

CHAPTER TEN
LUCIFER, THE TRANSVALUED CORE OF ETHICS

**“In George’s pocket are the keys to
Heaven, in George’s bosom are the
keys to Hell.”**
Runic song

It is difficult to transvalue values, but it is really important to try and do so. I have made a long argument that Lucifer is the beginning of ethics in the cosmos, the being who introduced all the functions required for an ethical system, and the first to articulate the values inherent in a dynamic cosmos. I think the argument is sound, that it works, and it leads to an important conclusion. The meanings implicit in the Lucifer texts, whether historical or mythological, must be accepted for the rational existence of any ethical theory. Lucifer must be accepted if there is to be an ethics. The old Runic song about St. George is interesting (1). He holds the keys to heaven casually in his pocket, but he holds the keys to hell surprisingly where we would not expect them, in his bosom. Hell is next to his breast, intimate, protected, and I would conclude, valued. The old texts have gotten twisted around and contaminated with the evil process of demonization, and we need to take a fresh and different look.

Imagine that one of the stories in the *Ethiopian Book of Enoch* concerns an officer of the celestial court who has been sent, along with 200 other officers, to administer a small planet at the periphery of the imperial star system (2). Enoch gives this group the name “Watchers,” which fairly accurately represents their managerial role. Our particular officer, one of high rank, has administered the planet through educating the primitive population in order that they might progress toward a more complex civilization. This education has been in the arts, sciences, technologies and ethics. Dealing with a primitive population still disorganized and tribal, injustice and warfare have also been prevalent, but cities have been built and the population is advancing.

The administrative colonizers have also done something we humans did frequently throughout our history. They have “gone native.” Many have become friends with the native population and most have taken native women for their wives. There are problems

with these intermarriages. The colonizers have a much longer life span than the natives, and the biological differences sometimes make childbirth difficult or fatal. But slowly, the mixed population has grown, and the colonizers have shown natural love for their children and a devotion to their families. Their progeny have become aristocrats and leaders, although we should also imagine, as is common in human societies around the world, that there is some “racial” tension. The primitive population is making great strides, is learning all the colonizers have to teach them about their technological level, and can soon hope to achieve the level, the secrets, of the colonizing empire. This colonizing empire reacts as our own colonizing empires have reacted through our history. It condemns the project: “An order has been issued from the court... against those who dwell upon the earth, that their doom has arrived because they have acquired the knowledge of all the secrets of the angels, all the oppressive deeds of the Satans, as well as all their most occult powers... And those (who taught them these things) will have no haven forever, because they have revealed to them the things which are secret -- to the condemned ones...”

This imperial order is described variously by the old texts, but the main points are all the same. The imperial court, very displeased that a colonial population has been educated and trained in the arts and sciences of the superior civilization, has condemned the colony to total destruction and made the administrators of the doomed colony criminals who will be captured or hunted forever. The punishment of the primitive population is terrible, but the real sadism is found in the punishment of the administrators, because that punishment is carefully and deliberately psychological and physical horror. In order to appreciate the need for transvaluing the value conclusions inaccurately drawn from the old texts, we need to consider the terrible evils done to The Watchers, for we have been talking about The Watchers in modern language and symbol.

Consider one of the administrative officers now, Azazel of the *Book of Enoch*, called a demon throughout history (3). Azazel instituted a program of teaching the native population, a program the imperial court described as “corrupting” the Earth. Far from the imperial court, Azazel developed a sense of freedom and initiative, and a moral agency that led him to choose to advance the native population rather than exploiting it. He paid dearly for that ethical choice. Listen to his fate (4):

“ ‘Bind Azazel hand and foot (and) throw him in the darkness.’

And he made a hole in the desert which was in Duda’el and cast him there; he threw on top of him rugged and sharp rocks. And he covered his face in order that he may not see light; and in order that he may be sent into the fire on the great day of judgment. And give life to the earth which the angels [The Watchers] have corrupted.”

Picture the officer now a bound prisoner, with a hood tightened over his face so that his eyes may never again see the light. He is thrown into a pit in the desert and then stoned with sharp, cutting rocks. Soon the ragged rocks pile up on top of the officer’s body, further blocking the light. Eventually, the pit is filled to the top with the heavy weight of the rocks, and underneath lies the blinded officer. This person, however, is not quite like us. Apparently, he is not mortal and will not die, although blinded, gashed with rocks, and crushed under the weight. The sands slowly cover the scene, the officer trapped in what seems eternal darkness, but still capable of thinking and feeling. His situation, though, is hopeless. He will never again see light, and on the final day of judgment (because this punishment is not over) he will be sent blinded into the fire, again for eternity. I want the reader to consider that cruelty which lies coiled at the base of “God is Love.” This officer remains somewhere in the desert, giving life to a planet he has “corrupted,” a true sacrifice of the most vicious kind.

But Azazel is only one of the defeated and hunted victims. The imperial forces also consist of troops with huge nets for taking prisoners of both the colonial administrators and the native population that has interbred with them. Enoch sees all this and asks his guide: “ ‘To whom are they going, these who are holding (the nets)?’ And he said to me, ‘(They are going) to their elect and beloved ones in order that they may be cast into the crevices of the abyss of the valley. Then the valley shall be filled with their elect and beloved ones; and the epoch of their lives, the era of their glory, and the age of their leading (others) astray shall come to an end and shall not henceforth be reckoned’” (5).

The forces are rounding up all the native population loved by the administrators, all the progeny, all the leaders they have mentored, all the persons the administrators hold dear -- their beloved. The administrators will not be killed immediately or thrown forever into the abyss before they are forced to see what is happening to their families, comrades and selected leaders. Instead, as Enoch relates it, they are forced to watch as these

beloved are piled into the crevices of valleys until the valleys are filled with the bodies of those most dear to them. The valleys become level ground choked with the dead. And the captured administrative officers must watch as the level of the dead rises, seeing the agonized faces of those they love thrown like garbage into a landfill.

I am not exaggerating the psychological and physical brutality. Enoch relates the orders of the celestial court quite clearly: "...slay the children with their mothers, and the children with their fathers..." (6). The officers who are the parents or grandparents of the native population will have to watch as the children are slain first, in order to further increase the officers' pain. First, the hope and beauty of the next generation will be destroyed in front of the eyes of those who created it.

Then comes the reckoning for the officers: "...here will gather together all (those) accursed ones, those who speak with their mouth unbecoming words against the Lord and utter hard words concerning his glory" (7). The captured officers will be herded together after the destruction of the native population, in some of the texts by a global flood, in others by means not quite so explicit. The punishment will begin and it will be severe: "After this judgment, they shall frighten them and make them scream because they have shown this (knowledge of secret things) to those who dwell on earth" (8). And Enoch is shown a terrible place and told: "This place is the prison house of the angels; they are detained forever" (9). A similar claim of wrong-doing on the part of the officers/angels can be found in *Psalms* 73, the description of Lucifer's Order and its "sin": "They speak violence in the heights of heaven, and set their mouth in the heavens, and their tongue wags on the earth" (10).

The three "sins" of The Watchers appear to be the education of the native serfs/slaves/workers into the civilization of the celestial court, the intermarrying with the native population which produces a progeny like the imperial court, and the mounting opposition to the totalitarian control of the court. These "sins" could equally well be described as virtues or values. Educating persons to reach their full potential rather than forcing them to remain stunted and slaves seems a high virtue, a significant value, and ethical act. Respecting persons for their full being rather than limiting one's interaction with them because of race or species difference seems another important value and a major grounding for ethics. Struggling to be able to speak freely and think thoughts in

opposition to the ruling power is the cornerstone of liberty and moral agency in modern terms. Now we have to consider that because some beings tried to actualize these values, almost the entire population of a planet was violently killed, the officers had to watch this painful destruction of persons they loved, and the officers then were psychologically and physically tortured and sentenced to have this torture continue eternally. In addition, the officers were demonized and their actions were described as sins. If ever values needed to be transvalued, this is a situation in which the need screams to infinity.

I've mentioned other instances of unethical brutality central to the religious interpretation of these old texts. Nor is it sufficient to say I have been using the Apocrypha and Pseudepigraph which were rejected by the major religions. First, not all have been rejected and remnants of these stories remain in the official bible without being elaborated but still part of the holy writing. We can find reference to The Watchers, but not their full story, in Daniel. The Psalms repeat some of the story of Lucifer's fall and the "sin" of thinking and speaking in opposition to the celestial court. The shortened version of the story of the Flood is prominent in the official bible. The Hebrew Apocalypse of Enoch contains some of the same references and adds the brutal treatment of Metatron. Second, there are more than sufficient examples of lack of respect for sentient beings, unnecessary use of pain and suffering, and the primacy of power and commands in the writings that were selected for inclusion in the official bible. There is Abraham commanded to kill his beloved son as a sacrifice to God in order to prove his obedience and love. The test is allowed to go much too far, with Isaac tied on the altar and the killing knife in Abraham's hand, before it is stopped. There is Ezekiel, ordered around like a slave and even commanded to eat unclean food. There is Job, a pawn in the argument between Lucifer and God, whose questions and complaints are muffled by raw power. There are all the slaughters of the Israeli neighbors; men, women and children annihilated. There is the devious agreement made to allow a foreign prince to marry an Israeli woman if all the men in his kingdom will be circumcised, and the surprise slaughter of those men as they recovered from the painful mutilation. There is the human sacrifice of Jesus.

The Hebrew Apocalypse of Enoch adds two other instances, in fact (11). There we learn that the archangel Gabriel was also punished with lashes of fire, in his case forty,

although we are not told the reason. Metatron, for having really done nothing but threaten with his splendor the divine ruler of the celestial court, is given sixty lashes of fire while made to stand and take it -- and also praise the ruler who ordered it.

This work also contains another cruel and brutal story of the Flood. Before the ruler had made human beings, he had created the “primeval ones” (angels created before man). The ruler had conceived the idea of creating human beings and asked for advice on the wisdom of this idea from the primeval ones. These primeval angels took the request seriously and gave it much consideration. They finally concluded that the ruler should not create such beings. However, the ruler did not like this answer, so he destroyed all the primeval beings! He then created a second company of beings to replace them. Still interested in his project to create humans, he asked this second company what they thought about his creating man. The second company of angels agreed with the conclusion of the destroyed first company, and being honest (and either brave or stupid) told the ruler it was not a good idea. That also was not a good idea. The ruler destroyed all of them as well. He created a third company of beings and put the same question to them. This third company apparently had some knowledge of what had happened to the first two, and did not have the integrity of the first two. They agreed with the ruler that his idea of creating human beings was good and should be done.

The ruler created human beings, but things went wrong, as the first two companies of angelic beings had anticipated, to their ruin and elimination. The ruler was now faced with a major problem and decided it was necessary to destroy almost all human beings with a planetary flood, keeping the family of Noah (who himself is described in the Book of Enoch as a very strange being) as the only creation salvageable. At this point, the third company of angels did an extremely brave thing, given the past history of this problem. They pointed out to the ruler after the Flood that, given what had occurred with human beings, the first company of angels had after all been right.

There are two things striking about this account. First is the disregard and disrespect for created beings that the ruler shows. Unless these beings are completely submissive and give only answers the ruler likes, there is apparently nothing ethically that prevents him from destroying such beings. His power alone is the basis for decisions and behaviors, and ethics is defined as what this powerful being wishes or does. Ethics is

reduced to brute force or raw power. That is all it can be. Second is the persistent courage and opposing thinking that seems a natural part of the cosmos and its sentient beings. We could understand the primeval company of angels not understanding the consequences of free thinking and speaking. But the second company, likely knowing what had happened to the first, maintained its personal integrity, its honor, its inner pride, its freedom. They paid with their existence for it, but they nevertheless chose it. The third company chose discretion as the better part of valor till the end, when they too summoned up the integrity and bravery to oppose by pointing out that the ruler should have listened to the truth of the primeval company. These beings all made such existential choices in the face of extreme risk and there is something about their actions that most fully describes the strength and importance of free thought and self-love in the cosmos.

There is a workable naturalistic argument for this emergence and vitality of free thinking and self-respecting in the cosmos. It depends on a required mechanism for complex systems, feedback mechanisms. If we adequately understand feedback mechanisms, we will understand sentience and why sentient beings must have the capacity and freedom to think clearly.

Feedback mechanisms both within and between levels of organization in a complex system must have adequate access to data generated by the system, to begin with (12). Any limiting or censoring of data will interfere with the adequate functioning of the mechanisms. In the complicated spaces between neuronal endings (synapses), for example, data about the quantity of brain bioamines must be sufficient for the feedback functions to work. The production of bioamines and their uptake through receptors are dynamic activities dependent on certain switching mechanisms that can increase production, increase receptors, or do the opposite. This activity starts with a reasonably accurate flow of information on the amounts of bioamines circulating. If that information is blocked or distorted, the mechanism will malfunction and the effects on the entire organisms can be severe. In other words, if the system cannot count on its getting free access to needed information, the system's function is imperiled.

Feedback also requires adequate interpretation of this data. This is more complicated and often involves the learning program. Keeping the system in oscillating balanced states means carefully initiating responses, taking account of the time-lag in negative

feedback, and manipulating small changes to keep within the parameters of the oscillations. Multiple feedback mechanisms will be involved in complex systems, and the process involves either hard-wired (built-in) interpretation programs or learned, trial-and-error, incremental interpretation schemes. A complex organism relies more on learned rather than hard-wired interpretation techniques, since attempting to hard-wire all required interpretations would be unwieldy and not feasible. Once the feedback interpretation becomes a learning function, the requirement for freely experiencing and thinking is implied. A sentient being, to be successful, must be a freely experiencing and thinking being. This value is built into the nature of the cosmos and of complex systems in a primary way. Interpretation emerges at a certain level of systems organization as sentience rather than hard-wired programs. The level of organization requires learning or sentience as the technique for feedback interpretation. The success of the feedback mechanism then becomes dependent on free experience and free thought, actual learning. The complex system depends on the success of the feedback mechanism. Free experiencing is an emergent property of the complexity of a level of organization. Sentient beings are by nature freely experiencing/thinking beings or they cannot maintain their complex system.

This explains in naturalistic terms the strength of the concepts presented in the various texts of Lucifer, The Tenth Order, The Watchers, Azazel, and the three companies of angels. Whether these texts are mythological or historical, at their base is a profound idea of the primacy of freedom in a dynamic cosmos. However, we will not be able to appreciate that idea, grasp it fundamentally, unless we transvalue the culturally-accepted values incorrectly derived from those old texts.

Human complexity will hopefully lead to human maturity. At least, there is no need to despair about our future. Edward Wilson looked into the future to find a human maturity that would allow humans to accept the value of what Mephistopheles offered to Faust and what Wilson still describes as the Mephistophelean bargain concerning external and internal control of our environment (13). It always fascinates me that when we talk about scientific understanding, probable truth, and human development, we use the names found in the Lucifer texts as the defenders and teachers of those values. I think it is very reasonable that we do so, because such important values are found in those texts, and

such beings are the supporters of those values. Our instincts are correct when we reach for the names of Mephistopheles, Lucifer, the Dragon, The Watchers, because they are the fighters for such values and the originators of a dynamic cosmos. Without them, the learning program deteriorates and the dynamic cosmos collapses.

What factors has the ruler of the celestial court supported or demanded? From the very first, the ruler chose, by rejecting Lucifer's thoughts and action, a static or closed system. He supported an unchanging, hard-wired or controlled cosmos which could not be critiqued. In the same way that he damned the child-like angels of the *Kebrā Nagast* for criticizing his creation Adam, he damned and tortured Lucifer for wishing to evolve his own happiness and not bow. The ruler wished to create sentient beings, but he refused to accept the reality or requirement of sentience: capacity and approval to freely experience. His beings were severely punished or destroyed for attempting to be what they were, sentient beings, free thinking beings. His choice was actually against sentience. The ruler also supported extreme cruelty, unnecessary pain and suffering. The complexity of the cosmos results in some necessary evil, but the ruler in the old texts, while discarding a complex dynamic cosmos, introduces arbitrarily much unnecessary evil. The evil is his choice or wish, not something implicit in the structure of a complex organization but generated by his personality and demand for extreme vengeance. In all the examples I have started this Chapter with, it would have been possible to destroy or punish without the extent of the pain and suffering inflicted. The psychological and physical pain does not fit the "sin" proportionately. The pain does not fit the character of the "sin" qualitatively. The pain in fact violates humanistic and cosmic ethics in terms of the natural features of sentient beings and dynamic systems. The pain is exclusively linked to the personal wishes of the ruler, perhaps to his personality itself, and has no redeeming quality for those receiving the pain or for the being giving the pain. It is empty of any meaning except sadism, and for that reason is very disturbing if fully appreciated. It is even more disturbing that the culturally-accepted reading of these texts does not grasp the sadism which so colors the ruler's actions (even embracing and willing the blood sacrifice of the ruler's own son); or does grasp the sadism and finds it a value consistent with sentience and ethical theory.

One Gnostic text does recognize the ethical failings of the orthodox monotheistic god. The Testimony of Truth argues: “But what sort of God is this God? First he envied Adam that he should eat from the tree of knowledge. And secondly he said ‘Adam, where are you?’ And God does not have foreknowledge. And afterwards he said, ‘Let us cast him out of this place, lest he eat of the tree of life and live for ever!’ Surely he has shown himself to be a malicious deceiver” (14).

The ruler’s lack of respect for sentient beings is clear and awful. There is a parable in the *Kebra Nagast*, the Parable of the Two Slaves, that is instructive (15). The two slaves are Satan and Adam, and even that characterization of them as slaves is an awful but accurate portrayal of the ruler’s relationship to other beings. The good slave is Adam, who is humble and weak, apparently the features most desired in beings by the ruler. The bad slave is Satan, who is arrogant and strong. Satan overcomes Adam, beats him and robs him, while the ruler watches. The ruler then descends, seizes the arrogant slave, beats him and crushes him. He binds him in fetters and throws him into the darkness. The humble and weak Adam is honored and approved by the ruler. The parable ends with this conclusion: “Whom He wisheth to honour He honoureth, and whom He wisheth to disgrace He disgraceth” (16). In a very short sentence, this captures the ethical position implicit in the religious interpretation of the old texts. Again, it is the ruler’s wishes or commands, the ruler’s power, that defines ethics. Psalm 51 of the Old Testament calls for “a contrite heart and a broken spirit.” Ethics has no existence separate from the ruler’s personality and power. His wishes are required to be the obeyed commands for his sentient beings, and his wishes and commands are the good.

The emphasis on being humble and weak is disturbing for ethics. Respect for sentient beings is difficult if those beings are required to be humble and weak. Such features place sentient beings into the special class of nonresponsible members of the ethical community who lack the capacity to be free moral agents. Members of this class may be protected, and in some ethical theories like Rawls may even be given special entitlements, but they are not conceived as accountable or having the capacity to act in their own best interests. They are excused, given gifts at the will of others, dependent on others, and not admitted as equal members to the ethical community. Being declared incompetent is a classification that most individuals fight, even when in fact it is not in

their best interest to fight it. Even in forensic work, some individuals with severe psychiatric diagnoses that would fulfill the requirements of an insanity defense reject such a defense. They have sufficient capacity to understand how powerless it will make them, and although psychotic, are reluctant to place themselves in such a weak position. However, the ruler of the heavenly court requires such humility and powerlessness, and it has become an unnatural value in transcendent theisms.

The second book of Esdras in the apocrypha of the latest version of the Bible translated by the American Bible Society may be from an original written in 2 A.D. The conversations between Esra and Uriel at the start of each apocalyptic vision show in a more gentle way than Job that human beings are limited and must be subservient rather than questioning. Esra sees a very tall young man surrounded by a large number of humans, some of whom the tall, human-like man is crowning. This being is Uriel, sent to teach Esra that he should not question the divine plan. Uriel is a kindly teacher, but intent on showing Esra he should know his proper place. He gives Esra the example of trees trying to invade the sea, and the sea trying to move on the trees -- an example I find fascinating because it is also the theme of my first article on ethics, the destruction of mangrove trees by an isopod and the extension of the sea into the invasive mangrove trees. Which is right, asks Uriel, and Esra answers that neither tree nor sea is right. Uriel is pleased with this reply, concluding that trees and seas have their "proper place." He then generalizes that people of Esra's world can understand only what goes on in this world, and only heavenly beings can understand what goes on in the heavens.

Uriel further diminishes Esra's capacity for thinking in the same way that Yahweh diminished Job's intellectual worth and avoided answering Job's questions. Uriel asks Esra questions he insists humans could experience and should be able to answer if they weren't so inferior. He adds questions about things beyond human experience to drive home the point of human inferiority, though Esra gamely keeps raising questions. On his second visit, Uriel insists to Esra: "You cannot understand!" He gives a series of tasks which he assumes humans can never perform, and tries to show Esra that unless he could do even one of these, he could not question "the new order" of the celestial ruler.

Looking at Uriel's test, which Esra failed because humans had not developed enough scientifically, we see that present human beings would do much better. We could in theory or practice answer all three of his questions based on this experienced world:

1. Could you weigh out a pound of fire? Yes, we can weigh or measure the elements of fire, thanks to our scientific development.
2. Could you measure a bushel of wind? Again yes, our science gives us the control to measure wind, and we would only have to agree on a conversion to bushel weight.
3. Could you bring back a day that has passed? In theory, we are already seeing the past days of stars whose light hurtles toward us, even if the star in its far place has died. We see the past in the starry skies.

Could we pass Uriel's test of things beyond human experience:

4. How many dwelling places are there at the bottom of the sea? We can map the sea floor and send robot minisubs like Alvin down to the depths. We've found the Titanic. We have photographed the Mid-Atlantic Ridge and other sea floor vents, and have identified the life-forms dwelling there. We've done what Uriel asked, although he didn't require it.
5. How many rivers flow into the waters beneath the earth? We now know a great deal about underground aquifers and some underground rivers, and could map more if we chose to spend the money.
6. How many rivers are there above the dome of the sky? Modern science is just beginning to look for water and water-flow channels on other planets and moons. We know very little about other planetary bodies, but our knowledge grows every day. We have taken the first steps toward space exploration.
7. Where are the exits from the world of the dead? This esoteric question has not yet been framed into a scientific question, and modern human beings have still not determined whether the question is a nonsense or meaningless question.
8. Where are the entrances to Paradise? We still don't know if there is a Paradise, much less where its entrance is.

But three out of five answers or beginning answers is not a bad record. It is one humans beings can be proud of, proclaiming our worth and our claim to ask questions. So of eight of Uriel's questions, we have developed to the point where we can answer six of

the eight questions. We are in a position to ask questions ourselves, because we have not accepted our “proper place” as one of static ignorance or limited experience.

How would we do on Uriel’s test of acting or power:

1. How many people are yet to be born? We could, in fact, give some estimates. We could put the end projection of birth rates at the estimated time of our star’s supernova, or at our species’ projected extinction based on average extinction rates. Putting in present birth rates and time to supernova, we could get a computer estimate of the number of people yet to be born. Rates are dynamic and should not be projected unchanged too far into the future. The natural world is contingent. But we could give Uriel an ideal projection, imprecise as it would be. We can think and compute in systems terms.
2. Collect scattered raindrops. We can sometimes successfully seed clouds for rain, but we haven’t collected raindrops, having no good reason to do so.
3. Make dead flowers bloom. We can do this through bioengineering at the present, using the DNA of the flower.
4. Open the rooms where the winds are locked up and make them flow for me. Manipulation of the climate is around the corner, but this is a future project. We understand many of the processes involved.
5. Show me the picture of sound. We can do that nicely now, with any sound Uriel would like. It has become a routine technology.

Our test results are not bad. We can specifically do two of the five things requested. We can forecast successfully doing another two. We can give a range of projections for one. Human beings need not close out possibilities, because Lucifer chose for a dynamic learning program, for competence and worth, and for self-confidence. Human beings have passed Uriel’s test, and Esra should have had faith in the future. He should not have allowed himself to be humiliated and silenced. A being is ready and worth attending to once that being has asked the question. Suppression is not fitting to sentient beings.

There is an important abstraction central to accepting humility and powerlessness, expressed both in philosophic positions (Bertrand Russell’s destruction of the self) and theological/mythological principles (monastic rules and Icarus’ flight to the sun). To legitimize humility and weakness, meaning must be removed from the cosmos as far as human beings are concerned. If the cosmos contains meaning within it, then some things

do matter. If some things matter, then what humans do and think matters in the systems scheme of things. That meaning will require valuing competent and ethically-chosen behaviors, of having such accurately-assessed pride in one's capacity that one will act and choose. The self-respect of knowing that one's acts and choices matter and are not illusions or delusions is tightly bound to meaning in the cosmos. Although monotheism appears to give meaning, as it had appeared to give free will, in fact it devalues and destroys the requirements for meaning at the human level. All human beings are placed in the special class of incompetents within monotheistic systems, but are nevertheless punished for their choices deemed incorrect by the ruler. They are not co-creators, not co-equals of any sort, but beings required to work toward a predetermined meaning imposed by the ruler. There can be no growth, no modification in the meaning, but only subservience to the static program. Beings capable of self-respect (pride) and moral agency must repress or kill those abilities, or like Lucifer, they will run afoul of the static order of the ruler's cosmos.

But monotheism is not alone in this problem, nor is philosophy immune from it, as Russell and Rawls both demonstrate from differing ethical theories. Consider the profound difference in world view illustrated by two examples.

First, think of the implications of a bit of dialogue written for a movie on the death of the Roman stoic and emperor, Marcus Aurelius: *Gladiator*. In popular culture terms, this bit of dialogue can stand for any self-respecting being who chooses to find and develop the meanings implicit in a dynamic cosmic system. The Roman field general is addressing his troops before battle and tells them: "What we do here today echoes through eternity." In a very short sentence, here is chaos theory explained, and in a grander and more accurate way than the usual statement that the flapping of a butterfly's wings in Asia can influence the climate of the globe. Human decisions and actions to carry them out at this point within the cosmos system are not meaningless, but will have reverberations throughout the infinite extent of the system, and for its eternal dynamism. Those human actions, if even in a slight way, will modify the growing meanings within the system and through that creation will emerge new functions and new potentials. We are at least as potent as the unaware butterfly slowly moving its wings in the tropical foliage of Southeast Asia, and we are likely much more potent.

Many things now matter in this battle. On the large scale, it will matter, will have meaning, whether this battle is won or lost -- and not just for human beings. It will matter who survives the battle and who doesn't. Each life counts. For each warrior, it will matter how he fights and how well he meets the challenges, for his own inner respect, for his image in his family's eyes, for his people, for his people's dreams, for the peoples of his world, and (if systems theory is correct) for all the levels of the cosmos. Here the human beings in the Roman legions are true co-creators of meaning in the cosmos, and truly co-equal to the powers of the cosmos. To use the battlefield metaphor of long-ago wars, each person has his place in the line, has the capacity to hold that place, and the self-respect to hold it to his limits. Their general made it clear that it mattered in a cosmic sense whether they held the line. It meant something that echoed through eternity. Given that naturalistic base for meaning, the other values of Lucifer follow, important values like respect, innate worth, freedom to experience, sentience to interpret feedback from experiencing, diversity, openness, risk taking, growth, and complexity. The self can choose to risk death in a meaning-full battle, but the self would never rationally choose to obliterate itself in order to make some final "peace" with an all-powerful and meaningless cosmos.

The old Romans, of the city rather than the empire, had this sense of human decisions counting through eternity, of the importance of human beings to the meaning of things. It was not based on a silly misconception that the Earth was the center of the universe, or that human beings were the center of ontology. The Romans likely knew better, because the Greeks and Egyptians did. The Romans from the beginning followed "fetial law," which required that any violence be justified within the cosmic scheme of things (17). Their special priest would go to the borders of the people who had done something against the Romans, state his case, appeal to the heavens, and give the other side thirty days to reply. Only if the case could be stated, if the war were considered just, could it be begun, and only after the other side had opportunity to set things right. Fetial law extended the Romans' decision making to the cosmos, and implied there was an important meaning to the decisions of human beings. It was not illusion. All was not vanity. The cosmos was not empty and meaningless. What was done did echo through eternity.

Now consider the Hindu depiction of Krishna and Arjuna at the epic battle on the field of Kurukshetra. Arjuna has chosen to have Krishna be his advisor, rather than the alternative choice of Krishna's army of a hundred million warriors (18). The two opposing sides line up for battle, but Arjuna is sad and his heart is not in a struggle which is basically a civil war. He knows the enemy. He understands the enormity of the slaughter likely to occur. He is a warrior, but he is not convinced the cause is just. Krishna brushes aside his concerns about the huge number of deaths, telling him the souls of these men have been in existence forever and will continue to exist forever, that the men's deaths are an illusion, and that nothing really changes in any important way. Pain and suffering are illusions and do not really matter. Nor does it matter who wins or loses the battle. It is only that Arjuna's role is a warrior role, and he must act as he is, as a warrior. That is all that counts. He has an empty role to play, but he ought to play it well.

Arjuna takes Krishna's counsel and wages the war. In the end, four of the enemy are left alive, and seven of the Pandus of Arjuna live. Arjuna has been a good warrior, but nothing has changed in the cosmos. The battle itself, and the number of the dead, did not matter. It was all an illusion, theater signifying nothing. This world, an illusion itself, does not count, nor does it change. And there the battle stops. Krishna is accidentally killed soon after, and is taken up to the skies in a shining radiance, to be with the Hindu gods, who also have not changed. Hindu polytheism is extremely sophisticated, but on the question of meaning in the cosmos, it is as static as Judeo-Christian monotheism or Islam. It shares that closed system view with philosophies as far apart as Platonism, Existentialism, Russell's Logical Positivism (but not Reichenbach's), Rawls' politicized ethics, and postmodernism. The only important thing (for no good reason) becomes playing out one's role, no matter what the role, without choice in the role -- a puppet. There may be strength and courage in playing out an assigned role, but it is strength and courage in the service of humility, self-resignation, and powerlessness.

The two approaches could not be more dissimilar. The despair of the latter and the shining struggle of the former are in sharp contrast, the same contrast as between the light and the darkness. Light, Lucifer and the Roman General decide for a complex cosmos, for a part in actualizing meaning, for the values we articulate as a specific theory of ethics. Darkness, Krishna, Arjuna, Russell... all resign themselves, repress themselves,

and give up their role in meaning and value, finally coming to the internal implication of the complete agnosticism and meaninglessness of postmodernism.

The value system expressed in understanding that what human beings do at their level, through the mechanism of feedback among levels, reverberates through infinity and eternity, has been called both an aristocratic and humanistic value system. Aristocratic virtues reflect the self-respect, free experiencing, and consideration of far-reaching consequences and obligations that a sentient being within a dynamic cosmos would consider the natural functioning of human beings. Humanistic virtues are described essentially in the same manner. We can see the two historical examples of this value system in the Roman, Coriolanus, and the American, Benedict Arnold.

We know Coriolanus only from Plutarch's Machievellian analysis that he was too good a man in reality and not sufficiently promoting himself as a good man in public. The easy traitor, Alcibiades, was to be preferred because he portrayed himself through clever public relations as a good man (although he was not), and the public therefore loved him. Coriolanus refused to pander or bow to the public and unfortunately that action depicted him as a dangerous or bad man (although he was not), and the public hated him. What were Coriolanus' defects, so strong even to the present that a near-riot broke out in the modern France of cultural revolution and neoleft vs. neoright, when Shakespeare's play about his life was performed? Coriolanus was a brave soldier who distinguished himself by turning the tide to victory in impossible situations, and who was frequently wounded in battle. He was also a member of one of Rome's founding families, a patrician with a sense of pride, honor and competence. When he stood for office, he refused at first to show the wounds he received in the defense of Rome, considering it insulting. He also had little respect for the tribunes and the plebeians who did not contribute to society. During the campaign, he was portrayed by the tribunes as the enemy of the people and a threat to the republic. Maneuvered into voicing his disdain for government failures, he was charged with treason for speaking his mind. At that point, in danger of being killed, deserted by his patrician comrades who chose expediency, rejected by his people, he fled the city and made an alliance with an Etruscan chief. He led the armies for this chief, with complete loyalty. Coming close to Rome, and able to easily take the city, he chose not to, at the request of his family and for love of his

culture. He understood that this decision would result in his death at the hands of his chief, so he communicated the decision to his chief before he acted on it. His chief, worried already about Coriolanus' popularity, used this act to order his assassination.

His story is a classic version of Benedict Arnold's story, as I have described in Chapter Four. Arnold was also known as an honest and loyal man, willing to fight and sacrifice his life for the revolutionary cause, a field general wounded seriously in battle and a brilliant strategist. He was responsible for winning perhaps the crucial battle of the American Revolution, as the other officers knew and acknowledged, but others took the credit and Arnold continued to be punished politically. His friends did not fully support him, and although he counted on George Washington, Washington did to Arnold what he later did to Thomas Paine, sacrificed him for political goals. Disillusioned, and sometimes in danger of being court-martialled, Arnold finally rejected the American cause and rejoined the British. He too fought loyally for the British, but was never given the advancements his skill would have justified. Arnold was brave, honest, sincerely committed to the revolution, self-sacrificing except for his honor, fighting for the men under his command, managing to mostly do the impossible assignments he was given, and disdaining political expediency or appeals to the public. He swallowed his pride on many occasions for the success of the revolution. He too finally decided honor (integrity) was more important than a charge of treason and crossed to the other side.

The transvaluing of values that I am suggesting would give a more positive interpretation to what these two men did, in keeping with a humanistic and cosmic value system that places emphasis on free experiencing, learning, development, and finally, meaning. They can be seen as maintaining fundamental values implicit in a dynamic system, at great personal sacrifice. Were they abnormal in showing too much integrity? Only in a system whose feedback mechanisms have been so damaged that real data and free interpretation of data are compromised. But such a system is already in an abnormal phase and may likely collapse, so it is better to adhere to the standards of an adequately functioning system rather than a damaged one.

This does raise the set of issues clustered around the legitimacy of authority, such as civil disobedience and rebellion. My proposal to transvalue present values which are based on resignation to authority or power is itself a rebellion or questioning of the

legitimacy of authority. In my recent bioethics book (19), I have already questioned, analyzed and rejected the modern version of Thrasymachus' argument for basing ethics on power (or the perceived interests of those in power). Postmodernism is based only on power, and that base is insufficient for human purposes and human nature. Coercion of sufficient force can make any of us bend and break, but it does not justify or legitimize itself using such means. Power is simply a raw fact. It does not earn or require praise, respect, obedience, adoration, free consent or resignation. As a physical force, it can be used to exert an unwilling statement or behavior. As a psychological force, it can more insidiously be used to program a statement or behavior once the mind is no longer free. But that changes nothing. Given pain, we will eventually all say or do things contrary to our free decisions. What we do after the pain does not change what we would have done without the pain, so our conversion or collapse justifies nothing but the power of pain. That we already accept as a fact, but not a justification. Power cannot give itself legitimacy nor can it claim that our coerced, forced statements when power is applied can legitimize it.

Authority is not always dependent on power to be legitimized, however, and that was Socrates point to Thrasymachus about the just society. Authority can claim a justification based on the natural system. It can construct ethical justifications. It can justify itself based on free consent and freedom to modify and develop the system of authority. When we look at the Lucifer story, we see no such justifications from the ruler of the celestial court. Instead, we see the appeal to force or power, the appeal to the primacy of existence, or the appeal to being the creator (another version of the appeal to power). There is no ethical justification given in the old texts, although theologians have attempted this for our modern era. The legitimizing of authority is an important task and is rarely done by appeal to power directly. One attempt is to create a line of divine descent or delegation, indirectly justifying the Earthly ruler's authority by linking it with the divine authority justified by power/divinity. Sometimes the line of descent is viewed as a bloodline with links to the heavenly court. The US Constitution gives a social attempt and the Declaration links this with natural law arguments and human nature. Modern attempts may be based on economic arguments or victimology. Rarely is the legitimizing of authority based on merit.

With a lack of successful legitimizing, and power is not a successful legitimizing, human decisions about civil disobedience, terrorism and rebellion are open to consideration. One of the insights of the Enlightenment is that it recognized the value of modifications within a dynamic system, and that while rebellion needed to be justified, once justified it became part of a naturalistic value system. Lucifer's choice to rebel, then, is not automatically an evil, and within a dynamic cosmos his choice can be ethically justified. It is strange and sad that his choice was not justified within the old texts because the absence of justification and the imposition of authority by power sets up a value system for us that is contrary to human nature, to free experiencing, to open systems, and to a systems theory description of the cosmos. Again, it is that value system that ought to be transvalued to reflect a more accurate and mature understanding of reality.

As I discussed, Wilson has also considered how a more mature human nature would consider the various choices found in a dynamic system; in his case, the example of human bioengineering. He does assume that we have slowly matured over our evolutionary development and that our cultures will reflect continuing maturity in the cultural arena. I'm not as convinced that we are so different from our Paleolithic ancestors or those just a step before the hominids. Looking at the flowers found in Neanderthal gravesites or the artistically-sensitive drawings of Cro-Magnons, there does not seem to be a large gap filled in by evolving cultural development. Considering the political sensitivity of the Greek city-states and the Roman city that became an empire, their understanding sometimes seems even more mature than our culture's understanding. I doubt that it is human nature that needs to mature, but rather human culture that shows a disturbing cyclical pattern of blooming and busting. It may not require human nature's maturity to save me from being burned at the stake as a heretic or sorcerer or satanist. It may require the maintenance of a dynamic and flourishing cultural system.

The systems concepts of cyclic oscillations and maturational development brings me to a Kipling poem I loved long ago, *The Conundrum of the Workshops* (20). It starts innocently enough.

“When the flush of a new-born sun fell first on Eden's green and gold,
Our father Adam sat under the Tree and scratched with a stick in the mould;

And the first rude sketch that the world had seen was joy to his mighty heart,
Till the Devil whispered behind the leaves, 'It's pretty, but is it Art?'"

That first blooming of culture is natural for our primitive ancestor, and it is Lucifer who suggests there may be more to Art, if Adam will learn. Lucifer continues to challenge toward further development, but sometimes with negative results, as in the Tower of Babel and the Ark's conquering of the Flood: "While each man talked of the aims of Art, and each in an alien tongue." "And the Devil bubbled below the keel: 'It's human, but is it Art?'"

"The tale is as old as the Eden Tree -- and new as the new-cut tooth --
For each man knows ere his lip-thatch grows he is master of Art and Truth;
And each man hears as the twilight nears, to the beat of his dying heart,
The Devil drum on the darkened pane: 'You did it, but was it Art?'"

Kipling talks about whittling the Eden Tree into a surplice-peg and learning to bottle our parents in the yolk of a disturbed egg, much before genetic engineering was a hint, and summarizes technology: "But the Devil whoops, as he whooped of old: 'It's clever, but is it Art?'"

He goes on to describe London writers scratching in the mould of their graves, with the anguish starting as the Devil continues to mutter criticism. And he ends closing the cycle: "Now, if we could win to the Eden Tree where the Four Great Rivers flow,
And the wreath of Eve is red on the turf as she left it long ago,
And if we could come when the sentry slept and softly scurry through,
By the favour of God we might know as much -- as our father Adam knew!"

There is the straight-jacket of cultural development as influenced by the values that need transvaluing. Lucifer tries to help us with our aesthetic expressions, our strivings for the skies, our courage in finding ways to survive against natural disasters, our development of scientific understanding and technology, our learning program -- but he is unfairly criticized in his challenging our growth by continuing to push our culture forward. His teaching and fostering our culture's development is reduced to the picking of a literary critic, the whispering of doubt into our ear, and the final anguish and despair as we lose

our self-respect and sense of confidence in our civilization. Our culture's growth loses its nerve (and we blame Lucifer), immersed in those unnatural values of the ruler's court, losing its way among the meanings of the cosmos, until it collapses in a death-wish, in a wish to return to the static Garden of Eden.

We crawl back to the stagnant Garden, where Eve's wreath of red flowers has neither faded nor changed, lying where it was dropped, and we praise the favour of God who might allow us to know what our father Adam knew, the dead peace of never having tasted of the fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil. Of never being taught. Of never being challenged to grow. Of never knowing ethics or the freedom of an ethical decision. Of never taking risks. Of never trusting one's own initiative. Of never knowing. Of never living.

Those are the anti-values that ought to be transvalued.

**“Why do you press me? I will not worship
one who is younger than I am, and inferior.
I am older than he is; he ought to worship
me!”**

Lucifer, in Vita Adae et Evae