

A Survival of Matter: Postmodernism vs Transcendence

By Christopher Winn

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“What ought I to do? I see only darkness everywhere. Shall I believe I am nothing? Shall I believe I am God?”

-Pascal, *Pensees* #227

I. Postmodernism

In 1970, Alvin Toffler published a book called *Future Shock*. In it, he predicted an approaching acceleration of change caused by advances in technology. Due to this acceleration, Toffler believed human beings adapted to a relatively simple environment would be “future shocked” in much the same way that a World War I soldier was “shell shocked”—overwhelmed by overstimulation.

Toffler’s terminology has fallen out of favor. Today, it is more commonly referred to by the likes of Google’s Head of Engineering Ray Kurzweil as “singularity.” Toffler’s term was clearly negative; Kurzweil’s is neutral, trending positive. That’s because singularity has an additional connotation which Toffler likely could not have foreseen—transhumanism, or the attempt to overcome humanity’s perceived flaws by merging with technology in cyborg-like fashion.

The philosophy which foreshadowed, coincided with, and arguably assisted the future shock / singular era is postmodernism. Like pornography, postmodernism almost defies definition, but we know it when we see it. It began in the liberal arts, and has much in common with terms and movements such as nominalism, moral relativism, deconstructionism, and so-called cultural Marxism. It is agreed that the poet T.S. Eliot (1888–1965) was a consummate modernist, while the playwright Samuel Beckett (1906—1989) was a consummate postmodernist. To compare the sentiments of their respective magnum opuses, *The Ballad of J Alfred Prufrock* and *Waiting for Godot*, is to find more similarities than dissimilarities. However, their subtle differences are almost identical to those between Toffler’s future shock and Kurzweil’s singularity. The first is perplexed, perhaps even mournful, concerning the approaching chaos. The latter is apathetic, perhaps even concealing a devious anticipatory joy.

Epistemology is a big word that simply means the study of *how* we know *what* we know. Postmodern epistemology generally concludes that we don’t know much because how we come to know it is imperfect. Because human beings are fallible (capable of making mistakes), riddled with confirmation bias (often seeing only what we wish to see), and have no standard by which to accurately judge anything (what with God, meaning and morality being imaginary), the quest for objective (indisputable) Truth is a wild goose chase—we wouldn’t know what we had even if we managed to catch

it. To the postmodernist then, all human affairs are nominal (in name only) and subjective (a matter of opinion). Put concisely, the postmodernist's truth is, unironically, that there is no Truth.

Believing that Truth is unknowable or nonexistent is an excellent excuse never to try attaining it. Besides, what if one were to try and find that the Truth does not conform to their wishes? After all, if there is no Truth then humans are utterly free. Everything is permitted, and nothing can be done to make me conclude that I am doing wrong, or could be better than I currently am. If everything is an opinion, nothing can be judged, and if nothing can be judged, there is no law, nor consequences for infringing upon it. If we are simply selfish apes spinning upon the space rock, caused by the big explosion without intent and the eons-long evolution without intent and the self-consciousness without intent, then one might as well get their bananas and have their fun without letting something imaginary like a conscience get in the way.

Such is the slippery slope of postmodern thinking. However glorious the prospect of total freedom may be, the human animal is an animal designed to seek and find truths, not invent them arbitrarily (make them up). We would not have made it this far if we were not passably good at doing so. Yet now we find ourselves inhabiting an environment full of the fruits of our ancestors' labors—the discovery of truths about mathematics, electricity, carpentry, plumbing, tailoring, food production, and even how to structure a society so that it doesn't burn itself down—only to conclude there is no Truth. Living every day, every moment, as though a lie is accurate, is bound to make anyone despair. And it has.

In *True Detective* Season One, Rust Cohle states that “meaning is historical.” If this is an accurate statement, perhaps its reverse is also—without history, there can be no meaning. The nominal, subjective, arbitrary, imaginary philosophy of postmodernism is as meaningless as it is ahistorical. It renders one free to do anything in a conceptual universe wherein nothing is worth doing. It has proven itself entirely insufficient to sate the voracious appetite of the average human being for discoverable, falsifiable, standardized truths. Those hungry for meaning are starving and dying from a diet of postmodernism.

Thus, for our purposes, postmodernism is the prevailing philosophy that relishes the approach of the singularity and the death of everything that preceded it. It is a philosophy born of academic angst, adopted by lower-class resentment, but beneficial to the agenda of upper-class elites. It claims that there is no genuine Truth, Meaning, or Reality, so that we will be entirely free to invent our own “truths,” “meanings,” “realities,” and enforce them upon others without pesky annoyances such as reason and ethics getting in the way.

The postmodernist's objection to this disparaging definition would be to say that this is the way of things—that even in ages when Truth, Meaning, or Reality were generally agreed upon or considered self-evident, they were already just imaginary human inventions for manipulating one another. The funny thing about postmodernists is that if they are right, then there is no such thing as “being right” by their

own definition. They render every philosophy, including their own, mere “sound and fury, symbolizing nothing.” A virus is called pernicious when it kills its own host and thus itself; postmodernism is a pernicious philosophy. The philosopher Nietzsche anticipated and perhaps even inspired postmodernism in one line— “there are no facts, only interpretations.” The writer G.K. Chesterton later commented upon this, “What we are looking at is not the boyhood of free thought; it is the old age and ultimate dissolution of free thought. It is vain for bishops and pious bigwigs to discuss what dreadful things will happen if wild skepticism runs its course. It has run its course. It is vain for eloquent atheists to talk of the great truths that will be revealed if once we see free thought begin. We have seen it end. It has no more questions to ask; it has questioned itself” (*Orthodoxy*).

Postmodernists would agree that their philosophy could not have existed prior to the Industrial Revolution, but they would say this is due to pre-industrial humanity being too stupid to apprehend it. I agree that it could not have existed until recently, but for a different reason. One can only afford to live as though there are no facts in the brave new world of obesity and vitamin D deficiency. If one attempts to live as though there are no facts in the natural world, the facts of that natural world will very promptly kill them off. The mountain lion doesn't care whether you interpret it to be a harmless kittycat, so long as its belly is factually full at the end of said academic exercise. Thus postmodernism is THE “First World Problem.” However, the internet is perfectly capable of rendering postmodernism a global pandemic if given sufficient time.

Living this lie in our artificial environment has two primary effects upon human beings. The first effect is a profound despair that would almost always result in suicide if not for the fear of death (even postmodernists live as though the fact of death cannot be entirely interpreted away). This is most stereotypically recognizable in the man whose sole joys are pornography and video games, or the woman who is zombified by an ever-increasing regimen of birth control and antidepressants, although these are hardly the strangest symptoms. The second may be a mere reaction to the first. It is the adoption of a radical political ideology to the effect that everything except oneself is wrong and should be destroyed or replaced. Nothing about the structure of the world, built by the sweat of our ancestors, can be praised, for it is all tainted by sins that we immaculate ones would never commit. And what exactly should be done about it, or what precisely is wrong with it, changes by the day if not by the hour. Sufferers of this malady are instantly recognizable by their inability to even casually converse without heavy reliance upon “ists”, “isms”, and “institutional/systemic”. They also say “capitalism” almost as often as atheists say “God.”

This ideology keeps public discourse at a fever pitch without ever substantively changing anything (except for the occasional life that gets caught in the crossfire). Chesterton again: “Progress should mean that we are always changing the world to suit the vision. Progress does mean (just now) that we are always changing the vision. It should mean that we are slow but sure in bringing justice and mercy

among men: it does mean that we are very swift in doubting the desirability of justice and mercy...Let beliefs fade fast and frequently, if you wish institutions to remain the same. The more the life of the mind is unhinged, the more the machinery of matter will be left to itself" (*Orthodoxy*).

Postmodernism can be arrived at independently and intellectually, so it likely cannot be classified as a conspiracy or psychological operation outright. However, if one wished to utterly sabotage developed societies without having to fire a shot, postmodernism would fit the bill in every respect. A few decades after the injection of postmodernism into a society, one reliably finds Yates' "The Second Coming"—"The best lack all conviction, while the worst/Are full of passionate intensity." It allows the devils to roam free while the angels are busy debating whether good and evil actually exists.

Via the combination of a postmodern philosophy with a singularity agenda, we have become more familiar with machines than we are with one another, and often we know celebrities we will never meet better than we know ourselves. Some of us have spent more hours writing to anonymous avatars than we have conversing face-to-face. Others among us have seen innumerable sex acts without ever participating in any of them. Almost all of us are reliant upon foods we did not gather, hunt, or grow, nor have we ever stepped foot upon a patch of earth that was not owned by some legal entity or other. If this state of affairs is not morbid, even wicked, then nothing is. And yet, when we attempt to describe this state with a single word, we must resort to calling it 'normal.' For it is as normal to us as the zoo enclosure is to an animal born in captivity. Like captive animals, we reap nearly innumerable benefits from our captivity. Nonetheless, we cannot shake the sense that there is something wrong with this zoo's drab sameness—its monotonous schedules and ever-visible, if inaccessible, strangers. Where in this lackluster routine, we seem to wonder, are the risks and rewards? And if there are none, then why adhere to it at all? This is made an especially valid question when one realizes that postmodernism's threat is not confined to the personal and psychological—though these would be sufficient. It is an existential threat to our species.

In his 1964 *The Myth of the Machine: Technics and Human Development*, author Lewis Mumford pondered technologic progress-for-its-own sake, and its likelihood of producing our postmodern future shock / singularity situation. He even coined the desire for a singularity-type existence as the "Megamachine"—the same drive that led megalomaniac pharaohs to construct the pyramids merely because they could. He began by envisioning man's evolutionary history and our exceptionality as tool-makers and tool-users.

"...If man were actually, as current theory still supposes, a creature whose manufacture and manipulation of tools played the largest formative part in his development, on what valid grounds do we now propose to strip mankind of the wide variety of autonomous activities historically associated with agriculture and manufacture, leaving the residual mass of workers with only the

trivial tasks of watching buttons and dials, and responding to one-way communication and remote control? If man indeed owes his intelligence mainly to his tool-making and tool-using propensities, by what logic do we now take his tools away, so that he will become a functionless, workless being, conditioned to accept only what the Megamachine offers him: an automaton within a larger system of automation, condemned to compulsory consumption, as he was once condemned to compulsory production?"

Unable to find a rationale for allowing progress-for-its-own-sake to menace the very species it is supposed to benefit, Mumford theorized that this future humanity was at risk of being enslaved by the edicts of the Megamachine, in the same way that countless lives must have been lost in pursuit of the pharaohs' architectural ambitions.

"...we must then go on to question the basic soundness of the current scientific and educational ideology, which is now pressing to shift the locus of human activity from the organic environment, the social, group, and the human personality to the Megamachine, considered as the ultimate expression of human intelligence – divorced from the limitations and qualifications of organic existence...The Nuclear Age conceptions of absolute power, infallible computerized intelligence, limitless expanding productivity, all culminating in a system of total control exercised by a military-scientific-industrial elite, correspond to the Bronze Age conception of Divine Kingship. Such power, to succeed on its own terms, must destroy the symbiotic cooperation between all species and communities essential to man's survival and development. Both ideologies belong to the same infantile magico-religious scheme as ritual human sacrifice. As with Captain Ahab's pursuit of Moby Dick, the scientific and technical means are entirely rational, but the ultimate ends are mad."

Mumford succeeded in predicting the current predicament of our political Leftwing, who are in grave danger of having their classical liberalism and thus liberality subsumed by postmodernism. On the one hand, leftists view the conveniences of technology as liberating and thus liberal; on the other hand, principled leftists are unnerved that this tact inherently allies them with greedy technocrats. Thus today's leftist is often forced in one breath to damn capitalism to hell, and in the next to shill for social media companies under the guise that "they're a private company; they can do what they like." Meanwhile, their supposedly liberal politicians utterly refuse to enforce anti-trust laws against the monopolies they constantly pan in the press, because such actionless talk allows them to earn brownie points with amnesiac voters while continuing to solicit corporate campaign donations in private.

Perhaps this is merely a natural continuation of WWII's faux-moralizing, wherein the Allies fought the "Axis of Evil" to "save the Jews," only to then collect Nazi scientists for their own identically immoral programs. The basic idea of National Socialism—centralizing greedy corporations without

overly-curtailling their greed in a Soviet fashion—was obviously not considered to be an evil to be destroyed, but an evil to be appropriated. In the West it lives on as crony capitalism, especially between Silicon Valley and Washington D.C.; in the East it has been perfected by the Chinese “Communist” Party, which “communizes” by exporting toys and trinkets to the capitalist consumers of the world while oppressing its producer citizens with surveillance and a “social credit score.”

In this, Mumford’s astute observation is effectively an update of Karl Marx. “Workers of the world unite” and “seize the means of production,” while an understandable reactionary strategy at the time, is rendered meaningless in a system of fully automated production where “the means of production” cannot be seized because there are no “workers of the world” to “seize them.” Marx was ultimately short-sighted compared to the Luddites (and Ted Kaczynski), who tried to forestall the Industrial Revolution and sabotage “the means of production” so that the “workers of the world” would continue to have any work at all.

The leftist may comfort his or herself for now with dreams of everlasting Universal Basic Income, where benevolent centralized powers will care for the jobless masses either out of the goodness of their hearts, or to prevent them from recommencing a Luddite way of thinking and attempting to harm the precious “means of production.” Mumford, and perhaps even Marx, would of course find this about as plausible as believing that the pharaohs would have continued feeding and sheltering their pyramid-builders if they could have got the pyramids without them.

But to run the thought experiment at all is to have misunderstood the full extent of class warfare. In this, even postmodernists lack cynicism due to leftism’s inexplicable, unfounded faith in human nature. The belief can be rendered thus—class warfare will end with scarcity. In other words, scarcity is the origin of class and thus class warfare, and when the utopian equity replaces scarcity, class warfare will go with it. Mumford corrects this—class warfare is not merely materialistic (Marx would have missed that); it is also ego. “Divine Kingship” is not *just* a scheme to achieve kingly wealth; it is a scheme to achieve quasi-divine *power*. As Frank Underwood put it in the pilot episode of *House of Cards* (U.S. version), “Money is the Mc-mansion in Sarasota that starts falling apart after 10 years. Power is the old stone building that stands for centuries. I cannot respect someone who doesn’t see the difference.”

The Leftwing *ought* to know this; their darling Nietzsche among others said in no uncertain terms that in the absence of God or objective truth there is only “the will to power” or Might Makes Right. But their secular religion of utopian materialism—the creed that all problems can be solved by materialistic equity—has blinded them to what Nietzsche and Mumford knew. When there is no material way to one-up one’s neighbor (or the contest is so hopelessly unequal that it loses its charm), one attempts to dominate and utterly destroy that neighbor instead.

Like Jesus Christ, “antichrist” Nietzsche ought to be taken as a whole or not at all. But the Left opted to pick-and-choose him in reverse of Hitler. Hitler latched onto the sickly Friedrich’s “overman,” “danger and play,” “will to power,” and “slave morality.” Leftists latched onto “God is dead” (without noting the melancholy “. . .and we have killed Him” that follows), “there are no facts, only interpretations,” and “philosophy [as] unconscious autobiography.” Both political sides left behind perhaps his most useful tidbit—the Eternal Recurrence thought experiment, an antidote to resentment. Conjoined, these two halves are fairly comprehensible as a Gospel of Dionysus—a Greco-Roman melodrama between the curtains of nonexistence and death wherein one drinks copiously, copulates frantically, goes on a few adventures or campaigns boastfully, and denies the existence of truth stoically. Nietzsche wanted to become a marble statue, and succeeded. But, for all his loathing of the Biblical, he left himself just as or more open to selective interpretation.

Jesus said “render under Caesar” *and* “the poor will always be with you”—an indication that class warfare has been and always will be with us. Mumford effectively concluded that, just as Leftists think they have finally managed to prove Jesus wrong and save the world without him, our class warfare will have reached its horrific apex. One cannot help but think of how both Chesterton and Rene Girard lampooned the beginnings of postmodernism as “Christian morality without Christ.” In this abomination they feared the ascendancy of a fatal mistake—the mistaking of “kindness” for true goodness, in the sense that one could say it is kinder to affirm sweet lies than bitter truths, kinder to destroy the excellent lest they embarrass the mediocre, kinder to strip human autonomy than allow the dangers of self-governance, kinder to embrace anarchy than maintain law and order. To be tyrannized by a spirit of lawlessness (2 Thessalonians 2:3) is an ancient paradox that we are only just beginning to understand.

As Dostoevsky was able to roughly anticipate the World Wars in *The Brothers Karamazov*, so one need not be a Nostradamus to anticipate this final incursion by Mumford’s Megamachine against the Malthusian “useless eaters.” But in doing so, it is all too easy to succumb to the ultimate aim of postmodernism—a defeatism that forestalls the manly or womanly fortitude to cast a sabot into these mincing gears. Let us exorcise this demon with all expedience, so that we might not merely take up space and goods during our species’ greatest struggle yet. Some human, who still has light in their eyes, righteous anger in their heart, and an ideal higher than convenience and comfort in their mind, will have need of that space and those goods. Let it be us.

II. Transcendence

If an objective spiritual truth exists, the knowledge of which is essential for us to apprehend, it must be rediscoverable. In other words, if God exists and wishes Himself to be known, He must have provided a mechanism to make Himself known which anyone could avail themselves of.

If this were not the case, then one would effectively (if unconsciously) be claiming that the time and place of one's birth utterly determines the fate of one's soul, and that if every copy of one's infallible book were burned, the essential knowledge therein would utterly cease to exist. Perhaps these will do for Calvinists, who gleefully chuck even newborn babes upon eternal hellfire in sadistic tribute to their god's omnipotence—but to those who aim a little higher than an even wickeder Moloch for their deity, these are unacceptable concessions.

Indeed, the Bible itself, so often treated as the totality of spiritual life rather than an invitation to meet God for one's self, suggests the same. Noah and Abram and Moses, et al., had no King James Version, seeing as they are featured in it. Instead, God sought out human beings who would heed His call. To suppose that God has changed, or that these people were special and thus merited special treatment which no longer occurs, is highly suspect. The first is blatantly unbiblical, and the latter willfully ignores that God was the first author to consistently 'subvert expectations' by allowing unlikely characters unlikely roles. One suspects these dubious theories are merely a consequence of organized Christianity's attempt to monopolize spirituality entire, despite itself being a progression of Judaism, Neoplatonism, etc.

So let us become as men and put away childish things. We see through a glass darkly, but there is no need to willfully obscure it further. We find ourselves living the lives of animals and thinking the thoughts of gods upon a spinning space rock, and none of us have much time to spare. Is there or is there not anything that we must know, in order to modify what we do with our frail lives? And if there is, could we find this *Logos*—the Word of God—without ordering it through Amazon Prime?

The first step of such a quest would be to wish for its prize, but it is likely that most have already taken this first step, willfully or not. The greatest predator, Man, constantly stalks or at least desires a most elusive prey in the form of spiritual contentment—a prey that secular science has concluded does not exist due to its immateriality. Yet, if everything is truly a product of unconscious adaptation, the evolution of genes and memes, wherefore came this desire for that which has no reality and thus has never been obtained? How can a successful animal crave a nonexistent stimulus when every craving is inspired by its accompanying stimulus? As I put it in a 2019 public correspondence on the subject, "I conclude that one cannot prove that there is Meaning to life—and it seems to me that this realization may itself be the initiation into that Meaning. We are told we are products of, and adapted to, this world, yet we inherently yearn for a Meaning that this world cannot provide. Is this not the very definition of transcendence—to discover that the locus of Meaning lies elsewhere?"

One step further and one has already reached the famed Dark Night of the Soul—the realization that they not only desire but actually *cannot do without* this seemingly unobtainable prize. For this is a prize that makes all other prizes seem hardly worth the trouble; if one must return emptyhanded from this quest, they might as well not return at all. This is the moment at which the original spiritual sacrament reveals itself—perennially rediscoverable so that it is almost impossible to miss. As the weary seeker gives up all hope of attainment, and simultaneously sees that all else but this attainment is vanity, they will inevitably sit down some place out of doors and far from the banal chatter of other humans. Such is the temper tantrum of adults—rather than screaming for attention, we seek to gather up a store of reserve energy within, secluded from the emotional vampires we are usually surrounded by.

Yet, unbeknownst to us, we have now assumed the setting and the posture of meditation. We could even at a distance be mistaken for an ascetic or hermit. And should we find that no energetic second wind comes to us in the form of a passable consolation—“ah well! what are you going to do? might as well get back to work and stop chasing dreams...”—we will have little choice but to *actually meditate* upon the problem, or upon ourselves, or (best of all) upon the apparent nothingness of it all.

Ex victis, victoria: from defeat, victory. Human nature itself has brought one, kicking and screaming, to the very place that they initially wished to be. Signposts would not make for as sure a path as this. One almost hates to spoil the fun of what happens when one takes up meditation while at rock bottom. Suffice it to say that this is the wellspring of spiritual philosophy and thus religion. The quiet, the silence, the *vacuity* of just focusing on one’s breath until even that awareness fades away, is the commencement of one’s personal spiritual education. Elijah himself could not do much better:

“Go forth, and stand upon the mount before the Lord. And, behold, the Lord passed by, and a great and strong wind rent the mountains, and break in pieces the rocks before the Lord, but the Lord was not in the wind: and after the wind an earthquake; but the Lord was not in the earthquake: and after the earthquake a fire, but the Lord was not in the fire: and after the fire a **still small voice**” (1 Kings 19:11-12, emphasis mine).

For some, like Gautama Buddha under his bodhi tree, the full attainment of this sacrament comes all at once. For others, the “still small voice” may at first merely be the realization that the nagging “conscience” they have carried about with them all their lives is something rather more than a figment, and ought at least to be humored from time to time. Still others may even have the unpleasant experience of effectively being spurned: “What are *you* doing on *my* holy ground? Put your mundane affairs in order before you worry about the mysteries!” Most seem to simultaneously glean that the prize they seek *is* attainable—indeed, is extended unto them with utter generosity—*and* that they are not yet adequate to accept it as it deserves to be accepted. Like the romantic boy who wishes to be a great man before he

weds the love of his life, questions about one's own worthiness—appropriate *and* defeatist—feature commonly.

This often brings a cold sweat to one's brow, for the question then begs itself, what if I don't live long enough to complete this process? What, indeed? Historically, the answer to this quandary has been reincarnation or transmigration; the Great Work cannot be left undone, so one will necessarily return until it is. Then, innovations such as the vicarious redemptions of Jesus Christ and Amida Buddha came along to the effect that those who have already completed the Great Work can do yours for you. Even in our Greek mythology, we find that Prometheus, who stole from the gods and was sentenced to having his liver repeatedly pecked out every day for all eternity, was eventually rescued by the god-man Heracles. Historically, no sage has ever doubted that “[His] grace is sufficient for thee” (2 Corinthians 12:9). The utterly doomed are instead those who delude themselves that they can do without this grace.

Such concerns relate to the Biblical paradox of fear; we are simultaneously told to fear God, and that God has not given us a spirit of fear. We are also told that jealousy is a sin, and that God is a jealous God. From such we may glean that “fear” of God is a desperate, jealous love, a vigilance concerning the fact that one cannot do without Him. Such a singular priority ought to render one a fearless, even vicious lion in every other context—*to hell with all else!*

Every other spiritual act is effectively an aid or augment to meditation. Even prayer—lately fallen into ill repute by those who misuse it to request cash and prizes—may be classified as such, for the devoted prayer inevitably finds as C.S. Lewis did that “It doesn't change God. It changes me.” This is not, of course, to say that supernatural things cannot occur from prayer—or any other meditative practice, for that matter. Some have received the frights of their lives from assuming that nothing inexplicable or uncanny would happen during their spiritual practices unless they requested such. To put it briefly, there is a reason why every Biblical appearance of an angel necessitates the statement “Be not afraid!”

Speaking of, the role of angels as compared to the “still small voice” appears to be more about verbosity than content. While angels have been known to offer full-length discourses, if the voice of God speaks more than a single full sentence, one has likely deified their own ego. These messenger spirits, historically called “tutelary” from which we get “tutor,” mostly bear very good or very bad news—however, that may have nothing to do with a penchant for drama, and everything to do with little else being relevant. Whether they never need appear, or whether they appear but once on the precipice of *interesting* times in the Chinese sense, or whether one learns the name of and is able to converse with their personal “guardian” angel, is but a cursory summary of the possibilities. The latter is held in particularly high regard by all “mystery schools” and “occult organizations”—hooded robe wearers of every stripe—because it allows one to ask what the particulars of their personal Work and Will are instead of having to parse it out through much introspective pain and suffering. However, the

inconveniences saved by using this metaphysical “cheat code” are probably balanced out by having to wade through the esoteric pomposity of said robe wearers.

Questionable prosaic and fashion choices aside, said schools and organizations undoubtedly possess more potent meditative methods than modern organized religion (with one notable exception—the religious are everywhere preeminent in almsgiving or charity). Indeed, it is difficult to conclude anything other than that, historically, religions were the “business up front” to fund and conceal the mystery schools’ “party in the back” (the mullet is henceforth a magickal analogy). While one can potentially sit in a church pew for a lifetime without ever knowing the spiritual in a more than hearsay fashion, the occult’s “our method is science/our aim is religion” (Aleister Crowley) has won over many a Doubting Thomas. However, anyone familiar with the gospels knows that Thomas is not the apostle one should aspire to imitate if there is any other alternative. Patanjali, author of the original aphorisms on yoga, notes matter-of-factly that dedicated spiritual practice often bestows magickal powers as a side effect, but that “By giving up even these [magickal] powers comes the destruction of the very seed of evil. The yogi should not feel allured or flattered by the overtures of celestial beings...” Franz Bardon, a modern magus of reputation almost as exemplary as Patanjali, conversely espouses in his *Initiation into Hermetics* that such powers are most permissible to help one’s fellow man—and the very road to Hell if used for any other reason. *Caveat emptor*.

Nonetheless, if one were to master meditation and harness “supernatural” power and memorize the sacred texts and study the comparative religion masterworks (Agrippa, Evola, Campbell, Hall, etc), it would profit them nothing without the occurrence of an actual transfiguration—the mortification or even death of their ego for its replacement by the will of God in “not my will, but Yours, be done” fashion. Indeed, if one could accord with the transcendent truths in humility and simplicity without formally understanding them, such would be infinitely superior to all theoretic knowledge. “The participants shall be apprised of their roles at the proper time. For now it is enough that they have arrived,” as Judge Holden coyly puts it in *Blood Meridian*.

And this is precisely why organized religion, for all of its faults, will remain preeminent over personal spirituality. Instructing the average insecure human being in the mysteries (“lost in caverns of Cabala,” describes Victor Hugo) is all too likely to produce “whitewashed tombs”—self-righteous cultists rather than genuine saints. Ignorance is only ugly when it is proud, whereas pride is always ugly whether it be ignorant or informed. Thus, “Blessed are those who have not seen, and have believed,” as Jesus appraised of Thomas. We have only sketched the personal alternative here due to the certainty that some will find modern religion unsatisfactory for both valid and invalid reasons. We pray that this glimpse of how individual relationships with God eventually calcify into communal religions is sufficient to indicate that previous hatred of religion need not mean an eternal hatred of God. The goal is, as Lewis said of

prayer, not to change God but to change one's self in a Wilhelmian fashion: "Neither a gloomy 'ought' nor a harsh 'must,' law now leads to pleasure; because attractively equipped, we are prepared to obey it freely" (*Lectures on the I Ching*, 129).

Such is our general thesis; that the struggle between postmodernism and transcendence is the choice between great freedom in a lawless paradigm or great restriction in a lawful one. Which is really just a prosaic way of saying that one must ultimately choose between the liberation of Lucifer or the cross of Christ—"Dionysus or the Crucified?" as poor Nietzsche put it. The plot only thickens when one attempts to behold both simultaneously and ask to what purpose such fearful symmetry was framed?

With the advent of computer technology, the approximations of consciousness with logic gates and memory with Boolean bits has brought "simulation theory" into the public eye. In short, the constant need to readjust the ever-burgeoning age of the universe to account for our ever-increasing appreciation of its complexity tempts one to conclude that this "library of assets" was prepackaged rather than occurring unintentionally. This is amusing for two reasons. The first is that calling everything one knows a "simulation" is rather pointless unless one has ascertained the alternative reality. The second is that we have unintentionally created a modern secular paradigm which is nigh-identical to the ancient mystical one.

The mystical paradigm is indeed to consider this reality as a "simulation" composed by a mysterious "programmer" for the conducting of a massive "experiment." The material or sensual plane is but the "sandbox environment" whereby astral or celestial forms may "graphically render" and be recorded in the etheric or akashic "memory." That these rendered forms are competitive adherents of game theory unto the extent of being self-correcting indicates the originating hypothesis. The simulator seeks peers from among the simulated; His beloved creations are afforded the right to create. Let them who have ears hear.

From such one may see the concession that is owed to postmodernism. The postmodernist is indeed correct that our subjective senses do not come close to apprehending the totality of reality. Indeed, most every mystic would side with them against dogmatic religion concerning the fact that objective reality cannot be comprehended *perfectly* in our present state. Like all deadly lies, postmodernism is pernicious precisely because it uses a large pinch of truth in its soul-destroying concoction. Postmodernism agrees with Buddha and Christ concerning the illusory or at least transitory material world as understood by the mind of man. *Unlike* Buddha and Christ, who allowed themselves to be humbled and enlightened by this realization of human frailty and cosmic helplessness, the postmodernist has chosen to *rejoice* that there is no firm foundation amidst this shifting sand.

This maps eerily to a key aspect of the Tree of Life or ten Sephiroth within Kabbalah. When one reaches the fourth sphere on the path to God (synonymous with the Love of God), one is confronted by a

great abyss. The final three spheres (God's Intelligence, Wisdom, and Ultimate being) are inaccessible without daring to leap across this expanse. However, those who leap while still weighed down by their own ego plunge to those depths, never to return. Aleister Crowley reported that these abyssal souls are a morass of shifting shapes that pathetically insist "I Am I!"—nothings that continue to fancy themselves somethings. This, not the fossil record, is the wastebasket of history.

The final necessary caveat to the "simulation" analogy is simply to appreciate that every experiment must have an end. This is eschatology, or the anticipation of an "End Times" writ large. The necessity for such has been somewhat unclear until postmodernism and singularity. After these, the gravity of the matter is much more apparent. If our programmer were not to conclude his experiment, then the very goal of his simulation might begin to produce diminishing returns. In other words, there would come a day when the simulated become incapable of rediscovering their simulator's will due to an abortive mutation of their consciousness (such as postmodernism taken to its inevitable extreme). If such a thing were to occur, then the simulator would solely find enemies where once he could have managed to manifest a few friends. Indeed, not only is it likely to happen; it has probably happened before. "...for I regret that I have made them" (Genesis 6:7).

Let us recall that, according to the Lord Jesus Christ, children are the kingdom of heaven. Let us then recall that according to him, it would be better to lose life and limb than lead these heavenly ones astray. Let us then ponder the points of history whereat one could say of children with some certainty that it would be better for them not to have been born, because conniving adults have made the joys of childhood and thus the maturities of adulthood all but impossible. Let us finally ask—do such places and periods ever stand for long? Postmodernists do indeed lead even children astray, but the millstone is already about their necks. This author expects, with occasional glances at his watch, that even the richest, most powerful, most cunning engineers of the postmodern/singularity duo will live to rue the day that *they* were born—and such shall occur even without Kaczynskian reactionaries doing them violence. To put it succinctly, they have pledged themselves to the Father of Lies, and will be outraged to find they were lied to; it is a rare thief indeed who feels no outrage when he himself is robbed.

Recognizing that the funds and knowhow necessary to succeed as a hermit are close to extinct within the developed world, we suppose that an inner hermitage is all that is feasible for most: "in the world, but not of it." The methods by which to learn how to dwell amidst high-tech singularity and low-culture postmodernism while enjoying a history-long peace have already been sketched. The only trouble which remains is that, just because one knows *what* to do does not mean that they will *actually* do it.

This serious trouble has also been accounted for in the "programming" of this "simulation." The programmer personally demonstrated rediscoverable transcendence for those who might otherwise miss it. He availed himself of his own mechanism by being both a timeless principle and a timebound person—

the *Logos* made flesh—just as he asks us to embody his Word and Will in our own little way. Leading by example, he upset history and the laws of physics for our sake in an unmistakable display. With a single lower-class life, he cast down the specters of religion and death, and offered to be the savior of anyone who cannot save themselves. He dispensed with the necessity of any action or merit on the part of the seeker, so that even the weakest might find what they seek. Thus by him anyone may be redeemed, be it by “confess[ing] with [their] mouth that [He] is Lord and believe[ing] in [their] heart that He rose from the dead,” or humbly admitting “I believe; help me with my unbelief,” or even merely requesting, “Remember me in your kingdom.”

Those who never knew him will be afforded the chance; those who knew him by a different name shall know him better; those who seek him always find him, and those who ask for him always receive him. He is the Word of God before, during, and after history—this is why no book or creed can possibly confine him. Many have and will pretend to be Him, and lead many astray, so much so that Time itself must be cut short for the sake of those who will love him. If you hate God, you hate him. If you love God, you love him. No one has ever gotten to God except through him. His name is Jesus Christ, the sole name at which every demon trembles and every angel bows. And for your sake, he even went so far as to trounce the greatest bestseller of all time (Homer’s *Iliad*=700 copies with 95% accuracy between them; the New Testament=7,000 copies with 99.5% accuracy between them), and in doing so fulfilled six hundred Old Testament prophecies about himself. The perfection of his words therein is unparalleled, so that only one phrase has ever been seriously challenged:

αὕτη γενεὰ οὐ παρέλθῃ ἕως πάντα ταῦτα γένηται

which means “...this generation [will] not pass away until all these things have happened.” Because Christ referred to his quite impossible-to-miss return in the preceding passages, it is criticized. But in order to stake their claim against Christ upon this, one must be intentionally daft *and* utterly ignore the miraculous accuracy which permeates it.

While standing before Solomon’s Temple in Jerusalem with his disciples, he predicts that after his death a desecration shall occur therein, and thereafter it will be completely destroyed. This event is to be the commencement of a lengthy-sounding apocalyptic age, full of catastrophes existential and philosophical, at the conclusion of which he will return in the heavens with an angel army. *Then* it is stated,

“Now learn a parable of the fig tree; When his branch is yet tender, and putteth forth leaves, ye know that summer is nigh; So likewise ye, when ye see all these things, know that it is near, even at the doors. Verily, I say unto you, ***This generation shall not pass, till all these things be fulfilled.*** Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away. But of that day and hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels of heaven, but my Father only. But as the days of

[Noah] were, so shall also be the coming of the [myself] be. For as in the days that were before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that [Noah] entered the ark, And knew not until the flood came, and took them all away; so shall the coming of [myself] be.” (Matthew 24: 32-39, emphasis mine).

From the desecration of the Temple by Antiochus Epiphanes, to its utter erasure by Titus, to the Israeli diaspora and the fall of the Roman Empire, and the formation of the hitherto unfathomably bizarre modern and postmodern world, he speaks as one whose authority it is, not just to *predict*, but to *declare*. Only the consummation date is left unset, yet those with discernment will sense its “summer being nigh” when the world has returned to a state identical to “the days of Noah” (wherein wicked obliviousness permeates). The generation referred to is clearly “the fig tree generation”—the last generation necessarily *and* inferably. These are, in the author’s opinion, those children who will be born and bred purely of postmodernism and singularity, though these be antithetical to life itself. Not only can such a world not stand; it cannot be allowed to stand. His nature will not allow it.