange, otherworldly sense, the experiential communion with the Transcendent can generate a wrenching form of 'remembrance' or familiarity or "at home". Part of our natural selves intersect with these unfathomable experiences that reconnect us with our deepest psychological roots and memories. Maybe Plato's Forms/Theory of Recollection, find Plato's quote of Socrates saying we've had knowledge of the Forms before, mention Sister Eileen telling me at a young age I was with God, forever, before I was born.

In the Wholly-Other nature of the experience, there is the easy step of understanding how the conception of 'Hell' came to be. If one does not submit, if one is not humble, you will experience hell.

How does one 'participate'? How does one get ready for such an encounter? What about 'spontaneous' 'revelations' instead of 'pursued'? Write about the terrifying feeling of 'nothingness' how Otto, Molinos, etc. did and then how that relates to the hellish nature found in experiencing the wholly other. Did these people, like Tillich, who express the Naturalistic side of Nihilism, or Nihilism within the world, ever experience the sort of Mystical ecstasy that correlates, but must be distinguished from, the purely naturalistic side, the side that hears the indefinite call within the world, i.e. from me and beyond me? E.g. Nietzsche says he has no reason for believing in the true world; "One simply lacks any reason for convincing oneself that there is a true world.". Why is it important that I ask if they have? Is it because one gets to 'participate' with the Other directly that is only hinted at in the 'message' of Nihilism in it's earthly sense? The inability to speak about the psychedelic experience is 'proof' that there is an Infinite/finite gap. It's still a 'void', it's just that one looks into the void. Peace, confusion, learning/recollection, uncanny, terrifying, utterly satisfying.

Plato/Socrates-

"Few only retain an adequate remembrance of them; and they, when they behold here any image of that other world, are rapt in amazement, but they are ignorant of what this rapture means, because they do not clearly perceive. For there is no light of justice or temperance or any of the higher ideas which are precious to souls in the earthly copies of them: they are seen through a glass dimly; and there are few who, going to the images, behold in them the realities, and these only with difficulty."

"The lovers of knowledge are conscious that the soul was simply fastened and glued to the body—until philosophy received her, she could only view real existence through the bars of a prison, not in and through herself..."

Phaedo- "...I desire to prove to you that the real philosopher has reason to be of good cheer when he is about to die, and that after death he may hope to obtain the greatest good in the other world...For I deem that the true votary of philosophy is likely to be misunderstood by other men; they do not perceive that he is always pursuing death and dying; and if this be so, and he has had the desire of death all his life long, why when his time comes should he repine at that which he has been always pursuing and desiring?"

"...the rest of the world are of opinion that to him who has no sense of pleasure and no part in bodily pleasure, life is not worth having; and that he who is indifferent about them is as good as dead."

Look into quotes from St. Theresa Journal- pg. 166"

I should use this section on mysticism to really focus on Cioran, specifically *On the Heights of Despair* and *Tears and Saints* and Molinos. He has the most 'atheistic' mystical language and there are so many quotes and great descriptions of what I am attempting to put forth. The need to 'promote' the 'true' religious mindset found in Cioran, who is normally labeled as a 'nihilist'. This needs to be dispelled. This section will highlight 'Nihiltheism' that is not grounded 'simply' in saints or other 'Christian' or 'religious' context. Huxley and Smith is a good start, since they work from a psychedelic viewpoint, rather than an explicitly 'religious'. Use Cioran's quotes for mysticism in this section, but keep in mind his ideas on 'madness' or mental health for the 'Suicide' section.

“Where, for any reason, physical or moral, the psychological dispositions are unsatisfactory, the removal of obstacles by a drug or by ascetic practices will result in a negative rather than a positive spiritual experience. Such an infernal experience is extremely distressing, but may also be extremely salutary. There are plenty of people to whom a few hours in hell— the hell that they themselves have done so much to create— could do a world of good.” Huxley

The same experience of Nihilism- the Nothing of the world is a diminished variant of the Transcendent version. Nothingness is just the dissolution of the 'I', of the ego. The ego fears the Other.

“The instant cure of most of our religious ills would be to enter the Presence in

spiritual experience, to become suddenly aware that we are in God and that God is in us.” Tozer

“I am sorry sometimes that God no longer fills us with dread. If only we could feel again the primordial quiver of dread in front of the unknown!” Cioran

“How desist from what we shall never recover, from that pathetic and unheard of nothing which bears our name...we can vanquish it only by means of a sudden whirlwind which, sweeping away the ego, leaves us alone, without anyone, without ourselves...” Cioran

“Through psychedelics we are learning that God is not an idea, God is a lost continent in the human mind.” McKenna

“He gave us two words: one is intellectual knowledge, and the other is realization. That is to say, intellectual assent is within this realization, and realization is beyond it. Therefore intellectual assent is not sufficient. Every man can say this theory is right, but that is not realization; he must realize it. We can all say we understand that this is hypnotism, but that is not realization. That will be when the hypnotism will break — even for a moment. It will come in a flash; it must come. If you struggle it will come.” Vivekananda

“...the infinite distance of the finite from the infinite and, consequently, the negative judgment over any finite attempts to reach the infinite. The feeling of being consumed in the presence of the divine is a profound expression of man's relation to the holy.” Tillich

“then you will think it useless to express an opinion, to take a stand, to make an impression; the noises you have renounced increase the anxiety of your soul. after having struggled madly to solve all problems, after having suffered on the heights of despair, in the supreme hour of revelation, you will find that the only answer, the only reality, is silence.” Cioran

“And once our egos have been deposed, what would be left of us? By all recorded accounts, everything would be left except what Horwitz called “a vanity, an elaborate delusion, a ruse.” Ligotti

“Regardless of the life stories of U. G., Wren-Lewis, and Suzanne Segal, ego-death is a state that has nothing but anecdotal evidence to support it, which groups this phenomenon with mystical experiences and revealed religions.” Ligotti (this is an important quote which demands pessimism. No direct experience of the Other, regardless if it is still illusory or within the 'mind', and one is left with only the Nothing of the world)

“...‘the tragedy of the ego.’ This phrase fits like a glove into Zapffe’s theory of consciousness as a tragic blunder. Disappointingly, Metzinger goes on to say that “the tragedy of the ego dissolves because nobody is ever born and nobody ever dies.” This statement is borrowed from Zen Buddhism (the Heart Sutra) and loses something when translated from a monastery to a university lecture hall.” Ligotti

The 27th of August is when I experienced something Other. What an amazing experience! Understanding, mystery, out of body, fear, humility, and on and on. The entire universe dissolved before my very eyes. I have never experienced anything like it. The sky, the ocean, Bach! What an amazing sort of experience that I cannot imagine not experiencing. Bach uses the language of music, which is God's language, in order to explain the universe to me. The details are for further exploration, but Naturalism seems to be wholly defeated by my experience. I could say that it was simply “me”, but this does not seem to be a possibility.

I want my last breath to be the same breath that is stolen from me when I fully experience Bach. As insignificant as this brilliant piece of music is, with it's illusory nature of omnipotence, which screams from a containment within even the most advanced architecture of man, only goes to show how unremarkable even the greatest of human achievements appear when placed against the backdrop of the Infinite.

“Mysticism...is unsatisfactory in moral content. The ultimate reality of the world is not moral ('God is not good') and the mystic who unites himself with ultimate reality is uniting himself with a non-moral being, therefore he is not moral.” Huxley (this is very important, Nihiltheism, must be worked into the writing)

“The general acceptance of a doctrine that denies meaning and value to the world as a whole, while assigning them in a supreme degree to certain arbitrarily selected parts of the totality, can only have evil and disastrous results...We have thought of ourselves as members of supremely meaningful and valuable communities – deified nations, divine classes and what not – existing within a meaningless universe.” Huxley (just putting this here in order not to forget it. It doesn't belong with mysticism, but it's a strong quote)

“...ego-death is a state that has nothing but anecdotal evidence to support it, which groups this phenomenon with mystical experiences and revealed religions.” Ligotti

“A generation ago, in the psychedelic era, people opened themselves to the unconscious before they had the humility or the devotion to God to be able to handle it. The unconscious needs to be respected and approached with prudence.” Keating

[#Nihiltheism](#) [#mystical](#)

[The Religious Experience of Nihilism](#) 

[-Nihilism Preface-](#) [\(Edit\)](#) 

[The Abyssal Experience of Nihilism](#) [\(Edit\)](#) 

[The Uncanny Illusion of Naturalism](#) [\(Edit\)](#) 

[Madness, Nonexistence, and the Other](#) [\(Edit\)](#) 

[The Startling Encounter with Infinite Nothingness](#) 

[The Symbolic Resonance of Nothing](#) [\(Edit\)](#) 