

Journal314 Part IV 20-33 Recall Summary

Philosophical and Metaphysical Ideas (Journal314_20-33)

- The section of the document 'Journal314_20-33' discusses various philosophical and metaphysical ideas, starting with the concept that all reality is the expression of a unified, unchanging force, as declared by Bahnsen and characterized by different philosophers.
- Thomas Ligotti's ideas are presented, suggesting that people generally have a good opinion of themselves and their condition in the world, despite the fact that things are not always what they seem, and that our heads are full of illusions, as testified by scientists, philosophers, and spiritual figures.
- Ligotti also discusses the concept of pessimism, stating that pessimists are often sidelined in history and the media, and that they are immune to the influences of religions, countries, and other factors that drive human behavior, and that without belief in a higher power or comprehensive delusion, they would not be motivated to take extreme actions.
- The idea of a new humanity is proposed, where personal economic gain is no longer a motive, and the only defensible reason to work would be to help one another, with the possibility of euthanasia being decriminalized and offered in a humane way, raising questions about the value of human existence.
- The text also touches on the ideas of neuroscientists and geneticists, who have found that much of human thought and behavior is determined by neural wiring and heredity, rather than personal control, but who do not feel that this knowledge necessitates suicide or a reevaluation of human nature.
- The concept of the uncanny is introduced, describing a feeling of wrongness or unease, and the idea that our internal authority may be flawed, and that nothing is inherently right or wrong, a notion that is shared by philosophers such as Otto and Heidegger.
- The section concludes with an example of the uncanny, where everyday objects, such as shoes, can become abstracted and unfamiliar, leading to a sense of confusion and questioning about their nature and meaning.

The Human Desire for Meaning and the Uncanny

- The text explores the idea that the human desire for meaning and familiarity in life is challenged by the possibility that the world and our existence may be without inherent meaning, as philosopher Martin Heidegger questions why there should be something rather than nothing.
- The concept of moral realism is discussed, with determinists and indeterminists promoting some form of operative morality, which is seen as a necessary truth for human existence, allowing people to live with a sense of purpose and belonging, as noted by the idea that "without this truth, or 'truth,' we could not go on living as we always have and believe that being alive is all right."
- The text also touches on the idea that truly believing in determinism or the multi-verse could potentially lead to insanity, as it challenges the individual's sense of self and reality, with the question posed by Metzinger, "Can one really believe in determinism without going insane?"

The Buddha, the Scientific World-View, and Pessimism

- The example of [Siddhartha Gautama](#), also known as the Buddha, is given, who embarked on a quest to neutralize his ego by leaving behind his family, gods, and sociopolitical station, but it is noted that this path requires a near inhuman dedication, and few people have the stamina to follow it.
- The scientific world-view is mentioned as potentially damaging to human mental well-being, as noted by Metzinger, and cultural critic Jens Bjørneboe's statement that "he who hasn't experienced a full depression alone and over a long period of time— he is a child" suggests that true understanding and growth may require experiencing darkness and difficulty.
- The text also explores the idea that perfect knowledge can lead to a sense of nothingness and pain, as noted by Ligotti, who references Hume's idea that reason is a 'slave to the passions', and that emotions are what give life meaning, even if that meaning is arbitrary and inaccurate.
- Finally, the text discusses the relationship between [Buddhism](#) and pessimism, suggesting that the two philosophies are closely linked, with Buddhists

claiming to be realists rather than pessimists, but ultimately accepting the idea of dukkha, or suffering, as the primary reality of existence, which is a fundamentally pessimistic view.

Buddhism and Pessimism

- The concept of pessimism is met with incredulity, but Buddhism acknowledges that suffering is a fundamental aspect of human existence and that liberating oneself from it should be a lifelong goal, as stated in the document 'Journal314_20-33'.
- According to the text, no single system or approach can cater to all individuals, and the pursuit of truth through self-examination can lead to a solitary existence, as noted by [Vivekananda](#), who views this as a positive outcome.
- Buddhism's primary objective is to attain enlightenment, or [nirvana](#), which is a common goal shared with other religions, but human beings often prioritize the pleasures of the present world over the pursuit of enlightenment, and this is a challenge that Buddhism faces in its teachings.

Consciousness, Ego-Death, and Non-Dualistic Meta-Realities

- Consciousness creates the illusion of purpose and direction, leading individuals to strive for something, go somewhere, be someone, and know someone, in an attempt to escape the inherent meaninglessness of existence, which is a concept that is central to the discussion in 'Journal314_20-33'.
- The idea of ego-death, or the transcendence of the self, is supported by anecdotal evidence and is often associated with mystical experiences and revealed religions, and this concept is explored in the context of the document.
- If the ego is deposed, what remains of an individual is everything except the vanity and delusion that constitutes the self, according to Horwitz, which is a perspective that is presented in the text.
- Non-dualistic meta-realities, such as those found in [Buddhism](#), serve to make sense of human life, but they do not necessarily prioritize human well-being or happiness, instead viewing individuals as mere vehicles for a higher purpose, as discussed in 'Journal314_20-33'.

Doubt, Suspicion, and the Horror of Existence

- The introduction of doubt and suspicion can lead to a profound awareness of the horror and darkness that underlies human existence, and this realization can be overwhelming and inescapable, which is a theme that is explored in the document.
- The philosophers Becker and Zapffe concur that a full understanding of the human condition can be devastating, and that individuals often employ coping mechanisms, such as social games and personal preoccupations, to avoid confronting the reality of their situation, which is a concept that is relevant to the discussion in 'Journal314_20-33'.

Taboo Commonplaces and the Impermanence of Everything

- The concept of taboo commonplaces is discussed, where people accept the survival of entities that are extensions of themselves, such as families, heroes, religions, and countries, as a substitute for personal immortality, highlighting the human desire for continuity and legacy.
- The idea that all civilizations and species will eventually become defunct and that the universe itself has an expiration date is presented, emphasizing the impermanence of everything, and the universe is described as "nothing in motion", which is considered a crucial point.
- The pessimistic perspective is outlined, where everything is seen as recreational and lacking in significance unless it is directly related to understanding and eliminating human suffering, which is considered an insoluble problem that will persist as long as human beings exist.
- The futility of existence is expressed, with the notion that a non-linguistic modality would be needed to adequately convey the sense of uselessness of everything, and that any kind of existence is useless, with nothing being self-justifying, and everything being justified only in a relativistic sense.

Religious Perspectives and the Habitat of Unrealities

- The differences in perspectives between various religious groups, such as Christians, Jews, Muslims, and Buddhists, are highlighted, with Buddhists being more accepting of a relativistic system, while others struggle with the idea of a "potato-masher system of being".
- The concept of living in a "habitat of unrealities" is introduced, where people are disconnected from the natural environment and instead inhabit a world of illusions, with Zapffe's idea that humanity should not continue to exist on earth being mentioned, and the delusional nature of human existence being emphasized.
- The views of philosophers such as Zapffe and Ligotti are discussed, with both being critical of the human condition and the idea of existence on earth, and the idea that neuroscientists and geneticists, despite discovering that much of human thought and behavior is determined by neural wiring and heredity, do not feel compelled to consider suicide as a result of their findings.

Moral Realism and the Questioning of Existence

- The majority of people reproduce and do not question their existence, being resistant to pessimistic ideas and instead believing in a form of moral realism that supports their everyday reality and sense of self.
- Those who truly care about understanding their existence cannot help but be believers in some form of moral realism, which provides a sense of optimism and meaning in their lives, encompassing aspects such as country, loved ones, [job](#), and personal identity.
- It is only when individuals shed their allegiance to external factors like countries, gods, and families that they can begin to confront the concept of the self, which is rooted in consciousness and the sense of being a human entity, despite the lack of a universal definition of what it means to be human.
- The concept of self is closely tied to consciousness, and once all external qualifiers are stripped away, one is left standing before the door of consciousness, which can be a source of horror, as it reveals the true nature of existence.

The Scientific Worldview, Depression, and Nihilism

- The scientific worldview, as discussed by Metzinger, can be damaging to mental well-being, and the idea that humans are essentially puppets can be a difficult concept to accept, potentially leading to insanity.
- Cultural critic [Jens Bjørneboe](#) is quoted as saying that those who have not experienced a full depression alone and over a long period of time are like children, highlighting the profound impact of depression on one's perspective.
- Depression can reveal to individuals that there is nothing inherently compelling in the world, and that perfect knowledge can lead to perfect nothingness, which can be a painful realization for those seeking meaning in their lives.
- The alternatives to living a life of false meaning are to live as depressives or as individuals who acknowledge the truth about the world, and nihilism, as a threat to human continuance, is no longer a viable concept, as people have grown up within a nihilistic framework and do not experience it in the same way as previous generations.
- Nietzsche's philosophy, which refashions fate into freedom and makes the world's meaninglessness into something meaningful, has been popular among atheistic amoralists, and his materialistic mysticism provides a way for individuals to find meaning in a seemingly meaningless world.

The Nihilistic Experience and Human Mortality

- The text describes the nihilistic experience, where the realization of one's own mortality and the impermanence of all things becomes overwhelmingly apparent, leaving only horror as the ultimate reality.
- According to the text, humans are unique in their awareness of their own mortality, which sets them apart from other life forms and creates a sense of disconnection from the natural world, as noted in the statement "We are not from here" and "If we vanished tomorrow, no organism on this planet would miss us".
- The text also references the idea that human pleasure is limited and fleeting, and that the awareness of one's own mortality is what drives humans to take action and strive for survival, as stated in the phrase "If human pleasure did not have both a lid and a time limit, we would not bestir ourselves to do things that were not pleasurable, such as toiling for our subsistence".

Tønnessen, Ontological Despair, and the Reality of Horror

- The philosopher Tønnessen is mentioned, who believes that intellectual honesty must lead to ontological despair, and that reason can lead to a understanding of God through the lens of nothingness and despair, as stated in the phrase "Tønnessen believes that "intellectual honesty" must lead to "ontological despair"".
- The text concludes that horror is the only true reality, and that it operates autonomously, generating ontological havoc and rendering human existence insignificant, as stated in the phrase "Horror is more real than we are" and "That we all deserve punishment by horror is as mystifying as it is undeniable".
- The human condition is described as one of suffering and futility, where individuals are forced to confront the reality of their own mortality and the meaninglessness of existence, leading to a sense of desperation and hopelessness, as expressed in the phrase "Being alive: decades of waking up on time, then trudging through another round of moods, sensations, thoughts, cravings— the complete gamut of agitations— and finally flopping into bed to sweat in the pitch of dead sleep or simmer in the phantasmagorias that molest our dreaming minds".
- Ultimately, the text presents a bleak and pessimistic view of human existence, where there is no escape from the crushing reality of horror and nothingness, and where traditional concepts such as free will, redemption, and meaning are rendered obsolete, as stated in the phrase "No life story with a happy ending to tell, only a contrivance of horror, then nothingness— and nothing else".

Journal314_20-33: A Bleak and Nihilistic View

- The passage from 'Journal314_20-33' presents a bleak and nihilistic view of life, where there is no pleasure, no loving God, and no compassionate [Buddha](#) to provide comfort, and instead, Azathoth is in control, making human existence a mistake or a joke.
- The text suggests that the idea of eternal return is the most horrible concept in the universe, and that human beings are left to face the horrors of life on their

own, with no escape routes or ways to manage terror through isolation, anchoring, distraction, or sublimation.

- The passage also touches on the idea that nature did not design humans to feel too good for too long, and that the belief in long-lasting pleasures is a deceptive but adaptive concept that helps with the survival of the species, and that people are expected to feel good enough for long enough to avoid complaining.
- The text criticizes the societal pressure to be positive and to avoid complaining, suggesting that complainers will not succeed or influence people, and that those who are pessimistic or depressive are often blamed and ostracized, with the implication that they should either conform to societal norms or be forsaken.
- The passage ultimately presents a pessimistic and nihilistic worldview, where the individual is left to face the harsh realities of life without any hope of escape or redemption, and where the only choice is to conform to the fabricated world or be left behind, with the author suggesting that this is the reality of human existence, and that it is up to each individual to decide how to navigate this bleak landscape.
- The text mentions various concepts and figures, including the idea of the "eternal return", Azathoth, and the "Last Messiah", which are all presented as part of a larger narrative that emphasizes the futility and horror of human existence, and the ways in which societal pressure and expectations can contribute to this sense of despair and hopelessness.

Societal Pressure, Conformity, and Thought Criminals

- The passage describes a societal attitude that rejects criticism and negative thoughts, embracing a mindset that prioritizes contentment and conformity, with the phrase "Up the Conspiracy and down with Consciousness" serving as a guiding principle.
- The text argues that individuals who express dissatisfaction or pessimism are dismissed as "thought criminals" and are encouraged to either conform to societal norms or leave, implying that there is no alternative to the existing system.

Schopenhauer, Disillusionment, and the Importance of Justice

- The passage quotes philosopher [Arthur Schopenhauer](#), who notes that people often become disillusioned with the tricks and illusions of life when they are repeated, and that humans have created unnecessary needs and desires, such as luxury and material possessions, which can lead to boredom and misery.
- Schopenhauer's philosophy is referenced as highlighting the importance of justice, love of mankind, and the denial of the will to live as a path to redemption, but this is presented in contrast to the prevailing societal attitude that values conformity and ignorance over critical thinking and self-awareness.
- The text suggests that individuals who are not content with the status quo are marginalized and dismissed, with their thoughts and feelings deemed "invalid, inauthentic, or whatever dismissive term we care to hang on you," and are encouraged to numb themselves with substances or distractions rather than challenging the existing system.
- The overall tone of the passage is one of satire and social commentary, critiquing a society that values conformity and ignorance over critical thinking and self-awareness, and highlighting the tensions between individual freedom and societal expectations.

True Christianity and the Penitentiary of the World

- The author's doctrine is considered the only true Christian philosophy, as it aligns with the spirit of the New Testament, which is rooted in asceticism, the denial of the will to live, and this concept is also reflected in the wisdom of various ages and philosophies, including Brahmanism, [Buddhism](#), and the teachings of Greek philosophers like Empedocles and Pythagoras, as well as [Cicero](#).
- The author suggests that true Christianity regards human existence as a consequence of sin and error, and that viewing the world as a penitentiary can serve as a guiding principle for navigating life and promoting tolerance, patience, and love for others.

- The author notes that individuals with a noble or genius-level soul may feel like prisoners in a world filled with common individuals, leading them to isolate themselves, and that human existence is marked by a brief period of life surrounded by vast periods of non-existence, which can evoke feelings of rebellion and discontent.
- The author argues that happiness is inconceivable in a world characterized by constant change and impermanence, as described by [Plato](#), and that humans spend their lives striving for something that will bring them happiness, but often end up disappointed and unfulfilled.
- The author challenges the idea that pleasure outweighs pain in the world, using the example of one animal eating another to illustrate the brutality of existence, and suggests that misfortune can have its uses, as a world without challenges would lead to boredom and stagnation.
- The author acknowledges that their philosophy may be seen as comfortless, but asserts that it is based on truth, and that people who prefer comforting doctrines should seek out priests or sham philosophers, rather than expecting genuine philosophers to compromise their principles.

Boredom, Suffering, and the Philosophies of Ethics

- The text discusses the concept of boredom and suffering, highlighting that boredom is a form of suffering unique to humans, as animals do not experience it in the same way, and it is often a result of the human ability to contemplate the future and the meaning of life.
- The author references various philosophers, including the Greeks and the Hindoos, who have different approaches to ethics, with the Greeks focusing on achieving a happy life and the Hindoos aiming to free and redeem individuals from life altogether, as stated in the Sankhya Karika.
- The text also explores the idea of a "realm of finality" and the concept of an infinite existence, exposed to no attack from without, and needing nothing to support it, which is discussed in the context of Platonic philosophy and the denial of the will to live.

William James, Nihilistic Depression, and the Emptiness of Life

- The author quotes [William James](#), who shares his personal experience of nihilistic depression and a horrifying fear of his own existence, triggered by the image of an epileptic patient, which made him realize the insecurity of life and the possibility of suffering.
- James' experience is used to illustrate the point that existence has no real value in itself, and that boredom is a feeling of the emptiness of life, which can be a direct proof of this concept, and the author also references Tolstoy, who quotes [the Buddha](#), Solomon, and Schopenhauer to support this idea.
- The text concludes by highlighting the different ways in which people cope with the reality of suffering and the meaninglessness of life, with Tolstoy identifying only four ways in which men of his class and society meet this situation, and the author implying that these ways may not be sufficient to address the deeper existential questions.

Healthy-Mindedness, the Sick Soul, and the Evil Facts of Reality

- The text discusses the concept of "healthy-mindedness" and its limitations, as well as the idea of a "sick soul" that is more aware of the evil and suffering in the world, with references to the thoughts of Tolstoy and the ideas of William James.
- Tolstoy's experiences with despair and suicidal thoughts are mentioned, and how he was drawn to the idea of a "thirst for God" as a way to escape his feelings of desperation, highlighting the limitations of a purely intellectual or rational approach to life.
- The text also critiques the idea of "healthy-mindedness" as a philosophical doctrine, arguing that it is inadequate because it refuses to account for the evil facts of reality, and that these evil facts may be a key to understanding the significance of life, with James suggesting that this approach can be overly optimistic and dismissive of the darker aspects of human experience.

Healthy-Mindedness, Christianity, and the Negation of Evil

- The concept of "healthy-mindedness" is further explored in relation to Christianity and the idea of a religion that focuses on the good and ignores or denies the evil aspects of the universe, with examples given of individuals who embody this type of temperament, such as those who are content with the finite and shielded from morbid repining.
- The text also touches on the idea that even those who do not identify with the "healthy-minded" type may still find themselves agreeing with some of its principles, and that there can be a tension between this approach and the more pessimistic or aware approach of the "sick soul", with references to the thoughts of Martin Luther and the idea that evil is irrational and should not be pinned down or preserved in any final system of truth.
- The concept of evil is described as a negative existence, a lack of goodness, and an "alien unreality" that should be negated, with Augustine's perspective being that evil is simply the absence of good, and the Other world is beyond good and evil.

Pity, Pain, Fear, and World-Sickness

- The idea of pity, pain, and fear is introduced as a potential key to understanding the meaning of a situation, and a quote from Luther is mentioned, where he says he would give up his chance of Paradise rather than live forty years more.
- The text discusses the concept of "world-sickness," where the human being's sensitiveness is increased, and the good quality of successful moments is spoiled, with all natural goods perishing, including riches, fame, love, youth, health, and pleasure, leaving only dust and disappointment.
- The spectre of universal death and the all-encompassing blackness is highlighted as a fundamental issue that healthy-mindedness cannot adequately address, with the typical response of "get out into the open air" or "cheer up" being dismissed as a rational answer to the deeper troubles that lie beneath.
- The text argues that a life not correlated with death, a health not liable to illness, and a kind of good that will not perish are needed, with the current goods of nature being insufficient, and the fact that we can die and be ill is

what perplexes us, making the present moment of living and being well irrelevant to that perplexity.

- The naturalistic look at life is criticized for ending in sadness, with old age having the last word, and the evil background being always present, even if healthy-mindedness tries to ignore and forget it, and the text concludes that the significance and value of any present fact depend on the remoter schemes and hopes with which it is related.

Pessimism, Naturalism, and the Cold Gloom of Reality (Journal314_20-33)

- The text from 'Journal314_20-33' discusses the concept of pessimism and the effects of naturalism on human perception, citing Heisman's quote that the glow and gilding of life vanish when considering the cold and gloom of the ultimate reality.
- According to the text, naturalism, influenced by recent cosmological speculations, portrays mankind as being in a desperate situation, similar to people living on a frozen lake with no escape, awaiting the inevitable day when the ice will melt and they will be drowned.
- The text also explores the idea that extreme unhappiness can lead to a state where the goods of nature are entirely forgotten, and all sentiment of their existence vanishes from the mental field, requiring a pathological melancholy that forces the individual to ignore all good.
- The author notes that such sensitiveness and susceptibility to mental pain are rare in individuals with a normal nervous constitution, and are often associated with a neurotic constitution, which has its source in the animal and spiritual region of the subject's being.

Negativity, Deadness, and the Search for Metaphysical Solutions

- The text describes a state of negativity and deadness, where the world is stripped of all emotion and significance, and the individual is left with a sense of unreality and disconnection, as if living in another century.

- The author also mentions that in some cases, this state of melancholy can lead to a profound astonishment and a search for a metaphysical solution, as the individual struggles to reconcile the double-faced and unhomelike nature of the world.
- Furthermore, the text touches on the idea that in extreme cases of melancholia, the individual may experience hallucinations and delusions, resulting in a state of desperation and overwhelming horror, where the universe coagulates into a material of unending terror.
- The conception of evil is not just an intellectual perception, but a profound and overwhelming sensation that can render all other thoughts and consolations irrelevant, and it is in these moments of desperation that the true core of the religious problem emerges, which is the need for help and relief.

Complete Religions, Unification, and the Coexistence of Good and Evil

- The most complete religions are those that acknowledge and address the pessimistic elements of human experience, recognizing that natural good is insufficient and transient, and that it can even be an obstacle to achieving true spiritual good.
- The process of unification and inner unity, as experienced by individuals like [Saint Augustine](#) and Alline, can bring a sense of relief and happiness, and it may occur gradually or abruptly, through altered feelings, powers of action, intellectual insights, or mystical experiences.
- However, for some individuals, like Bunyan and Tolstoy, the experience of suffering and bitterness can be so profound that it cannot be entirely overcome, and their redemption is into a universe that acknowledges the coexistence of good and evil, with the sadness and despair being preserved as a minor ingredient in the heart of their faith.
- Tolstoy's perceptions of evil, in particular, remained unmodified, and he continued to critique the official values and institutions of his time, while Bunyan's experience led him to renounce all worldly attachments and to trust in God through [Christ](#), embracing the grave as his house and darkness as his bed.

Saintliness, Self-Surrender, and the Precept of Love

- The character of saintliness is marked by spiritual emotions being the habitual centre of personal energy, and it can manifest in different ways, including asceticism and self-surrender, which can sometimes turn into self-immolation, and it is possible to identify a composite photograph of universal saintliness that is common to all religions.
- The saintly person experiences a profound transformation, where they find pleasure in sacrifice and asceticism, demonstrating their loyalty to a higher power, and this transformation is characterized by a heightened sensitivity to inner inconsistency or discord, making mixture and confusion intolerable.
- The precept "Love your enemies" is not self-contradictory, but rather an extreme limit of magnanimity, and if radically followed, it would involve a significant breach with instinctive springs of action and the present world's arrangements, leading to a critical point where one is born into another kingdom of being.

Penance, Sacrifice, and Surrender to Providence

- The impulse to expiate and do penance is a spontaneous expression of self-despair and anxiety, and in the form of loving sacrifice, ascetic discipline of the severest sort may be the fruit of highly optimistic religious feeling, as seen in the examples of Hindu fakirs, Buddhist monks, Mohammedan dervishes, Jesuits, and Franciscans, who all idealize poverty as the loftiest individual state.
- The saintly life is characterized by the recurring note of surrendering to God's providence without reserve, taking no thought for the morrow, and selling all one's possessions to give to the poor, with the belief that only through ruthless and reckless sacrifice will higher safety arrive.

Taoism, Emptiness, and Non-Action

- The concept of [Taoism](#) is also explored, where the [Tao](#) that can be described is not the enduring and unchanging Tao, and the sage manages affairs without doing anything, keeping people without knowledge and without desire, and

avoiding action, which leads to good order being universal, with the Tao being likened to the emptiness of a vessel, and the sages dealing with people without benevolence, just like heaven and earth deal with all things.

- The text also references the idea that when wealth and honours lead to arrogancy, this brings its own evil, and that the saintly person must order all their mind's objects and occupations with reference to their spiritual excitement, with whatever is unspiritual being repugnant, as seen in the examples of Suso's mortifications and the idealization of poverty by various religious groups.

Withdrawal into Obscurity and the Way of Heaven (Journal314_20-33)

- The text from 'Journal314_20-33' presents various philosophical ideas and reflections, including the concept that when one's work is done and their name is distinguished, it is best to withdraw into obscurity, as stated in the phrase "When the work is done, and one's name is becoming distinguished, to withdraw into obscurity is the way of Heaven."
- The importance of emptiness and the empty space is highlighted, as it is on the empty space that the use of things depends, such as the empty hollowness of vessels, the empty space within an apartment, and the empty space for the axle in a wheel.
- The text also warns against the dangers of excess and the pursuit of worldly desires, stating that the five hues of color, the five notes of music, and the five flavors can deprive one of their senses, and that the sage seeks to satisfy the craving of the belly, not the eyes, as expressed in the phrase "the sage seeks to satisfy (the craving of) the belly, and not the (insatiable longing of the) eyes."
- The idea that having a physical body makes one liable to great calamity is also presented, with the statement "What makes me liable to great calamity is my having the body (which I call myself); if I had not the body, what great calamity could come to me?"

The Tao: The Equable, the Inaudible, and the Subtle

- The text describes the [Tao](#) as something that cannot be seen, heard, or grasped, and is referred to as "the Equable," "the Inaudible," and "the Subtle," and that it is the Form of the Formless and the Semblance of the Invisible, with the phrase "We look at it, and we do not see it, and we name it 'the Equable.'"
- The importance of renouncing sageship, wisdom, benevolence, and righteousness is emphasized, as it is believed that this would be better for the people, and that it would lead to a more natural and harmonious state, as stated in the phrase "If we could renounce our sageship and discard our wisdom, it would be better for the people a hundredfold."
- The text also touches on the idea that learning and knowledge can be a source of trouble, and that simplicity and humility are to be valued, with the statement "When we renounce learning we have no troubles."

The Author, the Tao, and the Grandest Forms of Active Force

- The author describes themselves as being different from others, feeling listless and still, and having a mind like that of a stupid man, but values the nursing-mother, the Tao, and recognizes that the grandest forms of active force come from the Tao, as expressed in the phrase "The grandest forms of active force From Tao come, their only source."
- The concept of the [Tao](#) is described as profound, dark, and obscure, with all things enduring in their essences, and it is the Mother of all things, giving them what they need and making them complete.
- The Tao is considered unchanging and has no name, with simplicity and a lack of desire being key to achieving a state of rest and stillness, allowing all things to go right as if of their own will.

The Sage, Non-Violence, and the Hidden Tao

- The sage, or wise person, is described as someone who becomes the Head of all Officers when employed, and in their greatest regulations, they employ no violent measures, instead putting away excessive effort, extravagance, and easy indulgence.

- The importance of calm and repose is emphasized, with victory by force of arms being considered undesirable, as it would involve delighting in the slaughter of men, which would prevent one from getting their will in the kingdom.
- The [Tao](#) is said to be hidden, but it is what imparts to all things what they need and makes them complete, and those who hear about it and earnestly carry it into practice are considered scholars of the highest class.

The Violent, Non-Action, and the Teaching Without Words

- The violent and strong are said not to die their natural death, and the advantage of doing nothing with a purpose is highlighted, with few people in the world attaining to the teaching without words and the advantage arising from non-action.
- The importance of contentment and purity is emphasized, with purity and stillness giving the correct law to all under heaven, and the sufficiency of contentment being an enduring and unchanging sufficiency.
- The text also warns against the dangers of ambition, discontent, and the desire to constantly be getting more, stating that these are the greatest guilt, calamity, and fault, and that one can understand all that takes place under the sky without going outside their door, and see the Tao of Heaven without looking out from their window.

Contentment, Purity, and the Dangers of Ambition

- The importance of contentment and purity is emphasized, with purity and stillness giving the correct law to all under heaven, and the sufficiency of contentment being an enduring and unchanging sufficiency.
- The text also warns against the dangers of ambition, discontent, and the desire to constantly be getting more, stating that these are the greatest guilt, calamity, and fault, and that one can understand all that takes place under the sky without going outside their door, and see the [Tao](#) of Heaven without looking out from their window.

- The sages are described as having gained knowledge without needing to travel, given names to things without seeing them, and accomplished their goals without a specific purpose, highlighting their unique understanding and approach to the world.

Learning, the Tao, and the Diminishment of Actions

- The text contrasts the approach of those who devote themselves to learning, seeking to increase their knowledge daily, with those who devote themselves to the Tao, seeking to diminish their actions and desires, ultimately arriving at a state of non-action, where they can accomplish everything without purposeful intent.
- The sage is characterized as having no fixed mind of their own, instead making the mind of the people their own, and being good and sincere to all, regardless of how they are treated, in order to bring out the goodness and sincerity in others.
- The [Tao](#) is revered as the origin of all things under the sky, and is considered the mother of all, with those who understand and embody its qualities being able to live a life free from peril and laborious exertion.

The Sage, Humility, and the Origin of All Things

- The sage is characterized as having no fixed mind of their own, instead making the mind of the people their own, and being good and sincere to all, regardless of how they are treated, in order to bring out the goodness and sincerity in others.
- The Tao is revered as the origin of all things under the sky, and is considered the mother of all, with those who understand and embody its qualities being able to live a life free from peril and laborious exertion.
- The text warns against the dangers of excessive desire, ambition, and action, citing the example of princes who prioritize wealth and power, and instead advocates for a simple and humble approach to life, exemplified by the infant who embodies the attributes of the Tao.

Excessive Desire, the Infant, and Mysterious Agreement

- The importance of humility and silence is emphasized, with those who truly understand the [Tao](#) being reluctant to speak about it, and instead choosing to keep their mouth closed and blend in with others, in a state of "Mysterious Agreement".
- The text also discusses the negative consequences of excessive legislation, prohibition, and action, citing the example of a kingdom where such approaches have led to poverty, disorder, and crime, and instead advocates for a approach of non-action and freedom from purpose, allowing the people to transform and correct themselves.

Excessive Legislation, Non-Action, and the Interplay of Happiness and Misery

- The interplay between happiness and misery is highlighted, with the suggestion that one is always accompanied by the other, and that attempts to correct or impose order can ultimately lead to distortion and evil.
- The text concludes by cautioning against the delusion of thinking that correction and legislation can solve all problems, and instead suggests that a more nuanced and humble approach is needed, one that recognizes the complexity and interconnectedness of all things.

The Sage's Simplicity, Non-Desire, and Unlearning

- The sage is described as being straightforward and bright, but not dazzling or harmful to others, and is said to act without thinking of acting, conduct affairs without feeling trouble, and consider what is small as great.
- The sage does not desire what other men desire, does not prize things that are difficult to get, and learns what other men do not learn, instead turning back to what the multitude of men have passed by, and thus helps the natural development of all things.

- The words of the sage are easy to know and practise, but few people are able to do so because they do not understand the originating and all-comprehending principle and authoritative law behind them, and those who know the sage are few and therefore prize him highly.

Knowing and Not Knowing, and the Value of the Sage

- It is considered the highest attainment to know and yet think we do not know, while not knowing and yet thinking we do know is considered a disease, as noted by philosophers such as Socrates and Maya.
- The sage knows and loves himself, but does not parade his knowledge or set a value on himself, and avoids indulging in ordinary life, instead avoiding weariness by not acting thoughtlessly, and this is reflected in the idea that contemplating and meditating on death is important for Dharma practice, as noted in [Buddhism](#).

Self-Love, Thoughtless Action, and Contemplating Death

- The sage knows and loves himself, but does not parade his knowledge or set a value on himself, and avoids indulging in ordinary life, instead avoiding weariness by not acting thoughtlessly, and this is reflected in the idea that contemplating and meditating on death is important for Dharma practice, as noted in Buddhism.
- According to Buddhist teachings, contemplating death prevents laziness and attachment to the things of life, and [the Buddha](#) is described as coming forth to rescue all flesh from the bondage of folly and ignorance, with the [Bodhisattva](#) being deeply affected by the pain of age and the misery of decay.
- The text also quotes Pascal, who notes that if all men could learn to sit in their room, most bad things would be eliminated, highlighting the importance of self-reflection and introspection in achieving wisdom and avoiding harm to others.

- Ultimately, the sage and the Buddhist teachings emphasize the importance of living a simple and self-aware life, avoiding attachment to worldly desires and fears, and cultivating wisdom and compassion in order to achieve a state of inner peace and liberation.

The King, the Bodhisattva, and the Impermanence of Life (Journal314_20-33)

- The passage from 'Journal314_20-33' describes a king who, despite being aware of the suffering caused by sickness, lives a life of joy and ignorance, surrounded by worldly pleasures, and later grieves over the pain of sickness, dwelling in the seclusion of his palace.
- The king attempts to distract himself from his thoughts by observing and improving his gardens, selecting beautiful women to attend to him, and removing any offensive sights, but this distraction is short-lived as he is reminded of the inevitability of death and decay.
- The prince, who is later referred to as [Bodhisattva](#), is perplexed by the delusion of worldly men who, despite seeing the body brought to dust, continue to live carelessly, and he reflects on the impermanence of life, echoing the thoughts of philosophers such as Pascal, [Vivekananda](#), Heidegger, and Kempus.

The Prince, the Women, and the Pursuit of Serious Thought

- The women in the king's palace attempt to arouse the prince's feelings with their beauty and charms, but he remains unaffected, collected, and firm, and instead is driven to serious thought, witnessing the strange conduct of the women and understanding their design to disconcert his mind.
- The Bodhisattva reflects on the ignorance and delusion that overshadows the minds of the women, who are unaware of the impermanence of youthful beauty and the inevitability of old age, disease, and death, and he considers it a great distress that they do not exert themselves to consider these realities and instead indulge in sport and laughter.

The Human Condition, Mortality, and the Search for True Happiness (Journal314_20-33)

- The passage from 'Journal314_20-33' discusses the human condition, highlighting the impermanence of things and the inevitability of old age, disease, and death, which fills the heart with sadness and heaviness, as noted by the author, who references Pascal.
- The author reflects on how the knowledge of mortality and the transience of human joys can rob them of satisfaction, and that yielding to the power of love despite this knowledge is akin to behaving like beasts, lacking in self-awareness and foresight.
- The text also touches on the idea that true happiness and peace can only be achieved by letting go of worldly desires and attachments, as exemplified by the prince who becomes disillusioned with the pleasures of the world and seeks a more profound and lasting sense of fulfillment.

The Prince's Journey and the Attainment of Samâdhi

- The prince's journey is marked by his rejection of the worldly pleasures offered by his father, the king, and his subsequent search for a more meaningful and permanent form of happiness, which ultimately leads him to a state of perfect peace and enlightenment, described as Samâdhi.
- The author also introduces the figure of a Shâman, who is similarly troubled by the thought of old age, disease, and death, and is searching for a way to escape the cycle of suffering, seeking a happiness that is not subject to decay or impermanence.
- The passage concludes with the prince's encounter with various people in the city, all of whom are driven by their own desires and fears, highlighting the universal human experience of attachment and suffering, and the need for a deeper understanding and acceptance of the nature of reality.

The Prince's Request, the King's Advice, and the Allure of Worldly Duties

- The prince's heart was filled with joy upon hearing the words "separation and association," which led him to express his dread of age, disease, and death, and to respectfully request permission to become a hermit in search of "true deliverance."
- The prince's father advised him to suppress the thought of leaving home and instead undertake his worldly duties, find delight in getting an illustrious name, and then give up his home and family, but the prince besought his father to grant him life without end, no disease, no undesirable old age, and no decay of earthly possessions in order to give up the thought of leaving home.
- When his father refused to grant him these prayers, the prince again besought him to let him go and leave his home, comparing his life to dwelling in a burning house and emphasizing the need to seek an explanation for his doubts, even if it meant seeking it in an unrighteous way.

The Prince's Resolve, the Women's Temptations, and the Burning House

- The royal father, seeing his son's mind firmly fixed, commanded attendant women to provoke the prince's mind to pleasure, but the prince was unmoved and instead looked upon the women with a changed perspective, seeing them as uninviting and repulsive, and questioning their disposition and trustworthiness.
- The prince's father and others attempted to persuade him to stay, citing the need for him to feel pity for those who would be affected by his departure, including his loving mother who had cherished him kindly, and advising him that he could practise a hermit's duties in his home without needing to enter the forest wilds.
- The prince ultimately remained resolute in his decision, driven by his fear of birth, old age, disease, and death, and acknowledging that his disobedience and disregard for his father's kindness were motivated by his desire to escape the inevitable doom of death, which he believed would come to those who neglected right consideration about their present life.

The Hermit's Life, Sensual Pleasures, and the Evils of Existence

- The speaker of the text is reflecting on their decision to live a hermit's life, away from the sensual pleasures and misery of the world, and is convinced that this choice is necessary to achieve wisdom and escape the evils of birth, old age, and death.
- The speaker cites their own experiences and the teachings of wise individuals, including Theresa of Avila and St. Farigno, to support their decision to renounce worldly desires and seek a life of quietness and rest.
- The text emphasizes the importance of self-denial, purity, and the rejection of covetousness and lustful desires, which are seen as the root causes of sorrow and misery, and instead advocates for a life of moderation, restraint, and spiritual pursuit.

Self-Denial, Purity, and the Rejection of Worldly Desires

- The speaker cites their own experiences and the teachings of wise individuals, including Theresa of Avila and St. Farigno, to support their decision to renounce worldly desires and seek a life of quietness and rest.
- The text emphasizes the importance of self-denial, purity, and the rejection of covetousness and lustful desires, which are seen as the root causes of sorrow and misery, and instead advocates for a life of moderation, restraint, and spiritual pursuit.
- The speaker argues that the wise person should not be attached to worldly pleasures or desires, and should instead seek to destroy the risings of desire and cultivate a sense of detachment and inner peace.
- The text also touches on the theme of impermanence, noting that everything in life is transient, including wealth, power, and even life itself, and that true peace and happiness can only be achieved by letting go of attachment to these things.

Impermanence, Deliverance, and the Path of Non-Violence

- The speaker expresses a desire to escape the cycle of birth, old age, and death, and to find a sure mode of deliverance, and believes that this can be achieved through a life of simplicity, humility, and spiritual discipline.
- The text critiques the idea of seeking religious merit through violent or harmful means, such as slaughter, and instead advocates for a path of non-violence, compassion, and moral conduct.
- Throughout the text, the speaker emphasizes the importance of living a simple, austere life, free from the distractions and temptations of the world, and of cultivating a deep sense of inner peace, wisdom, and spiritual awareness.

Emptiness, Self-Realization, and the Katha Upanishad (Journal314_20-33)

- The text from 'Journal314_20-33' discusses the concept of emptiness and the path to self-realization, citing various spiritual and philosophical sources, including Buddhist teachings and the Katha Upanishad, a Hindu scripture.
- According to the text, the state of emptiness is not just the absence of something, but rather a transcendent state that goes beyond all forms of mutual relationship, subject and object, and birth and death, as described by [Daisetz Teitaro Suzuki](#).
- The Katha Upanishad is quoted, where [Nachiketa](#), a young seeker, is offered various worldly pleasures by the king of death, but instead chooses to ask about the secret of death and the possibility of an afterlife, demonstrating his preference for perennial joy over passing pleasure.
- The text highlights the choice between wisdom and ignorance, where the wise recognize the difference between abiding joy and fleeting pleasure, and strive for self-realization, while the ignorant are led astray by their senses and vain learning.

Wisdom, Ignorance, and the Transcendence of Duality

- The text highlights the choice between wisdom and ignorance, where the wise recognize the difference between abiding joy and fleeting pleasure, and strive for self-realization, while the ignorant are led astray by their senses and vain learning.
- The concept of emptiness is further elaborated as a state of absolute emptiness that transcends all forms of duality, and is described as a "zero full of infinite possibilities" and a "void of inexhaustible contents", as quoted from Cioran, emphasizing its role in making all things possible.
- The text also touches on the idea that true deliverance is achieved by transcending material limitations and bodily existence, and that this state is characterized by inward rest, peace, and the absence of the concept of "I", as described in the context of Buddhist teachings and the Katha Upanishad.

True Deliverance, Inward Rest, and the Absence of "I"

- The text also touches on the idea that true deliverance is achieved by transcending material limitations and bodily existence, and that this state is characterized by inward rest, peace, and the absence of the concept of "I", as described in the context of Buddhist teachings and the Katha Upanishad.
- The text discusses the importance of Self-realization and the rarity of individuals who make it their supreme goal in life, with the guidance of an illumined teacher being crucial in attaining this state.
- The speaker renounces earthly desires and treasures, recognizing their transience, and instead seeks eternal fulfillment through the instruction of a wise teacher, such as [Nachiketa](#), who has renounced worldly desires and powers.

Self-Realization, Earthly Desires, and the Guidance of an Illumined Teacher

- The text discusses the importance of Self-realization and the rarity of individuals who make it their supreme goal in life, with the guidance of an illumined teacher being crucial in attaining this state.
- The speaker renounces earthly desires and treasures, recognizing their transience, and instead seeks eternal fulfillment through the instruction of a wise teacher, such as Nachiketa, who has renounced worldly desires and powers.
- The text references various philosophers, including Luther, [Kierkegaard](#), Nietzsche, and mystics, highlighting the idea that enlightenment cannot be achieved through worldly works or rituals, but rather through a deeper understanding of the Self.

O M, the Godhead, and the Supreme Goal of Life

- The symbol "O M" is introduced as the highest symbol of the Godhead, representing the ultimate reality that brings complete fulfillment of all longings, and is considered the greatest support to all seekers.
- The text emphasizes that the Self cannot be known through scriptural study, intellectual understanding, or hearing discourses, but rather through direct experience and revelation, which is only possible for those who have disciplined their minds, controlled their senses, and practiced meditation.
- The importance of discrimination, a one-pointed mind, and a pure heart is stressed, as these qualities enable individuals to attain the supreme goal of life, which is to be united with the Lord of Love, [Brahman](#), the hidden Self in everyone.

Meditation, Wisdom, and the Path to Liberation

- Meditation is highlighted as a means to deepen one's understanding and experience of the Self, allowing individuals to go beyond the world of words and thoughts and into the realm of wisdom and superconsciousness.
- The text concludes by encouraging seekers to wake up, seek guidance from an illumined teacher, and embark on the challenging but ultimately liberating path of Self-realization, which leads to eternal freedom from the cycle of death and rebirth.

The Afterlife, Spiritual Liberation, and the Cycle of Rebirth (Journal314_20-33)

- The text from 'Journal314_20-33' discusses the concept of the afterlife and the attainment of spiritual liberation, citing that those who rely solely on good works and sacrifices are ultimately subject to the cycle of birth, death, and rebirth, and are considered fools who are dwelling in darkness and ignorance.
- According to the text, true liberation can be achieved by practising penance and faith, and by acquiring freedom from all desires, as nothing eternal can be gained by what is not eternal, and it is recommended that one should approach a learned Guru to understand this concept.

Montaigne, Philosophy, and the Preparation for Death

- The text also quotes Montaigne, who states that the study of philosophy is a preparation for death, and that as one becomes less attached to the commodities of life, they will become less fearful of death, and that living a long life does not shorten the time one will be dead.
- Montaigne also emphasizes the importance of disengaging oneself from worldly relations and accepting death as a natural part of life, and notes that those who teach men to die also teach them to live, and that it is impossible to disengage oneself from the thought of death.

Ecclesiastes, Vanity, and the Futility of Worldly Pursuits

- Additionally, the text quotes [Ecclesiastes](#), who states that all is vanity, and that there is nothing new under the sun, and that the pursuit of knowledge and wealth is ultimately futile, and that what has been done will be done again, and that true wisdom lies in recognizing the impermanence of all things.
- The quotes from Ecclesiastes also highlight the idea that the pursuit of pleasure and knowledge can ultimately lead to sorrow, and that true

fulfillment cannot be achieved through material means, and that one should recognize the limitations and fleeting nature of human existence.

Vanity, the Fleeting Nature of Life, and the Rise of Science (Journal314_20-33)

- The section from the document 'Journal314_20-33' discusses the concept of vanity and the fleeting nature of human life, with quotes from various sources, including the Bible, highlighting the idea that all human endeavors are ultimately vain and that life is short and fragile.
- The quotes from the Bible emphasize the futility of human toil and the search for meaning in a seemingly meaningless world, with phrases such as "all was vanity and a striving after wind" and "all go to one place" underscoring the idea that human existence is fleeting and ultimately returns to dust.
- The section also includes quotes from [Will Durant](#), who notes that in the past, people could afford to be pessimistic about life on earth because they believed in an afterlife, but with the rise of science, this consolation is no longer available, and people are left to confront the reality of mortality and the impermanence of all things.

Durant, the Cycle of Destruction, and the Illusion of Progress

- Durant also discusses the cycle of construction and destruction throughout history, with civilizations rising and falling, and the scale of destruction increasing over time, highlighting the idea that human progress is an illusion and that we are ultimately doomed to repeat the same patterns of behavior.
- The section also touches on the idea that technological advancements and material wealth have not brought humanity the happiness and fulfillment that was expected, with Durant noting that "we taught people how to read, and they enrich the tabloids and motion pictures" and that "peace departs as riches come", suggesting that human nature is inherently flawed and that our desires and greed will always outweigh our capacity for wisdom and compassion.

- Finally, the section quotes [Aristotle](#), who suggests that the idea of progress is a delusion, and that human affairs are ultimately changeless and still, with what we call progress being merely superficial change, a succession of fashions and new ways of doing old things, rather than any genuine advancement or improvement.

Aristotle, Superficial Change, and the Essence of Human Nature

- Finally, the section quotes Aristotle, who suggests that the idea of progress is a delusion, and that human affairs are ultimately changeless and still, with what we call progress being merely superficial change, a succession of fashions and new ways of doing old things, rather than any genuine advancement or improvement.
- The essence of human nature remains the same despite advancements in technology and civilization, with people still driven by crude, selfish, and contradictory purposes, as evident in the use of tools ranging from wooden ploughs and flint knives to machine guns and bombs.
- The concept of progress is called into question, as all history seems to be a futile circle where human discoveries and accumulations ultimately lead to decadence, degeneration, and death, with even the great civilizations of the past, such as Atlantis, disappearing and leaving behind only legends.

The Nihilistic Experience, Science, and the Biological Episode

- The passage highlights the nihilistic experience of the complete disappearance of everything, citing the example of various species of man, including Piltown, Neanderthal, and Cro-magnon, who lived for thousands of years but left behind only a few remnants, and the fact that almost every idea and perception held by humans will be a delusion or prejudice.
- The idea that science and universal education would bring about happiness, truth, and freedom is also challenged, as the findings of science have instead revealed a picture of universal struggle and death, with biologists reporting

that all life lives at the expense of other life and that the ability to kill is the ultimate test of survival.

- The example of the author's dog, Wolf, is used to illustrate the biological aspects of life, where even love and affection can be reduced to simple biological instincts, and the passage concludes by noting that when faith in a higher purpose or destiny begins to weaken, life becomes narrowed down to a mere biological episode, leading to a loss of belief in oneself and one's race, and a sense of skepticism and scorn towards great endeavors.

Faith, Hope, Doubt, and Despair (Journal314_20-33)

- The section from the document 'Journal314_20-33' discusses the themes of faith, hope, doubt, and despair, quoting Edwin Robinson, who states that a materialistic worldview leads to a belief in a futile and absurd existence.
- The text references various philosophers and thinkers, including Pseudo-Dionysius, who describes the divine as the cause of all things yet transcending them, and [Thomas Aquinas](#), who expresses humility in the face of infused contemplation, saying "I can write no more" after experiencing profound insights.
- [Aldous Huxley](#) is quoted, discussing the concept of world denial and the shift in societal values over time, noting that what was once considered orthodox and comprehensible is now seen as madness, and highlighting the importance of contemplation in cultivating ethical values and avoiding harmful behaviors.

Huxley, World Denial, and the Benefits of Contemplation

- Aldous Huxley is quoted, discussing the concept of world denial and the shift in societal values over time, noting that what was once considered orthodox and comprehensible is now seen as madness, and highlighting the importance of contemplation in cultivating ethical values and avoiding harmful behaviors.
- Huxley also emphasizes the benefits of contemplation, stating that it can lead to a sense of satisfaction and contentment, allowing individuals to refrain from negative actions and instead become conduits for positive influences, and

he notes that contemplatives are less likely to engage in destructive behaviors such as gambling, intolerance, or exploitation.

- The text also includes a personal anecdote from Huxley, where he describes his inner world as a "five-and-ten-cent ship" filled with trivial and superficial structures, symbolizing the limitations and pretensions of the human self, and he contrasts this with the idea of an inner world that is strange and unpredictable, yet a potential source of wonder and connection to the divine.
- Other thinkers mentioned in the text include Clifford Williams, [Vivekananda](#), and Pascal, who are referenced in the context of contemplation, morality, and the human search for meaning and connection to a higher reality.

The Void, Objective Reality, and the Active-Contemplative

- The Taoists and Zen Buddhists, as well as philosophers like Cioran, Vivekananda, Tillich, and Suzuki, have explored the concept of looking beyond visions to the Void and then back to objective reality, which encompasses "the ten thousand things".
- In contrast to the quietist, who retreats from the world, the active-contemplative, such as the saint or the [Bodhisattva](#), embodies a balance between transcendental insight and practical charity, as described by Eckhart, where one is ready to descend from a state of spiritual elevation to perform acts of kindness, like bringing a cup of water to a sick brother.

Mescaline, Timeless Bliss, and the Problem of Reconciliation

- The use of mescaline, as described, opens up the way to contemplation, but one that is incompatible with action, leaving the user with the problem of reconciling timeless bliss with temporal duties, much like the quietist, and this is evident in the user's feeling that, despite the revelation, something is wrong.
- The experience of mescaline use is characterized by a participation in the manifest glory of things, which leaves no room for ordinary human concerns, especially those involving persons, and this raises questions about the

importance of human relationships and the ability to engage in practical actions.

God's Disposition, Disintegration, and the Higher Order

- The idea that "in life, man proposes, God disposes" suggests that human plans are subject to a higher power, and this is reflected in the notion that the whole may be disorganized, but each individual fragment is in order, representing a Higher Order, which prevails even in disintegration.
- The experience of disintegration, while potentially dangerous, may also have its advantages, as it allows for a more immediate perception of the ultimate order, unobscured by human fabrications, and this is evident in the user's feeling that the body can look after itself, even in a state of chaos.
- The mescaline experience is described as wonderful, almost terrifying, and comparable to the heavens of schizophrenia, but it is also noted that this paradise of cleansed perception is not sustainable, and the blissful intermissions eventually give way to horror, a phenomenon not experienced by all mescaline users, who may only encounter the heavenly aspects.

The Mescaline Experience, Beauty, and the Limitations of the Human Mind

- The user's fear of being overwhelmed and disintegrating under the pressure of reality is a significant aspect of the mescaline experience, as it highlights the limitations of the human mind in coping with intense beauty and significance, and the need to reconcile the desire for contemplation with the demands of practical action.

Religious Experience, the *Mysterium Tremendum*, and the Divine Light

- The literature of religious experience often describes the overwhelming fear and terror that individuals experience when they come face to face with the

Mysterium tremendum, which is attributed to the incompatibility between human egotism and divine purity.

- According to theologians such as Boehme and William Law, the divine Light can be perceived as a burning, purgatorial fire by unregenerate souls, and a similar concept is found in The [Tibetan Book of the Dead](#), where the departed soul shrinks from the Pure Light of the Void.

Schizophrenia, Reality, and the Downward Spiral of Fear

- The schizophrenic is described as a soul who is not only unregenerate but also desperately sick, unable to take refuge from inner and outer reality in the common sense world of useful notions and socially acceptable conventions.
- The schizophrenic's sickness is characterized by an inability to shut off the experience of reality, which is perceived as too intense and significant to be explained away, leading to interpretations of malevolence and desperate countermeasures.
- The author reflects on their own experience and notes that if one starts with fear and hate, it can lead to a self-validating downward spiral, and that controlling madness is not possible if one begins with these premises.

The Clear Light, Tibetan Rituals, and the Role of the Psychiatrist

- The author is asked about their ability to focus on the Clear Light, as described in The [Tibetan Book of the Dead](#), and responds that it would be difficult to do so without guidance, highlighting the importance of the Tibetan ritual, where someone is present to guide the individual.
- The author draws a parallel between the Tibetan ritual and the role of a modern psychiatrist, suggesting that the latter could provide similar guidance and support to the insane, helping them to remain undistracted and focused on the Clear Light.
- The text discusses the idea that despite the terror, bewilderment, and confusion in the world, the ultimate Reality remains unshakably itself and is

of the same substance as the inner light of even the most cruelly tormented mind, and that this fact should be constantly reminded to people, especially those in institutions, through various devices such as recorders and public address systems.

Artificial Paradises, Goethe, and the Limitations of Verbal Communication

- The author notes that humanity will likely never be able to dispense with Artificial Paradises, as people's lives are often painful, monotonous, poor, and limited, and they have an innate urge to escape and transcend themselves, quoting the author's own experience of returning to a state of being in one's right mind.
- The text also quotes Goethe, who suggests that people should talk less and draw more, and that communication through sketches and observation of nature can be more profound and meaningful than speech, highlighting the limitations and futility of verbal communication.
- The author criticizes the dominance of verbalism and rationalism in education, arguing that the non-verbal humanities, such as the study of nature and transcendental experience, are often ignored or dismissed as non-existent or unimportant, and that this neglect can lead to a lack of understanding and appreciation for the world.

A More Realistic Education and Transcendental Experience

- The author suggests that a more realistic and less exclusively verbal system of education would allow individuals to explore and experience the world of transcendental experience, and that this could be beneficial for personal growth and development, citing the example of [Aquinas](#), who experienced Infused Contemplation and thereafter refused to return to his academic work.
- The text concludes by discussing the idea that certain mental events, which are normally excluded from consciousness because they possess no survival value, can enter into consciousness when the biological efficiency of the brain is lowered, allowing for a deeper understanding and appreciation of the world.

Visionary Sightseeing and the Mind's Antipodes

- The intrusion of biologically useless but aesthetically and spiritually valuable material into one's mind may occur due to illness, fatigue, fasting, or confinement in a place of darkness and complete silence, allowing individuals to visit the mind's antipodes and experience visionary sightseeing.
- Through self-inflicted punishment, such as fasting and restricted environments, individuals can transport themselves to a state of visionary experience, where they perceive self-luminous objects with praeter-natural brilliance and significance, often resembling gem-stones.

Gems, Visionary Illumination, and the Other World

- The passion for gems and precious stones can be attributed to their resemblance to the sources of visionary illumination, with individuals believing that acquiring such stones guarantees their preciousness and therapeutic and magical virtue, as described by philosophers like Socrates and [Plato](#).
- According to Socrates in the *Phaedo*, there exists an ideal world above and beyond the world of matter, where colors are purer and more brilliant, and precious stones in this world are but fragments of the stones above, making the precious stones in our world highly prized.
- The fascination with polished stones like marble and granite can be seen in the efforts spent in obtaining them, such as the transportation of pink granite from Aswan to Baalbek and Palmyra, which was a laborious task that existed beyond mere utility, but rather to proclaim their kinship with the Other World.

The Ideal World, Precious Stones, and the Significance of Polished Materials

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precious stones in this world are but fragments of the stones above, making the precious stones in our world highly prized.

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- Visionary experience is not always blissful, as it can also be terrible, with hell being a part of the experience, and the light in such experiences can be described as the "smoky light" of the [Tibetan Book of the Dead](#) or the "darkness visible" of Milton, highlighting the intrinsic appalling significance of such experiences.
- The writings of philosophers like [Plato](#) and the descriptions of visionary experiences by individuals like Weir Mitchell and Ezekiel emphasize the idea that precious stones and polished materials hold a deeper significance that transcends their physical properties, and are instead connected to the psychological and theological Other World of visionary experience.

Le Pays D'Eclairement, Schizophrenia, and the Perception of the Infinite

- The concept of "le pays d'eclairement", or "the country of lit-upness", is discussed in the context of the autobiographical record of a young girl's passage through madness, where the world of the schizophrenic is characterized by forced visions and an intense electric glare without shadows.
- For Renee, the schizophrenic girl, the illumination is infernal, bringing fear and a nightmarish sense of unreality, and the perception of the infinite in a finite particular is a revelation of "the System", a vast cosmic mechanism that grinds out guilt and punishment, solitude and unreality.
- In contrast, healthy visionaries experience the perception of the infinite as a revelation of divine immanence, and the literature of religious experience often references the pains and terrors that occur when individuals come face to face with the *Mysterium tremendum*, which is attributed to the incompatibility between human egotism and divine purity.

Sanity, Negative Visionary Experience, and the Doctrine of Saving Faith

- Sanity is described as a matter of degree, and there are visionaries who see the world as Renee saw it, but are still able to live outside the asylum, experiencing a transfigured universe, but for the worse, with everything appearing sinister or disgusting.
- The text also notes that negative visionary experience can be induced by purely psychological means, such as fear and anger, which can plunge an individual into a hellish experience, and that the theological doctrine of saving faith has been developed to reconcile the rationality and morality of eschatologists with the brute facts of psychological experience.
- According to this doctrine, faith, or loving confidence, is what guarantees a blissful visionary experience, while negative emotions, such as fear, hatred, and malice, can lead to an appalling experience, highlighting the importance of confidence and love in shaping one's visionary experience, as seen in the example of the Pharisee, who, despite being virtuous, may still have negative emotions that lead to infernal visionary experiences.

The Nature of Mind, Visionary Experience, and the Moment of Death

- The nature of the mind is such that individuals who repent and have faith in a higher power are more likely to experience a blissful visionary experience, particularly at the moment of death, than those who are self-satisfied and consumed by anxiety and negative emotions.
- The state of mind during a visionary experience can greatly impact its quality, with prolonged experiences potentially becoming overwhelming or even horrific, as seen in some schizophrenic individuals or those who take mescaline, and this can lead to a transformation of heaven into hell or bliss into horror.
- According to the author, only a small minority of individuals are capable of immediately uniting with the divine Ground after death, while others may experience visionary bliss or horror, and the majority will end up in a world

similar to that described by Swedenborg and mediums, from which they can potentially progress to higher states of being.

Mortification, Transcendental Experience, and the Perennial Philosophy

- The author suggests that mortification of the body, despite its potential drawbacks, can be a means of accessing a transcendental world of Being, Knowledge, and Bliss, which is why many spiritual aspirants have practiced bodily mortification throughout history.
- The author quotes various philosophers and theologians, including James Mckenna, to emphasize the importance of personal experience and spiritual practice in understanding the ultimate Reality, and notes that few individuals, including philosophers and theologians, have made a genuine effort to explore the spiritual realm.
- The author references [the Perennial Philosophy](#), which holds that the ultimate Reality can only be apprehended by those who have made themselves loving, pure in heart, and poor in spirit, and suggests that empirical theology, based on the experiences of ordinary people, is limited in its understanding of the divine.
- The author also notes that no saint or founder of a religion has ever been optimistic about the prospects of spiritual enlightenment, citing the phrase "Many are called, but few are chosen," and references the teachings of the [Christ](#) of the [Gospels](#), who emphasized the importance of private worship and the rejection of vain repetitions and sacrifices.

Historic Christianity, Spiritual Calculus, and the Divine Ground (Journal314_20-33)

- The development of historic Christianity was influenced by human factors, and its progression was not hindered by the fact that people in the past did not focus on problems that their descendants found interesting, as noted in the context of the document 'Journal314_20-33'.

- According to various quotes, certain thoughts and concepts, such as the intuitive knowledge of the Godhead or Quantum Theory, are only thinkable within the framework of an appropriate language and system, and many of these concepts were ignored by predecessors, resulting in a lack of means for clear and fruitful thinking about them.
- In modern industrialized societies, only a few individuals are able to transcend the prevailing occupation with matter and analytical thought to experience the spiritual Ground of things, also referred to as [Jnana](#), which is the unitive knowledge of the divine Ground and the ultimate reason for human existence.
- The quotes from various sources, including Eckhart and "The Cloud of the Unknowing", suggest that achieving this unitive knowledge is extremely difficult, and even those who know the divine Ground most perfectly perceive its infinite incomprehensibility, with thinkers like Tolstoy, [Vivekananda](#), and Tillich also exploring this idea.

Erroneous Beliefs, Ritualistic Legalism, and the Crisis of Every Moment

- The text also emphasizes that erroneous or inadequate beliefs can hinder progress towards this goal, and that ritualistic legalism, while improving conduct, does little to alter character or modify consciousness, as highlighted by the phrase "good to be born in a church, bad to die in one".
- Furthermore, the text notes that there is currently no Spiritual Calculus that can coherently describe the divine Ground and its manifestation in the world, and that we must be patient with the linguistic eccentricities of those who attempt to describe one order of experience in terms of a symbol-system relevant to another order.
- The quotes also suggest that crisis and spiritual training can be powerful catalysts for personal transformation, with the saint being one who recognizes that every moment of human life is a moment of crisis, requiring an all-important decision between the way that leads to death and spiritual darkness, and the way that leads towards light and life, as inspired by the thoughts of Eckhart, Tolstoy, Vivekananda, and Tillich.

Selflessness, Spiritual Training, and the Sacredness of Nature

- The concept of selflessness is explored in the context of spiritual and military training, with spiritual training aiming to make people selfless in every circumstance, while military training focuses on selflessness in specific situations and towards certain groups of people.
- The [Gospels](#) provide insight into the spiritual "not-I" through the parables and discourses, which reveal the presence of the divine in Jesus, referred to as the [Christ](#) and the eternal Logos, as discussed by authors such as Spong and [Vivekananda](#).
- The doctrine of God being present in the world emphasizes the sacredness of nature and the importance of humans being intelligent and docile collaborators with nature, rather than trying to dominate it, as highlighted by Vivekananda in Karma Yoga.

Progress, the Perennial Philosophy, and the Dullness of the World

- The idea of progress is questioned, with [the Perennial Philosophy](#) suggesting that the reality of progress is uncertain and that individual men and women should focus on achieving unitive knowledge of the divine Ground, rather than being concerned with the progressiveness of their social environment, as discussed by authors such as Vivekananda and Seraphim.
- The world is described as being dull and unfulfilling for ordinary people, with brief moments of pleasure and intense suffering, and that true happiness and safety can only be achieved by abandoning the limitations of personal and emotional love and embracing the spiritual being of the Godhead.
- The Perennial Philosophy is seen as a means to preserve people from idolatrous worship of temporal things, such as church, state, or revolutionary ideologies, and to promote charity and unitive knowledge of the divine Ground.

Detachment, Holy Indifference, and Universal Charity

- The importance of detachment from the ego and personal attachments is emphasized, with the goal of achieving a "holy indifference" to temporal success or failure, and cultivating a love of God with the whole heart, mind, and strength, as discussed by authors such as Tillich, [Vivekananda](#), and Spong.
- Ultimately, the elimination of self-will, self-interest, and self-centered thinking is necessary to achieve a deeper understanding of the divine and to cultivate universal charity towards all creatures, as highlighted by the concept of mortification and the teachings of Karma Yoga and Quietism.

Mortification, Self-Interest, and the Critical Philosophy

- The concept of mortification is a painful yet necessary aspect of spiritual experience, which can be obscured by self-interest and requires individuals to renounce exclusive family ties and worldly attachments.
- Those who pursue careers in the arts, philosophy, or science often choose a life of poverty and hard work, and similarly, the critical philosophy must be willing to mortify common sense in order to achieve true understanding.

Theological Formulas, Spiritual Experience, and the Atonement

- Theological statements and formulas have been taken too seriously, and it is believed that salvation can be achieved through assent to these formulas, rather than through genuine spiritual experience, with thinkers like [Kierkegaard](#), [Vivekananda](#), and [Jnana](#) emphasizing the importance of unitive knowledge and rational intelligence.
- Most people are not concerned with consistency in thought or action, and even those with creative gifts, such as poets, can become idolaters if they worship

beauty in art and nature without seeking a deeper understanding of the divine Ground.

- The orthodox doctrine of the Atonement is criticized for attributing discreditable characteristics to God, and the concept of "turning to God without turning from self" is seen as absurdly simple yet explanatory of the follies committed in the name of religion.
- The teachings of the [Christ](#) of the [Gospels](#) and [the Buddha](#) of the Pali scriptures emphasize the importance of private worship, the rejection of vain repetitions and rituals, and the pursuit of spiritual insight and enlightenment, which is often at odds with the practices of historic Christianity and other religious institutions.

Ceremonies, Repetitions, and the Pursuit of Complete Deliverance

- The founder of a religion is noted to have made use of ceremonies, repetitions, and sacramental rites, despite the potential for "vain repetition" to be used to justify selfish actions in pursuit of power and wealth.
- To achieve complete deliverance, one must accept suffering, convert from righteousness to total selflessness and God-centeredness, and cease to be focused solely on being a good citizen or following strict moral codes, as noted in the concept of the "straight and narrow" gate.

The Shift from Eternal to Temporal, Moral Idolatry, and the Education System

- The shift in Western society's attention from the eternal to the temporal order has resulted in significant increases in technical, governmental, and scientific efficiency, but may have also led to a lack of focus on spiritual growth and [the Perennial Philosophy](#).
- Moralists can commit idolatry by worshiping their own ethical ideals rather than God, treating virtue as an end in itself rather than a means to achieve knowledge and love of God, which is necessary for true social effectiveness.

- The education system often disparages primitive forms of idolatry, but also ignores the importance of spirituality and the Perennial Philosophy, instead promoting human ideas and ideals as objects of admiration and worship.

Contemplatives, Idolatry, and the Importance of Self-Reflection

- In academic and educated circles, there are few true contemplatives, but many enthusiasts of political or social idolatry, highlighting the need for self-reflection and a focus on God rather than the ego.
- Self-reproach can be painful, but it can also serve as a reminder that the self is still intact, and that attention is not yet fixed on God, emphasizing the importance of self-knowledge, humility, and the love and knowledge of God.

Religious Systems, Imperfect Individuals, and the Provisional Nature of God

- The religious systems of the world have been built by imperfect individuals, resulting in a mix of good and dark aspects, and highlighting the need to seek God in a provisional and symbolic manner, rather than becoming attached to a particular form or dogma.
- Even the most saintly individuals can suffer from distractions, but can also make use of them to grow in self-knowledge and humility, ultimately leading to a deeper love and knowledge of God, as noted by philosophers such as [Vivekananda](#), who emphasized the importance of spiritual growth and self-awareness.

The Limitations of Science and the Philosophy of Meaninglessness

- The text discusses the limitations of the scientific picture of the world, which is a partial one that only considers elements that can be weighed, measured, or numbered, and ignores aesthetic and moral values, religious experiences, and intuitions of significance.

- According to the text, many men of science have come to realize the limitations of their field and the importance of considering other aspects of reality, but the masses are often convinced that the scientific picture is a complete representation of reality, leading to a worldview that is without meaning or value.
- The text criticizes the philosophy of meaninglessness, which carries to its logical conclusion the idea that life is without significance, values are illusory, and ideals are merely inventions of cunning priests and kings, and argues that this philosophy can only have evil and disastrous results.
- The text also discusses how the general acceptance of a doctrine that denies meaning and value to the world as a whole, while assigning them to certain arbitrarily selected parts of the totality, can lead to the deification of nations, classes, and other groups, and can result in the supply of "vital lies" to the masses to make them happy and well-behaved.
- Additionally, the text notes that some people, such as artists and men of science, can live contentedly with a philosophy of meaninglessness because their work provides them with a sense of meaning and value, but this is not the case for most people, and the text warns against the dangers of a worldview that denies meaning and value to the world as a whole.

Huxley, Positivism, and the Need for a Holistic Approach

- The text appears to be quoting from an essay by [Aldous Huxley](#), titled "Beliefs", which is printed at the end of his book "[The Perennial Philosophy](#)", and is critical of the influence of Positivism on modern thought and its corruption of the thought process and worldviews of many people.
- The author of the text seems to be arguing that the scientific picture of the world is incomplete and that a more holistic approach is needed to understand reality, and is warning against the dangers of a philosophy that denies meaning and value to the world, and instead assigns them to arbitrary parts of the totality.

Mental Illness, Talent, and the Mystical Experience

- The driving force of 'mental illness' is the lack of 'talent' or the inability to express one's thoughts, which can lead to a sense of meaninglessness and hinder a person's ability to move forward, as they are unable to fulfill their own happiness or illusions.
- Meditation and systematic training in recollection can make possible the mystical experience, which is a direct intuition of ultimate reality, and this concept is supported by various philosophers, including Nietzsche and Bertrand Russell, who have discussed the idea of transcending one's own limitations.
- The mystical experience is characterized by a direct intuition of an ultimate spiritual reality that is beyond the self and yet within it, and this experience can be achieved through techniques such as meditation and the cultivation of intellectual curiosity for its own sake.

Transcending Limitations, Dispassion, and the Non-Moral Mystic

- To transcend the limitations of human life, one must be a member of a community that provides protection and support, and also train themselves in the art of being dispassionate and disinterested, as exhibited by the mystic, who is able to transcend ordinary limitations more completely than others.
- The mystic's ability to transcend ordinary limitations is due to their disinterestedness, which allows them to pass beyond the boundaries of average human life, but this can also lead to a lack of moral content, as the ultimate reality of the world is not moral, and the mystic who unites themselves with this reality is uniting with a non-moral being.
- The concept of mysticism is also discussed in relation to the idea of "beyond good and evil," and the philosopher's idea of nihilism, which suggests that the ultimate reality of the world is not moral, and that the mystic's union with this reality is not a moral one.

Mysticism, Nihilism, and the Story of John Bunyan

- The concept of mysticism is also discussed in relation to the idea of "beyond good and evil," and the philosopher's idea of nihilism, which suggests that the ultimate reality of the world is not moral, and that the mystic's union with this reality is not a moral one.
- The text also references the story of [John Bunyan](#), who experienced a fierce temptation to sell and part with [Christ](#), and ultimately felt a sense of guilt and despair, which lasted for two years, and this story serves as an example of the human struggle with moral and spiritual dilemmas.

Despair, the Spiritual State of the Wealthy, and the Transience of Life

- The passage begins with a quote that expresses a deep sense of despair and longing to escape one's own identity and circumstances, referencing the works of Tolstoy, [Kierkegaard](#), and Cioran, who all explored themes of existential crisis and spiritual struggle.
- The text then transitions to a discussion of the spiritual state of the wealthy, citing a passage from "A Few Sighs From Hell" that suggests God has revealed the sad condition of rich men, who are often hardened by unbelief or presumption and seek worldly glory instead of spiritual salvation.
- The passage emphasizes that those who live according to their fleshly desires do not seriously consider death and the judgment that follows, and that both the wicked and the godly must eventually depart this life, citing the example of the beggar and the saints of the Lord, who must yield up their spirits and separate from their earthly attachments.
- The quote from [Job](#) 14:14 is mentioned, where Job expresses his willingness to wait for his appointed time to come, highlighting the importance of acknowledging and preparing for one's own mortality.
- The overall tone of the passage is one of solemn reflection on the human condition, encouraging readers to consider the transience of life and the importance of spiritual preparation for the judgment that is to come.