

A Peculiar Way of Thinking

Revisited

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Introduction to the current revision:

The following tale of bewilderment, confusion, reward and reconciliation recounts one person's journey into the milieu of psychedelic oblivion. Faced with a longing for knowledge and forgiveness, this romantic tale of mischief and fantasy reveals and perhaps glorifies this young man's arduous journey towards enlightenment and self-fulfillment. It is a story bereft with agony and betrayal; an intimate portrait of duplicity, and a journey fraught with traps set by ghouls and demons, cyclones and silly clowns. The story proposes, while witlessly enduring self-inflicted suffering, altered states of consciousness can lead one to greater truth and to an enhanced understanding of the vibrant voyage of being. It is an ironic story - epic and bold - that asserts that the search for self-comprehension is a gallant ordeal that can have devastating repercussions on our lives. This longing is a culling of sensation and perception that arcs us outwards towards a finite singular point of light which surrounds our being. Ultimately, it is just the trace of a spark chipped off the flint stone of eternity.

This revised essay has been rewritten as a narrative upon the third person experience of another entity, somewhat like the inner voice narrating upon itself. It dances back and forth through time as past participle melts into the present and future past. Telling the story from the first person perspective, literally from the inside-out as in the original essay, represents a distorted view of the subject and does not permit a certain objective real-time analysis. Basically, the person was stoned when he wrote the story so his theories might be a little distorted. Furthermore, it is self-defeating to write a thesis of consciousness from the viewpoint of a person's own subjective viewpoint. That is no way to conduct scientific research since one's own consciousness can only be known personally and is not subject to external validation by others. This was attempted by the introspectionists in the late 19th century and later rejected by the behaviorists (Boring, 1950). However, by stepping outside, objectifying certain distinct characteristic of his consciousness, one might be able to identify the aspects of reason affected by hallucinogens which might in turn bring him closer to understanding himself.

The body of the text has been mostly rewritten in order to clarify the original philosophical, literal and textual intent from a more qualified perspective. Over 20 years of accumulated experience and knowledge has been invested in the life of the characters to further deepen and enrich the narrative. It is my aim to maintain the original character's naïve charm and innocence, as I believe it fulfills the requirements for an open subject whose virtues are difficult to condemn.

The story itself is entwined with the illuminations of several literary and musical personalities, utilizing their prose and lyrics to further the philosophical arguments. The narration generally flows according to the drug induced experience - self-reflection, eerie confusion, paranoia and anxiety during the cresting, followed by a prolonged ebb and flow of emotional tides vacillating between heightened awareness, ecstasy, synesthesia, and moments of intellectual clarity which ultimately ends in fading memories of one's self-proclaimed brilliance. This undulating cycle revolves throughout the story as the brain processes the surging revelations and picturesque mindscapes, until finally achieving acceptance. It would seem, as a conclusive statement, that acceptance is the ultimate reward, however, this is not the case. The story erratically brings us up to date regarding neuroscience and science of mind. Our lack of understanding, or plausible scientific experimentation and resultant theory of consciousness has kept us in the realm of poetry and the poetic of mind and space. It is here that we take our leave and jump off into the abyss that science does not explore.

The original essay was a culmination of a course in study at Wash U regarding the use of intoxicants for literary inspiration generally, and more specifically for personal investigation. We examined the works of Walter Benjamin, Thomas Dequincy, Antonin Artaud, and Charles Baudelaire. I have further added studies in pharmacology, anthropology, psychology, cognitive neuroscience and philosophy of mind to aid in demystifying the occult status that some of these subjects have obtained. The revised text should add additional layers of understanding to the experiences that we only typically obtain through hindsight.

The original poetry remains unaltered.

*Cypress, Texas
October 2008*

*Tranquility stretched far beyond Utopia.
It was no mere illusion. To deny this
Would be to break the binds between
Waking and sleeping.*

*Only to be brought together by floods of
Great and many images. It is here within
The imagination that one finds
Tranquility.*

*Within his own essence, can he understand
The elusive mysteries of the realm
In which he so much yearns to
Escape.*

*There is nothing pathological to this
But more an altering of the real world
In which waking and sleeping only facilitate
Flight.*

*I become a great balloon expanding ever so
With delusions. Forbearance brings me
To a state of awareness concealed with in my
Fate.*

*Soon the balloon shall expand to a point
The final minuscule of pressure will
Erupt the outer walls and send me on a
Fury ride to
Hell.*

A Peculiar Way of Thinking

To days gone by.

Upon recollection, I find myself damned; for in my wonder I have conceived a beast; a beast that has forsaken existence, has traveled far beyond its barricaded realm and has returned with knowledge alien to its intellect. This beast, exhausted with its futile attempts to bare rationale to its confusion, fell to its knees, and with mercy beheld in its hands, hideousness could only front its sorrowed questioning. Upon acceptance of its fate, it howled a cry of anguish and frustration and fell in a flaming heap, spilling its polluted blood and releasing its anxiety in a cloud of putrid steam. Smoldering, it lay in bewilderment, eulogistically decrying the strange visions it had endured; a fading phoenix hysterical with the dark fury of the ghostly laughter echoing from within. Neatly, it eventually rose from the ashes panting madness and bliss.

I, too, lay floating upon the vast oceans of its beastly prophecies. It journeyed in search of self in a world lost to pleasure - an Odyssean voyage beyond reason which held passion so sublime as to raise him up even amongst the gods and man. What the brute imparted to me on his return was a knowing chronicle of self-discovery extorted from the far reaches across the ancient sea. His revelations batter my mind, resonating with the torrents of these supernatural visions. The tide sweeps me overboard compelling me towards the shore; however, I am weighted down by memories of my past and I dip deeper below the surface. I struggle to remain buoyant by my strength of will alone swimming wildly towards the ruined pier that once harbored a magnificent fleet of warships. Further inland, the boundless waves crash over the jetties which protect my province and unnatural thoughts flow freely into the canals of my mind. Lucidity narrows, filtering out ambiguities, and with the smoothness of a moment suspended before me, logic whirlpools into oblivion, taking me with it.

And in this way the most inexplicable visions were also drowned, with nothing, almost nothing, salvaged from the flood – nothing if not, floating on the surface of this black torrent, the steeple of a Gothic church made of wood, wooden steeple with stained-glass windows, dark green and red.
(Benjamin, p.64)

Startled, the creature washes up upon a distant shore; sun starched, narrow straits of sand and sea, coral and conch. Beyond, a plush pastoral meadow of fern and flower – a plethora of pansies and posies - unfurls upon the horizon while willows embrace the weeping wind. In its midst, a trampled path meanders across a candied hillside like a ribbon wrapping a tossed wedding bouquet - yellow poppies and iridescent daisies dot the brae; moss and lichen settle upon the stones. Enticed by wanton desire, wanderlust guides the beast into the dense foliage. Hypnotized - a cataphyll blushing downy and damp, bending idly as if towards a new lover - he reflects in awe upon the moist condensation of the velvety fronds. Lying amongst the berries and blossoms, he dreams of heroic deeds, decoding the checkerboard fate of humanity. Clouded by giddy ignorance - a rarity under the cloudless sky above - perception is distorted by passions held deep within his soul. He rubs his eyes, only to dissolve the illusions of solace this enchanted field has brought him.

"The human spirit brims over with passion.... But this unfortunate spirit possesses a natural depravity, which is as great as its unexpected, quasiparadoxical aptitude for charity and the most arduous of virtues; and it is also rich in paradox, which allows it to employ that overflow of passion for the furtherance of evil. A man in such a situation never believes he is selling his soul." (Baudelaire, p.33)

And with a deep breath, he blinks twice to regain his focus. Now, darkness filters through the trees; grotesque images of tortured men distorted and contorted, lifting up their arms in an eerie dance of anguish. Shadows wind through the branches spilling from behind boulders and brier – no cause for rest amongst the dank calling of the howling wind. I anxiously ponder this disturbing turnabout high skipping a circle around myself in a midnight pirouette of concern. He continues the story perplexed, as he explains how the serene meadow transformed into this dark cynical forest before his eyes. The garden no longer offered him sanctuary. Fear now pierced his heart and trepidation shook his being. Here, the only flowers grow from amongst the twisted vines and thorny bush - the most splendid from the most wretched.

This fragrance deceives him again, for I begin floating as if in a dream and awaken at the foot of a mountain of ice; a mountain upon which stands, as a pinnacle rising up through the clouds, a crystalline palace. I marvel at its presence. Mouth ajar, awe horrifies me. A jeweled and rusted gate before me beckons; a forgotten portal decayed and decrepit, a message reminiscent of Dante's entry into Hell. But I falter in grief, a great depression overcomes me and language fails me. I weep tired persistence and jostle memories long forgotten. I reach out to speak and fan air; silence becomes me, and I am lost.

Here, nothing more of the person remains than an unlimited capacity, and often also an unlimited propensity, for entering into the situation of every other in the cosmos, including every animal, every inanimate object. (Benjamin, p. 143)

I was told once, from prophet to pupil, that you melt the crayons and build your castles while you're sober, so you can appreciate the beauty later through altered vision. I never listened, for a fermenting fetus lay nestled in the melting wax waiting to be born under the candlelit glow of bent wheat fields and black light. In hindsight, these suggestions alerted me of what lay beyond the gate. Constructing and perceiving are two disparate ways or modes of identifying with the Other. In a way, perceiving is a form of deconstructing. We covet what we perceive autogenically. We own it as it becomes us as neurological signals in our brain. Our mind breaks it down into relevant manageable particles flickering and oozing from synapse to synapse where it gets put back together in a knowable representation.

It seems as there is no break from duality. The stories that this beast imparted forewarned me of tortured dreams and desperation - reality bent and twisted. Rationalizing would only lead to more irrationalities. Indifference only to difference. He found himself in a cyclical existence in time; a cosmic breath, revolving and evolving, exploding and imploding.

He reminded me of clouds. The potential for rain yet the surrogate sun. There is midpoint of every two extremes - an ethereal point where all forces are equalized; a place where all opposites are unified and all repulsions are fused; a moment when the nocturnal sun shines upon the moon. A singularity, the

refinement of moment. Waves moves off sideways and upwards spherically as a gesture back towards the outside. Downwards, a black abyss. I think of breathing and the silent space between each breath. The potential, and the inevitable: the space of ahhhh. Shifting one way or the other is greeted with great calamity; hearts twist and souls scream where the edge of chaos meets the emergence of tomorrow. The difficulty, the extreme tension required to pull oneself out of this state of respite with enough force to migrate a soul into paradigm shifting, is unlike normal change of mind, or decision making, it is fluid and absolute, a now that transcends all other moments and jets us onward into the infinite. Through the gate, we travel out to this edge, to this space of greatest capacity; the source of creativity.

This creature had delved deep within himself seeking answers to the mysteries of the soul. Through intoxication, by altering his perception, he sought release from the fabricated reality in which he resided. He thought by expanding the hollow dwelling which confined him he might punch a hole through this dimension into a universe in which he alone manufactured its reality. He found himself bitterly entangled in the emptiness of this predicament and realized that the most overlooked qualities of ordinary objects often took on an uncanny and supernatural luster. He began to perceive the underlying importance of these objects, and as some have suggested, a sense of "profane Illumination" (Benjamin, 1929).

I am left aggravated, though relieved, upon hearing his realization. I take permit here to examine the process leading up to and upon the conception of this discovery, thus, to explain what he found, as told to me, when he looked backward, into his mind, rather than forward, into the reality his eyes perceived. With reference to past literature and the arts, I shall attempt, through synthesis with my own experience, to theorize and make hypothesis.

*What translucent stockade
confines me in this mirage?*

*Is it an illusion or
something I have heard?*

*What form does it take now
only dancing in my eyes?*

*Only a prosecution of the jury
can murder young lust.*

*Passion interrupts perception
forcing a vengeance
plunged deep within my soul.*

Reality contemplated, I toil with the idea that I am alone in my own universe. Have I fabricated this delusional existence? In the same way that an atom has a nucleus, a universe has its vertex. Somewhere between the two, I covet my own agendas. The quantum synthesis of life forces - mind, body, and spirit - creates the existential make-up of my essence. It is a field of energy that emanates from each phenomenal being; be it me, a poem or a work of art or nature. I question whether these things exist or whether I project them as a residue of my dreams. My delusions house deception - a face hidden behind a mask of assumptions. I take it upon my own discretion as to which way I am to perceive reality. Each individual entity projects its own presence; embodying character, personality and constructed identities. My reality deals only with the essences of these things; these projected traits which remind me that I am not alone, that I swim amidst the virtual ocean of collective thought and a greater mind. Through my senses, I perceptually assimilate stimuli released by these things, and by "things", I mean more than just objects; I mean shapes, forms, spaces, perceptions, sensations, words, ideas, and the plethora of phenomena that make up my existence, both tangible and intangible. All these things can assist in constructing a reality base upon which I cultivate my desires, inspirations, and sense of self. Evaluating and interpreting, I mold them into my own delight and fold them into my being. However, it is not the object or thing that I embrace; it is the perception of its projected essence. In effect, an essence is an energy that is felt by a combination of all my senses, at once instantaneous and outside of causality. Based upon the amount of knowledge and schemata previously assimilated, I can analyze, correlate and categorize information rushing into my being. If connections are obscure, I can give the thing new meaning, new identity and new presence to fit within my already manufactured schema.

It would seem that within my own mind, I can manufacture my own reality by modifying the information previously assimilated, but outside my mind in the world of phenomenal objects, the world stays the same. Kevin O'Regan believes that the world out there holds its own memory and consistency. An argument against the idea that we store every memory of every experience within our mind. He believes there is no need for us to remember every experience, that the world out there is a storage receptacle of its own reflexive experience. An argument, also, against the duality of mind and body, subject and object, I share in the experience of perception. I am perceiver, and through the act of perception I am one with that which is perceived. By diminishing nature, relating it to human scale, I create a lens in which to view reality from a new standpoint. I create the ability to peer under the shroud of deception, uncover the ploy and therefore, add true meaning to an object's presence. Any thought, action or existence, be it animate or inanimate, can be pulled out of context, placed upon a pedestal, broken down, and thus rebuilt within the realm of my consciousness, while outside, it remains unchanged. It still is a wall, though I may perceive breathing or pulsating. Rationalizing destroys illusion and only becomes appropriate when anxiety overwhelms the soul. King Crimson states:

"No matter how closely I study it,

*No matter how I take it apart,
No matter how I break it down,
It remains consistent”.*

It is this anxiety that invades the heart like a storm, creating confusion, havoc, and destruction. It is the only of my emotions birthed by all the other passions, and is completely dependant upon them, thus, its grip tugs at my psyche, shredding it with expectations and grating it with delusions.

In order to exhume this combustible anxiety and to rid me of its discontent, I take sanctuary within the recesses of my mental labyrinth in order to segregate myself from reality. It is here that I take refuge and seek intoxication. Benjamin says that “the drug taken in solitude is ones self”. Thus, using solitude as an intoxicant means delving into my existence, finding there amusement, satisfaction and security.

But as the storm of anxiety breaks, I find myself alone, bewildered, and naked to the darkness. Wind rushes by, slicing through me like a cold dull knife. I look up to the sky, only to gaze upon an immense mirror. Darkness reflected reciprocates the shadows. I begin to spiral down to where thoughts and ideas run like rivers of melting wax. Colors collide, splashing life to the abyss. Far off, I gaze upon a single eye and watch as a tear bombards a serene pool. Concentric spectrums slap at the shores, startling me. I turn only to transfix my gaze upon an unconceivable presence. In that instance, the membrane life figure disintegrates before my eyes, a mirror replaces it. In it I see, I see... a beast. I scream. Scream wails into the air. Its thunder awakens me, dragging me across a desert of ice. Ahead, I see a mountain rising out of the white prairie, but before I reach it, all illusion evaporates. I am left with nothing but an impression of lost hope.

I am left hazy and disillusioned. I seek means to express the experience. I wield my tools in language. As Antonin Artaud states, words are a crystallization to the thought process. Where though has a fluid quality; (i.e. it flows, seeps, oozes) words are solid. Since thinking is an easy way of absorbing outside reality, language is used as a way of dealing with the implosive tendency that the mind succumbs to. In it fluidity, it runs in a deep cavern only to be accessible by its point off concentration. A deep well in which hand over hand I must draw buckets of ideas out of the rushing on-sweep of waves. At the spicket, only droplets swell on its lips. It is this spicket that allows a controlled degree of reality to enter my world.

My world has no words, therefore words o through a filtering device that allows interpretation of dialect. Language is the work of evil; its solidity only obscures true reason. It is the transference of one person’s knowledge, vocabulary or experience, in order to convey images to another person. This person must take that information, and make some link with a bit of related past experience in order for verbal expressions to be manifested into mental connections. Thus, the art of empathy. This past experience may be a seemingly trite reaction to an unfamiliar traumatic situation. An experience that has been subconsciously and subliminally riveted within the chambers of the mind. Language usually only entails the definitive reception of words. Language is deceptive and is easily exploited. This deception is made at the point of departure into the air creating a shooting gallery of interpretations. The other person has just

to aim and pluck words from the air, drawing them into the crevices of his mind for critique by his sensory elements. The deception may not be as blatant as an outright lie; it may also be subtle, as in sarcasm. It more, though, evolves out of a misinterpretation, a jumped conclusion, or a supposition. It is not always a voluntary reaction that causes missed connections when trying to communicate. Therefore, recalling myself, my world deals only with essences, with impressions that one being emanates to me, and not with words which hold the ability to be misinterpreted.

Artaud relate words to the bark that falls from a tree. Within this tree, its core is soul and the fiber surrounding the core is the mind. Within the fiber, the mind carries thoughts to be expelled by the peeling bark. This fiber also carries nutrients to his soul, in the form of life and reality. Though as decimated as his reality is, it still must be the basis for all his fantasies. Artaud believes the world can only judge us by our words. I disagree. The human body is not as rooted as Artaud's tree. Though the soul is the concentration of the energy, the body is the receptor and transmitter of the energy. The internal organs, the heart and mind, are the machines which manufacture the energy. Artaud thinks that drugs have no affect upon the soul, they only react on the mind, and with words being directly channeled from the soul, what is said may not necessarily come from there. In their transference from the soul, through the drug altered mind, words can be tainted and untrusting. I agree, yet I can expand and say that just the single fact of doing the drug creates change within the soul. Artaud makes it seem to placid, to stagnant, hardened. I think it continually metamorphosis's with every passing breath.

New stimuli are always rushing into the soul, shaping it, shaping me, creating my essence. This seems a common fact that any experience can cause change. The only way to avail change is to stop time. If a situation occurs, than it changes something, in some form to some degree. If it does not happen, than no change is produced within the person's experience. Walter Benjamin thinks the Surrealists did not cause any change but does it not seem common sense that their existence altered someone, somewhere, in some manner? If war had not bee created, would men have not found some other way to channel frustration? The repression of one emotion causes an expression of another. War is an intoxicant. It is the satiation of mans instinct to control and dominate; it is the channeling of inhibitions and anxiety into aggression and wrath. Within this transference occurs change. War creates revolution, and revolution is nothing more than power changing hands. It is dogmatic that history must constantly be transmuted. Charles Baudelaire says that man has the responsibility of history; that he has an obligation to carry forward time. Yet, it also must succumb to its inevitability.

"We reap the harvest we have sown"

A lyric taken from a composition by Pink Floyd encapsulates this premise.

Intoxication spreads much farther than mere consumption of mind altering substances. Sobriety may be intoxicating to the alcoholic. Thomas de Quincy thinks men are disguised by sobriety and it is when they are intoxicated that they display themselves in their true complexion of character. Interpreting while sober does not always produce correct perception. Artaud sees intoxication as a way of pursuing thought without resistance. Benjamin thinks this resistance is created by buffers layered around the inner

mind which have the chance to influence what amount of reality that infiltrates into the inner mind. He thinks they also act to mold reality into a form the mind can relate to. With the consumption of mind altering drugs, these segmented layers align, in order to allow easy, though narrowed penetration from the external world. This alignment allows images to flow freely from inner to outer minds. In my words, these layers of buffers are like a series of flood gates on a dam, in which the successive unlocking of these gates allows the confluence of the inner and outer minds. Thus, unification occurs, yet can not be suspended indefinitely. The drug wears off. The gates slam shut. What is left within is trapped within the unknown. What is left outside is barred from the sublime evaluation and is there left in the realm of the known.

Aldous Huxley thought that reality is a series of doors behind which new worlds exist. Drugs are then used as the key to unlock these doors. Where, then, in all of reality can these doors be found. I recall the image of a mirror facing another mirror. Existence recedes to infinity within. Each step back holds new insight, and greater expansion, though the further back I go the less delineated my images appear. In this, I find utility within drugs. They react on me as if they were a finely polished lens through which I can magnify and intensify the images that appear before me. In the same way, I turn my sight towards reality and the lens reverse effect. Sight is narrowed, images deleted. Point of view becomes obscure. I look on reality with new insight, giving it new meaning, new light. I feel my mind hover to the corner of the room. My back resting on the ceiling, I gaze about the room. Below, my body sits, gaze fixed, as if obsessed upon a candle which has melted inwardly. Again, as Benjamin smoked himself in his pipe, I trap myself within the candle and at the same time, I fear it consumes my soul. I feel myself drift off, clenched by the flames grip. From the ceiling, I see myself rub my eyes; I feel my eyes being rubbed. Fire has drained them of their tears. I open them only to find myself deep within a cavern. Heat envelopes me. Walking forward I find myself inspired by a grand ledge running the circumference of a circular cliff, creating a portico balustrated by stalactites. Below, a molten sea encompasses an eternal flame. Where am I? I assume I have been transported into the candle. This is not rock, it is wax. My feet sink into the disillusionment, consumes my body. Below, I pass through my initial conception, fetal and embryonic stages until I am breached from a womb into a new world. I lay upon a grass covered bluff; overhead rises a gigantic tree. I stumble to my feet, staring about, digesting my new surroundings. Awe. I find myself isolated upon an island. The tree above me stands alone as monument above the cliff. A river ends abruptly as it cascades over the cliff. Below it plunges into an abyss of prismatic spray. I squint for its depth is deceiving and its colors intense. They wash through me, causing me to lose my balance. My spirit shrieks, for I have fallen over the ledge. I float upon a cloud and am then rescued by a beautiful nymph. Without her, navigation would be impossible. Leering over the edge, I find myself returned to the ceiling. I rejoin my body, still entrenched within the candle. My visions evade me like dreams shattered by my awakening. The thought of dreams causes me to delve deeper into thought. I decipher my lapse into the abyss as a premonition of death. I feel relieved on descent. The weight of the world is relinquished from my shoulders. I accept my fate. Yet, before meeting my doom, I awaken to a reality that seems more illusive than my dreams.

Deception destroys the roots

*That hold so securely in the earth
The malleability of an invisible dream.*

*Morality is functionless
Without a beacon to guide it.
It has no home within this dream.*

*Freedom is met with resistance.
Integrity is bottled
By forces outside the dream.*

*Normality begins within itself
Built-up from these roots
Lying between the dream
And death.*

At first consumption of mind altering substances, stimuli pounds upon the gates within my mind. Attitude taints the sublime. As intoxication takes over, the gates slowly release. The inner and outer minds are united. Saturation of stimuli occurs. Thoughts flow freely. Judgment of the external reality dwindles. The lens contracts, the spicket closes allowing the fusion to occur by only a mere droplet at a time. Reality is only used to gather more stimuli for thought, for contemplation, for evaluation.

Again I drift off. This time the knife cuts deep within the subterranean mind. I find myself submerged. I swim through a mass-less, infinitely elastic, medium. I am an electromagnetic wave propagating through this ethereal existence. Layers of crystalline discs float before me. A wish of my hand and they shatter into nothingness. At the same time I become an accelerated frequency. At light speed I am transported to a dark, hollow void. Within this vacuum, I find myself utterly alone. Though exposed, I feel no cause for evasiveness. Comfort and security allow me liberty of ease. Solemnity hoods my anxiety. Thoughts evade me. I am left numb, and existing only within infinity. Reality is far behind me, out of reach, out of sight, out of mind. Here, I am confronted with an image of myself. This apparition seems vaguely familiar. I recall a pond, reflecting an angry sky, but, now I see the sun blazes bright upon the water. I look through this veil; behind it I find my soul. This introduction leaves me drowning in dehydration. With a sardonic grin, the image looses and exultant cry of laughter. It points its vaporous finger at me in mockery. With a tempestuous exhalation, I dispel the image before me. Again I am deceived by my own imprudence.

In my heedless regard of the image, and of myself, I contrived a mirage from my own self-deceit. I am so overwhelmed by the deception reality bears, I can not fathom through my own aberration. Upon this acknowledgment, again I am subjected to another image. The same though without façade. The interjection caused the merging of my forces. An energy caused the junction to solidify. I am than thwarted with awe as an explosion of light sends tides of color deluging through my being. I stand fast, immersed in the sudden onslaught of vibrancy. Though blinding, its intensity is maternal in its comfort and warmth. I am stolen from my humble nest. As the waves subside, my body becomes bathed in drought. I se my internal bodily organs magnified within y mind. Beat by beat, my heart sends

coagulated blood ripping through my arteries. My fingers probe and flitter across my skin. Do my fingers feel my skin, or does my skin feel my fingers. They become one fusing mind and body.

Meanwhile reality swamps my mind. Its marsh and mire pollutes my existence. Vision become smears as if I have smudged them with my thumb. Viscosity reacts upon my mind, as thought begin to solidify. Though always fluid the cease to retain their accelerated liquidity and begin to ooze and seep, as opposed to the uncontrolled spilling I recently experienced. Connections are no longer made within my circuitous, convoluted mind. Decision making becomes difficult as my thoughts become confused; I become disoriented. The drug altered mind's ability to make connections is endless. Thoughts lead from one to another, and the similarities in events are magnified. Having to chose causes me to hesitate and leads the mind into new labyrinths. Another decision leads into another maze, off to new uncharted dimensions. Though a decision the other way, guides the mind to other worlds. It is feasible that sooner or later all thoughts are relative to all other thoughts, and thinking becomes cyclical and paradoxical in its ability to relate and end with any beginning.

Yet now...I am left with dulled images of a far away world. Though, the impression it made upon me is eternal. As Benjamin states, these impressions are like spoonfuls of reality that I have scooped from my inner mind and placed upon an examination table. They are the sublime thoughts that have remained on the outside of the gate between the inner and outer consciousness. They are lasting in their ability to mold and taint my personality.

This impression reorganizes itself in the form of art, music, and literature. Upon exposition of the true inner self, I now look for a way in which to express and purge my being of the overwhelming experiences. Repression creates tragedy and harbored emotion. The expulsion of these emotions deflates my conscience. Artaud thought Van Gogh was "suicided by society". I think he was suicided by his inability to cope with this conspiratorial society and thus amplified his inner disgruntlement of his newly found demise. Acceptance was ludicrous in Van Gogh's mind. He succumbed to his own introversion. Failing through painting to release the tension mutated by his inner schism, he thus committed suicide. Others have acknowledged their demise, as Van Gogh did, yet have come to accept it. Passively resigning to its intention, they seek the arts as a release of their inner pressure. Yearning to understand their existence, they put solid fabrication to their visions. Edgar Allen Poe delved deep within his shadowed mind and extracted forces marred by darkness and repulsion. Though in his sinistry, he captivates his audience in common fears, creating tension through obsession, murder and deceit.

The 1960's inspired a vast amount of revelation within its music. Rock and Roll laid way for thought and expansion of ones inner existence. King Crimson, rooted Robert Fripp's imagination, succeeded in formulating music that captured the essence of meditative intoxication. As they sang, confusion became their epitaph, but on the other hand, Pink Floyd sorted through their confusion only to find what I have found. Out of their confusion, they were able to realize the answers to their questioning. Yet with their disclosure came depression and sorrow, for the answer is that there is no answer, and like Sartre found that "Hell is other people". Any comprehension must come from within itself; I am the answer to my own questioning. Their inner strength was too slight to gaze beyond this barrier and their

career terminated in an avalanche of emotion. I too have felt this depression, but in my gloom I found fruitful advantage. I am able to see the new light. Though far away, it is not quite out of reach.

As Baudelaire, Artaud, and De Quincey have found through intoxicated reverie, I too have found antithesis to reality creating my own alternative world. One in which dreams and visions triumph over tangible worldly goods. Abstractions demand meditation. It is on an individual and idiosyncratic, none-the-less personal, reaction.

END

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