

CHAPTER ELEVEN
THE NATURALIST'S HYPOTHESIS
AND THE THEIST'S STORY

**“People sacrificed to Odin and the
twelve chiefs from Asaland, and
called them their gods, and believed
in them long after.”**
The Ynglinga Saga

This Chapter looks at three topics: How will the idea of the incomplete and the unperceived influence ethics and science and what has Lucifer contributed to answering this question? How do the Lucifer stories help identify the same mistakes made by modern naturalism and transcendent theism? With or without the use of the Lucifer device, are polytheisms more adequate in explaining experience than monotheisms?

All the old texts ascribe a light and brilliance to Lucifer. He is the most beautiful of all the celestial beings, the favored of the ruler, a natural leader, the highest of all beings except the ruler, and the bearer of light. He is the bright sun of the morning. From the *Book of Enoch* and the official texts of the bible, we know that such celestial beings were made of air and fire, struck from blazing and brilliant material substances like rock or metal, infused with photons of light. It was difficult for human beings to look at such beings, whose faces seemed ablaze with fire and even sparking like strong electrical charges. The radiance was intense. Yet it was possible to interact with them and sometimes not even to recognize that they were different, as Jacob did when wrestling with what turned out to be an angel, or Tobit did when helped by Raphael. Adam and Eve interacted with Lucifer often in the Book of Adam and Eve (1), not realizing who he was. In some cases, it was because Lucifer had assumed a shape that would seem pleasing and human to Adam and Eve. In other cases, he still appears to be shining like the celestial being of his nature.

From current astrophysics we learn that 900 million years after the explosion creating our universe-state, amid a cosmic dark age of fog or haze, starlight began streaming through the pervasive hydrogen gas. The forming stars and galaxies reached sufficient numbers to dissipate the foggy cloud (to ionize the hydrogen gas of our universe) and

light up the dark. Lucifer, the being of first light, carried light into the void in link with current science. This personification and bearer of light, and bright son of the morning, existed in his light-filled environment until his choice to oppose the ruler. That choice had a number of dreadful consequences. He was defeated and bound, removed from the light-filled world he knew, and forced to live in the darkness or the black void/pit/bottomless. Worse, he became intermixed with the darkness and was no longer a being of full light. He became the Prince of Darkness. This darkness, though, was something more than the absence of light. Adam and Eve are told by the ruler that because of their disobeying his orders, they no longer are beings of light; but, unlike Lucifer, they are told that their nature has not been changed into the special darkness that Lucifer has. God has been merciful to them. As with Enoch, it seems we are not talking about the darkness of evening, the scarcity of light photons to interact with our vision system, the ordinary darkness of night as opposed to day. There is more to this darkness, and it seems to be more alien or alienating, more separate from the nature of both the celestial beings and human beings. It is recognized as one of Lucifer's worst punishments, that he has become an amalgam of light and darkness, which has removed his beauty and glory in some way. However, he does not exist as the absence of light photons or an absolute blackness. Instead, there is activity and energy in his darkness, an alternative to the activity of photons of light. His darkness does not do anything that we can perceive, but it is not inert. Its energy is not visible in the same way that his photons of light were radiant and shimmering, but it is present. The darkness is something, some kind of natural experience that cannot be perceived by means of light. His escape or throwing down from the realms of light has somehow resulted in a combination with this void or bottomless darkness which has its own mass and energy. From our modern perspective, it is a very complicated cosmos that is being partially described by writers who lacked the experiences and concepts to sufficiently comprehend it and impart that comprehension.

It would be easy to see this darkness as just another mythic symbol for evil and the lack of unity with a god's glory or bliss in the abstract. But we have already suggested that such mythological readings make assumptions that need not be accepted since they are without basis in experience or valid argument. There are no compelling arguments

that would require us to conclude that the mythic or symbolic readings are the only ones or the best ones. No one has ever made a valid and verified argument for taking these old texts as myths or symbols, rather than seeing them in alternative ways, as histories, descriptions of real experience in common terms, attempts at early scientific understanding, or naturalistic hypotheses. We have made our ancestors all poets, but we have forgotten that poetry was also a way to convey experiential facts, such as Homer's history of the Trojan War and the geographic explorations of Odysseus, or Lucretius' metaphysical attempt at atomic theory, or the genealogy of the Pendragons of Wales (Maximus, the Red Dragon), or the migration of Odin and his people from the lost Siberian city of Asgaard (2,3). We have buried these viable hypotheses under the invalid assumption of mythology and symbolism, and then filled in the rock-choked pit with the changing sands of another invalid assumption, psychoanalytic interpretation. It is only if we choose to be rational that we can finally free ourselves from the stoning of mythological fantasy interpretations, and let history, geography, exobiology, cosmology and philosophy rise from the desert sands.

I want to try that with the Lucifer texts and then show such an interpretation's connection to ethical theory. I want to link the current knowledge of the darkness found by astrophysics with the darkness used to change Lucifer's being. There are millennia between, but I think a connection can be made by the mind and by the scientific learning program. It is a naturalistic interpretation, as opposed to the transcendent theistic interpretation and its companion, the mythological/symbolic interpretation.

The most current hypothesis about our perceived universe is that it contains as much as 95% of unperceived matter and energy, now called dark matter and dark energy (4). One of our central means of perception is, of course, the light spectrum, although our biological perceptors fail us on the infrared and ultraviolet ranges of that spectrum. We can also use the x-ray means of experiencing the cosmos and translate that into images we can grasp. Our technology allows us to extend our natural perception beyond the dreams of our questing ancestors, both the lower levels and the traces of quantum mechanics and the higher levels that also are informed by that theory. Still, our range of perception is limited, and when we make conclusions about our universe, those are

specific to the small slice of the cosmos that is our perceived universe. Further inferences are feasible, but we must go carefully and we should be prepared for surprises.

Dark matter and dark energy were one of those surprises. The amount of even our slice of the cosmos that is unperceived was an even bigger surprise. There is apparently so much waiting for us in the dark. That should be exciting, but since we are a diurnal species, most of us are naturally afraid of the dark, and we yearn for the light. We are biologically constructed to function with light or baryonic matter/energy, not with dark or nonbaryonic matter/energy. We are not made to perceive the dark. Two of my daughters, as part of their courses in geology and parks management, had new experiences exploring park caves and “wild” caves, spelunking. Underground caves are a mysterious environment for most of us, and explorers wriggle through the passages using light sources, including miner’s lamp headgear. Usually, the guide takes an opportunity, when the group has reached a low level in the underground caves that is completely separated from the noise, odor and light of the world above, to give the spelunkers a special experience. They all sit around each other for support, and the guide asks them to turn off their lights for as long as they are willing to experience the dark. Now, most photons of light are absent, unavailable for the human organism to use to experience its world. The sensory deprivation of light is a striking situation. My one daughter found it exhilarating, but others will find it close to panic. Even this, however, is not the darkness of dark matter. Dark matter is not the absence of photons or baryonic matter. It is another kind of matter that does not transact with baryonic matter in any perceptible way, because its nature is different than the nature of baryonic matter. All we know of it is what we infer in order to make our theories about baryonic matter work. We can say it is nonbaryonic. We can say it is nonphoton. We can say it is nonluminous matter. Those are all what it is not. What it is has yet to be said. Old Gnostic texts somehow describe this scientific understanding in a very similar way. They talk of Darkness and Light making up the cosmos, and of our material world being an inseparable mixture of dark and light particles. They talk about Light being astonished at Darkness, and Darkness not knowing of the existence of Light (5). They seem close to being right.

The luminous being that was Lucifer, for an act of moral agency and self-respect (pride), was thrown into this darkness as well as into the darkness of space (the

bottomless) or the void. His nature was altered by taking away his luminous beauty, but his nature was not completely changed. He somehow transacted with dark matter as he was engulfed by it, and emerged a combination in some way of baryonic and nonbaryonic particles or matter/energy. He exists on a wider field of perception than before, a combination that Zoroastrianism said was offered to Ahriman by Ahura-Mazda in its dualistic conception of reality (6), the god of light and the god of darkness. Ahriman refused the offer, so the dualism of Zoroastrianism remains. The Lucifer texts do not give Lucifer any choice in the matter, and the result is that actually Christianity is not monotheistic until End Times. Until then, Lucifer has considerable power because he has had luminous and dark matter/energy incorporated in his being and in his cosmos. In our human sphere, in fact, it appears that dark matter far outweighs luminous matter, which may explain the amount of power Lucifer has in the human sphere, and may explain God's wish to destroy our sphere along with most of its beings -- which have been "corrupted" by the dark/luminous matter combination. At End Times, this will of the ruler is supposed to be actualized, with much of this segment of the cosmos and Lucifer and his Tenth Order being thrown into dark matter/energy and confined there forever.

Still, this is not an adequate solution to the problem of a creeping dualism in the major monotheistic religions. Reality is still composed of both dark and luminous matter/energy, only now the baryonic particles are forever separated from the nonbaryonic particles. But this creates an even firmer dualism, not a monotheism. Those forced to exist in the nonbaryonic aspects of reality will not experience the bliss of the luminous aspects, but they still exist, have not been destroyed, and if we think about it are powerful in their part of reality. The separation that the Scholastics talked about from God is complete and permanent (7), yet the nonbaryonic aspects of reality are only arbitrarily characterized as damnation and punishment. We have no inference or experience with which to so characterize them rationally. Reason will not support such a conclusion. An unknown and unexperienced part of the cosmos awaits, change and an emergence of new properties will occur, and this ought to give us hope rather than despair, pleasure rather than pain. It is quite possible for Lucifer's mind to make a heaven of hell, and this realm would contain 95% of the mass of our perceived universe.

There remains, moreover, Lucifer's combination of the luminous and the dark. He is more complete than the monotheistic god or at least equal to him, now incorporating more of the cosmos or reality. What is needed is to naturally evolve the capacity to perceive the full range of luminous and dark matter, as Lucifer appears to have done. If this capacity can be maintained, then End Times will not resolve but exacerbate the dualism proclivity of the major monotheistic religions and indicate there is a severe problem with the assumption of monotheism conceptually. Lucifer's darkness may not be a weakness or a punishment, but an opportunity. The darkness, the bottomless, the void may be like the dark dust nebulae, the birthing place of stars.

If Lucifer is eternal, neither End Times nor the final judgment will bring an end to the dance of ethics. Nor will it end the complexity and diversity of the cosmos. It will most definitely not bring *completeness*, either in the learning program of science, the decisions of ethics, or the beliefs of transcendent theisms. Both modern naturalisms and transcendent theisms (whether polytheistic or monotheistic) have tended to make the same mistakes in metaphysics and ethics, an odd convergence. Given the conceptual key of Lucifer's darkness, I want to look at those similar mistakes in detail. That may explain why the keys to Hell are in George/Lucifer's bosom, close and intimate and valued more than the keys to Heaven.

Modern naturalisms and transcendent theisms have both improperly assumed a completeness to knowledge or the learning program, so the mistake of completeness of knowledge exists on both the natural scientific level and the transcendent theological level. It is only recently in science that a trend has emerged that argues that the completeness standard or goal cannot be even theoretically achieved. Its conclusion, however, has been a disaster. Because this trend assumes without reason that the only good science would be a complete (absolute) science, if only in theory rather than practice; and because this trend successfully points out that even in theory the scientific method cannot give us this complete and absolute knowledge; it concludes that science is just a pretend story like any other cultural fantasy, a conversation that is as subjective and irrational as all conversations may be if they please (8,9,10). It is really the old argument based on a partial misreading of Kant that if one cannot know the thing-in-itself, and Kant shows that would be conceptually impossible, then one can never objectively or

scientifically know anything. No matter that Kant was a realist and scientist, and transcendental in a rationalist manner that kept the human mind enmeshed with natural experiences rather than a transcendental realm. The retelling of the transaction of the perceiver with the perceived in current postmodernism has resulted in a total agnosticism as Botwinick admits, a complete skepticism about any possibility of knowing -- because we cannot have completeness and an omniscient knowledge of things-in-themselves. This recent trend, rather than coming to the only rational conclusion that works, that the concept of completeness is a mistaken concept and should be abandoned, instead comes to the unworkable conclusion that without completeness we can know nothing. All -- or nothing.

Such irrational postmodernism is itself a reaction against the irrational standard of completeness in science proposed in this last century and falsely attributed to the Enlightenment. It reaffirms the conceptual mistake of completeness by accepting it as the goal or standard, insisting on it, and making the same mistake. Over 25 years ago, our New York State University College at Brockport had a special philosophy program called the International Philosophy Year. It was really an amazing program for a college to undertake successfully, bringing in most of the internationally-known scholars in various specialties of philosophy. We had the opportunity to discuss and socialize with most of the names in the philosophy anthologies I use as textbooks for my seminars. One month's program focused on philosophy of science, and the questions centered on completeness in science. The completeness concept was still alive and flourishing at that time, although criticism had begun to rise. Given the power of the philosophic school of ordinary language analysis and the heavy influence of British philosophers, it should not have been surprising that completeness was still fashionable. With roots in Logical Positivism and the model of physics before quantum mechanics and systems theory corrected some of its Platonic assumptions, the formal logic and mathematics framework for science was very strong. Philosophers (and some scientists) had forgotten what one of my mentors, who had studied under the logical positivist Rudolph Carnap, taught me. Such formal, symbolic systems, whether in logic, mathematics or physics, seem complete and absolute -- until one tries to give meaning to the symbols. Assigning a meaning to such symbols changes them from functions to descriptions of the real world. The real world is messy.

As soon as you begin to assign these meanings, the symbols lose their completeness and absolute “truth.”

As Casteneda pointed out tellingly, the function of identity seems complete and absolute: $a = a$ (11). But now consider, he asks. Is the morning star the evening star? Lucifer would have been very interested. The morning star is the planet Venus, and the evening star is the planet Venus. Venus may equal Venus, but is the morning star = the evening star? Or more difficult, think about this blue marble in your hand, which last year was the smallest blue statue of Socrates. Is the blue marble made from the melted down statue identical to the statue? In mathematics, $2 + 2 = 4$, if you are in a base 10 mathematical system; but not if you are in a base 2 or some other system. The meaning of the numbers then changes, and we are back to carefully specifying the initial conditions of our example. However, even the logical positivists knew one couldn't completely or absolutely specify all the initial conditions. That would take omniscience, and maybe eternity, and we have neither. Only systems epistemology will get us out of this mess, and it will not do it by assuming a completeness for science, or an absolute truth value for objectivity and reason.

Reichenbach also understood that, even if we believe we can write down all knowledge of physics on a 3 x 5 card, as my brother-in-law who directs the National Magnet Lab still jokingly contends can be done, we need to add a caveat (12). We humans may be living through an atypical phase of the universe, he argued. There is no way we could know this or test it. However, it is a conceptual probability, even if it is a low probability. If this phase is quite atypical, then all our scientific theories and hypotheses could be mistaken. There is then, no completeness we can assume, no absolute truth, but only the probability that is coherent with and corresponding to a dynamic cosmic system. This is much more exciting, interesting, fulfilling and ongoing than a closed and complete system could ever be, and why the quest for certainty and completeness has so taken philosophy I have no idea.

But it has, through history, and we need only listen to what the logical positivist Bertrand Russell said about science in his essay, “What I Believe” (13):

“Physical science is thus approaching the stage when it will be complete, and therefore uninteresting. Given the laws governing the motions of electrons and protons,

the rest is merely geography -- a collection of particular facts telling their distribution throughout some portion of the world's history. The total number of facts of geography required to determine the world's history is probably finite; theoretically they could all be written down in a big book to be kept at Somerset House with a calculating machine attached, which, by turning a handle, would enable the inquirer to find out the facts at other times than those recorded. It is difficult to imagine anything less interesting or more different from the passionate delights of incomplete discovery...Of this physical world, uninteresting in itself, man is a part...the great world, so far as we know it from the philosophy of nature, is neither good nor bad..."

There is one thing correct about Russell's beginning-of-the-century statement. Such a physical world would be very uninteresting, as all static omniscience would be uninteresting. As I suggest in my newest book on bioethics, omniscience is not a bad description of a hell for sentient beings, the end of purpose for a learning program, a true evolutionary dead end (14). However, there is no reason to so infer the physical world. It is a conceptual and empirical mistake. The cosmos continues to open before our scientific learning, and there are good reasons to infer it will continue to open infinitely. Our perceived/experienced cosmos is only a part of the cosmos, as new discoveries have confirmed throughout history. There is no reason to assume we have reached either the basement or the ceiling of the organized levels that comprise the cosmos system, or that there even is a basement or ceiling. Some of us are more comfortable with those philosophic concepts, but they bring in their wake very uncomfortable problems, for example, what contains the cosmos, what caused the initial conditions of its creation, into what will it dissolve, how can emergent properties or change be explained. If the implications of these concepts are considered, comfort with them rapidly dissolves. It is true that the human learning program, the human mind, cannot imagine infinity or eternity and say it fully grasps it. But it can infer and have partial understanding, a process we routinely do with all our scientific information (quantum mechanics, human genome). It is not likely we will ever fully finish reading the code of the human genome, and those who believe we can have not understood the complexity of an organized system and its transaction with the perceiving organized system. There should be nothing upsetting about this. It is an opportunity. Perhaps we have taken the psychiatric concept

of “closure” too seriously and literally. Closure is not automatically a good thing, and even in psychiatric interventions, there may be some situations that should not have closure. Mental health, after all, is not mental inertia.

I’ve briefly outlined some naturalistic, agnostic and atheist mistakes about completeness, to illustrate that it is not a mistake specific to theological beliefs. It occurs when a metaphysics does not correspond to knowledge of complex and dynamic systems, and can be as persistent in naturalisms (even postmodernism) as it is in transcendent theisms. In theisms, such completeness is found in omniscience and omnipotence, two features of monotheistic gods that are important in the belief systems. Omniscience implies a complete understanding of all within the cosmos, full knowledge of all the past, present and future. There is nothing left to learn or know, which is why it is so difficult to maintain concepts of free will and an all-good deity within such monotheisms. Omnipotence implies a completely ordered system coherent with the deity’s will or wishes, a static system attuned completely to its creator from the moment of its creation. Nothing new or opposing can occur, which is another reason why the concepts of free will and an all-good deity end up in intellectual tangles. In the monotheisms, omniscience and omnipotence are such compelling assumptions that believers are often willing to sacrifice the deity’s attribute of all-goodness to sustain them, and/or to move toward a dualism by introducing an all-evil being such as it is insisted Lucifer is. These are heavy costs to pay for omniscience and omnipotence and it is not clear what is gained from such concepts. This does reflect, however, that initial first ethical act, when Lucifer chose for a dynamic cosmos and God willed to maintain as a closed system. We can more fully understand now what was at stake. Omniscience and omnipotence could not be maintained in a dynamic cosmos system, but only within a static closed system. Opposition to that system is opposition to omniscience and omnipotence, to completeness, which is just another way of saying opposition to a closed, static system.

A second shared mistake is the attribution of *amorality* to the cosmos, although here transcendent theisms divide themselves, as do the various naturalistic philosophies. The above quote by Russell represents the most common view of the attempt to derive ethics from natural features of the cosmos. Russell insists that the physical world is neither good nor bad, but completely neutral to ethical considerations. He repeats this throughout

his writings on ethics, and he is joined by the majority of philosophers of ethics. Postmodernists reduce ethics to power and illicitly-assumed political ideologies. Ordinary language philosophers insist on the fact/value distinction or the “naturalistic fallacy,” and are left with cultural intuitions. Existentialists find ethics in the choosing process, not in the natural world. Rawls and others justify ethical/political biases by way of the process of “reflective equilibrium” which can justify anything through circular reasoning. Humanists, when not coming close to relying on postmodern political and social ideologies, accept the description of a neutral cosmos and science, and fall back to cultural or individual relativism. Bioethicists embrace process ethics and deny the possibility of content ethics, making the justification of ethical conclusions irrelevant, except through selected consensus power. NeoKantians have fallen back on the processes of moral agency and respect. Utilitarians have found their home in cost-efficiency and policy theory, heavily influenced by cultural economic theories and risk-assessment processes. All implicitly accept the amorality of the cosmos or natural world. Even Van Potter, who coined the term ‘bioethics,’ was unwilling to step over the fact/value divide.

Only a few naturalists have attempted to base an ethical theory on the characteristic of the natural order/system/cosmos. Edward Wilson is a prime example (15), doing a thorough job of outlining a reasonable theory that could derive ethics from the human transaction with the biosphere and physical world. I stopped short in my new book on bioethics with some question of whether a naturalistic ethical theory could be extended past what we could learn from the nature of the human species (16). This book takes up the issue again, and I hope has successfully extended ethics into the dynamic cosmos. This argument would reject the amorality of the cosmos, using the Lucifer texts as a tool for approaching the problem, and showing that in fact ethics is an aspect of the cosmos as well as an aspect of human nature. This is a minority position, but I think it is the correct conclusion for the reasons this book gives. In some ways, it has roots in Greco-Roman concepts of the natural order and natural law, and in the Roman Catholic variations of those concepts (17). Our scientific knowledge has expanded considerably since that period, and it is on current scientific theories and hypotheses that I base my characterization of the natural cosmos and the ethics implicit within it. My theory is based on a dynamic rather than static order, one of the difficulties with the previous

attempts at grounding ethics in the natural order. Instead of the order of a closed system, I describe the dynamically-ordered organization of an open system. The features of that dynamic cosmos are what, on a human level, we call ethics. The cosmos is not amoral, but importantly moral.

It would seem that transcendent theisms would be eager to find not only intellectual design within the cosmos, but ethical design. There are difficulties with this, however. Any ethical design natural to the cosmos would be a restriction on the deity's omnipotence, since it would require that ethics not be based on the deity's will or wishes, but on a greater grounding, the aspects of the cosmos. In some ways, that makes the cosmos more important and powerful than the deity, even though it may reflect his features. And if the cosmos were dynamic rather than static, it would mean that development and change could eventually make cosmic values inconsistent with the deity's will or wishes. At that point, the cosmic values would be required to take precedent, and the deity's power would be limited. This conflict can only be avoided within a closed and static system. Such a system would be lacking the features I've proposed can be found and articulated within a dynamic system as ethics. The "ethics" of a closed system would give way to controlled and permanently ordered organization, a reduction of ethics to power, control, order. We would be back to Thrasymachus and coercion.

This has not prevented many transcendent theisms from basing their ethics and morality on faith and revelation alone, rather than attempting a unified base on human reason and knowledge of the features of the cosmos. Once reason and natural experience are set aside, the ground of ethics can be literal or fundamental interpretation of revealed sacred texts and histories, individual intuitions of faith and conscience, or a reversion of faith to a social gospel of good works. This further confirms the critics' view that in a pluralistic society, content ethics is meaningless and only process ethics (politics) is possible. Ethics then becomes politics or charity or subjectivism or authoritarian beliefs.

The inflexible ordering of the cosmos has been a problem for the transcendent theisms that do maintain they base ethics on the natural law as well as faith and revelation. It becomes difficult to define "natural" and "unnatural" in a static sense, yet they are important concepts for an ethics based on aspects of the cosmos. As critics continue to

point to the incompleteness of science and the lack of perfect objectivity and absolute truth, and erode the static base of the natural order, the grounding of ethics turns more to faith and revelation, and to traditional teaching and authority. The general world acceptance of values based on human nature such as the innate worth of all human beings then also becomes eroded, and human beings must prove or establish their value vis a vis the State or their fellow human beings. Without social utility, human beings find their worth washed away by the criticisms of a static natural order and the false assumption made by the critics that therefore there is no natural base for human worth except for social utility. This is a tragic and very serious cultural trend, in part brought on by the conceptual mistake of the amorality of the cosmos or the conceptual mistake of believing in a static cosmos. Ideas do matter, and can have disastrous consequences in the practical world.

The third conceptual mistake shared by modern naturalisms and transcendent theisms is a description of reality as a *static and closed system*, capable of being completely perceived and understood. This idea of what nature, reality or experience is like is no longer correspondent with our scientific knowledge of natural experience, nor coherent in a philosophic theory or metaphysics. Still, it is often the model underlying much of our thinking about the natural world. For example, the environmental naturalisms frequently talk about a balance of nature that is only interfered with by the human organisms. This perfectly-balanced ecosystem is assumed to exist naturally, until human interference results in the unbalancing and destruction of the ecosystem. Environmental ethics is filled with such a model assumption (18). In the very first article I had published in a philosophy journal, “Stasis: The unnatural value,” I critiqued the unwarranted assumption of a benign and perfect balance in any ecosystem (19). It simply does not occur in natural experience, and it is a conceptual nightmare because of the competing needs and interests of species who make up an ecosystem. An “ecocatastrophe” is in the eye of the beholder within the ecosystem, and can only make sense if we are able to establish the moral features of the cosmos. The best that can be achieved is not a fantasy “steady-state,” but the actual oscillating “controlled-state” of a dynamic and always vibrantly-balanced system. In another article, I outlined the oscillating features of complex systems (20), and

this current biological knowledge is carefully explained and developed by scientists in many specialties (21,22,23,24).

Despite current biosciences depending heavily on a systems or complexity theory, environmentalism and environmental ethics is still marooned in a steady-state, clockwork universe. The central feature of this static concept is a rejection of change, modification, development in new directions, creativity and vitality. Efforts focus on maintaining the present state, the present ecosystem, neglecting to account for the importance of extreme oscillations and even subsystem collapses in the history of evolution and in the paleontological record. The reality is that without subsystem collapses, major disruptions in controlled-state, and ecosystem replacements, the biosphere would not have developed human beings or likely any of the current complex organism systems. We may wish to hold a moment in time forever, but as Mephistopheles understood when making the bargain with Dr. Faust, such an emotional wish to forever stop the moment is *the* significant step in losing one's soul.

Current naturalisms, with their focus on perfect static balance, steady-state without change or growth, and demeaning of complex systems like human beings, are not that far removed from the Garden of Eden and not that different from theisms in rejecting scientific extension of our perception and our intervention. There is something quite dark, for example, behind the social and ethical opposition to human reproductive technology and bioengineering, and the easy advocacy of censoring scientific investigation and the fruits of the learning program.

Theisms find themselves supporting a steady-state and closed system because of their wish to attribute to the deity or deities omnipotence and omniscience. Some have attempted to use the model of growth and evolution (25), but it is difficult to reconcile this with complete knowledge and absolute control. Those attributes fit the model of a closed and static system much better, unless the theism retreats to the position of the deists, that the deity starts the cosmos or creation, but then withdraws from its dynamic operations and does not control its growth and development from that point on. The deity becomes the initial conditions. Most theologians are not pleased with that passive role for a deity after the creation, and are not willing to give up omniscience and omnipotence for the being to be worshipped. The deist argument does not give sufficient reason to

worship such a being, and little motivation to be submissive to that being's will, since the will does not operate in the developing cosmos in any direct, interventionist way.

A dynamic system also does not fit well with the closed history of sudden creation, testing and redeeming opportunities granted, and final End Times and judgment. This entire closed drama, in fact, is prescribed or predetermined, particularly since efforts have been unsuccessful to rescue free will from the attributes of omniscience and omnipotence in a static cosmos. Again, the conceptual mistake of a static system colors our thinking. It makes not only theists, but also atheists, agnostics and naturalists yearn for an End Times of some sort, as McGinn has pointed out (26). For transcendent theism, End Times is the chance to force complete submission to the unchanging natural order, when everyone will be brought back in line with the deity's predetermined plan, even if only by damnation for eternity and separation from the natural order. Lucifer will then lose the final battle and be bound in chains to be thrown into the darkness, along with the Tenth Order and any humans who have chosen for growth and development over the static plan.

For naturalists, End Times may serve a more tragic flaw. Most natural End Times descriptions involve environmental cataclysms that destroy the human species and the planet, caused by human beings knowing and doing too much (an unlikely event). McGinn argues this ecosystem destruction caused by human "sin" seems a required replacement for the religious beliefs in End Times. In literature, T. Coraghessan Boyle progressed to creating a fictional ecosystem disaster that has been embraced by young intellectuals (27). Pop culture is filled with various ways of destroying the Earth. All these scenarios imply that human beings are not worthwhile when they strive and reach, when they intervene in the status quo, when they rise to new growth, when they are dynamic. There is a rejection of the self or a destruction of the self when it chooses for dynamic growth, much as Bertrand Russell's description in "A Free Man's Worship." There is a wish to punish for achieving the heights or climbing higher, as if human beings must know their place and keep to it, must not be, as Lucifer wished, equal to the god. Modern naturalism seems very far from the courage, vitality and self-respect of Lucifer. It makes self-awareness of competence and the wish to develop into the "sin of pride" in as stark and harsh a way as transcendent theisms do. In its case, the political State or

social conformity and sameness may be replacing religious institutions and their deities as the entities who demand submission and bowing, and reject ethics. This may represent one of the required relationships in a social species, even genetically programmed, but it is at variance with the evolved learning program which is also genetically programmed. The tragic flaw may be two competing programs, both important to species survival, and both in a tenuous tension. Lucifer and his histories extend beyond the theological field and reflect the reality of human beings transacting with the cosmos. He is the dynamism and the learning program, the force that moved our species from a static Garden of Eden into a complex biosphere and finally into a complex cosmos. To bow or to oppose is a powerful choice.

Finally, the fourth shared conceptual mistake is the assumption held in common by both modern naturalism and transcendent theism that the old texts are in no way historical, that a star civilization interaction is nonsense, and that *any attempt to interpret the ancient texts as other than myth or religion must be censored or suppressed*. The miscarried argument of both these positions is that these texts have always been seen as mythic or religious and therefore must be. A premise is that all ancient peoples thought only in terms of symbols, superstitions, nonscientific magic, hallucinations and induced unreal visions, and built their lives exclusively around worship of a transcendent and ineffable deity or deities. Another premise is that no sentient life exists other than on Earth, or if it did, would not have interacted with sentient beings on Earth, and anyone who entertains the hypothesis that it might have done so is prima facie wrong. Another premise is that the texts only reflect a religious preoccupation which was typical of ancient cultures whose primary interest was transcendent religion. A final premise is that there is no way we could absolutely demonstrate any other interpretation, and that the religious interpretation is always prima facie the correct one until proved otherwise, the burden of proof being on anyone who doubts the religious interpretation. The weakness of this argument is apparent, especially its circularity and its insistence on the prima facie supremacy of the standard interpretation. In addition, there is the logical blunder of arbitrarily assigning the burden of proof to any other interpretation than the religious one. Actually, this is a case of all interpretations having to assume a burden of proof,

including the standard one of mythological or religious interpretation, since all are hypotheses rather than verified conclusions.

Nordic mythological interpretation gives a good example. *The Heimskringla or The Chronical of the Kings of Norway* contains The Ynglinga Saga, or The Story of the Yngling Family from Odin to Halfdan the Black (28). This Saga is actually what it says, the historical account of the first leaders of the people of Vanaland, named after the river first called Vanaquisl, then Tanaquisl, and finally the name we recognize, Tanais. To the east of the Tanais, in Asia, was Asaland, whose chief city was Asgaard. Nearby was Vanaland, and after many battles, the two peoples became united. The leader in the city of Asgaard was named Odin, and there were twelve temple priests called Diar. To those who think in terms of mythology, this is a bit startling, because Asgaard is supposed to be the home of the gods, and Odin is considered a deity. Yet in the Saga, he is described as a “great and very far-travelled warrior, who conquered many kingdoms.” Recent Russian and American archaeological digs in what could be the general area of Asaland have unearthed a lost civilization there, with its own writing system. It is not irrational to consider the hypothesis that Asgaard might have been an actual city and that many cities like “the shining city of the North” might be waiting under the rock and sand.

Odin was also pictured as very human, with some extraordinary powers, of course. He had two brothers and a wife. The Saga tells of Odin giving his two brothers Asaland and setting out “with all the gods and a great many other people” first westward and then south. Odin had many sons, and he also divided some of his kingdom with the temple priests who had names like Frey, Thor and Balder, names that later became deified. He is described as being very clever and teaching people all the arts; he “knew many more than other people.” The Saga calls this knowledge “wisdom and witch-knowledge.”

The history relates that Odin died in his bed in Swithiod, the cold land north of the Black Sea. Near death, he asked to be marked with the point of a spear and told his people he was going to Godheim where he would welcome all his friends: “...the Swedes believed that he was gone to the ancient Asgaard, and would live there eternally. Then began the belief in Odin, and the calling upon him.” All the other individuals now called gods in the Nordic mythology were also mortal, and their deaths are recounted in The Saga. But before they were elevated to deities, they were leaders and priests of their

peoples. The Saga also assumes that Asgaard was an actual city and one of the later chiefs even sets out to reach it. True, his adventure is strange, like Ezekiel's or Enoch's. He comes close to the geographic location of Asgaard and sees a circular or egg-shaped, rock-like object. A door opens in the "rock" and he is asked his purpose. The chief replies he wishes to find Asgaard, and he is told to come inside. The door closes, the "rock" disappears, and we can only hope that the brave chief has found what he was looking for.

Over time, these persons in The Saga have been changed into fanciful mythology, but it is just as reasonable, perhaps more reasonable, to consider that these were actual leaders of a people whose history was passed from oral tradition to written, with some fanciful accretions that do not detract from the historical accuracy of The Saga. The chiefs were also deified, along with the twelve original temple priests, but while all were extraordinary men and women, none claimed to be deities and all acted very much as we would expect human beings or average sentient beings to act. There was certainly belief in magic and blood sacrifices, but some of the magic may have been early empiricism, the beginnings of the scientific learning program in rude form. The Saga does not give us the reasoning behind the blood sacrifices. At this point, any of the interpretations may be entertained, and all, without exception, must prove in a sufficiently strong argument that one interpretation is more accurate than another.

Looking at the argument for a mythological or religious interpretation, it has failed that criterion. All its premises are open to criticism, and adding the analogy of current primitive groups and their behavior does not strengthen the argument for two reasons: most primitive groups by now have had contact with more complex civilizations and are not natural anthropological laboratories; and most anthropological researchers do not have the tools to correct for their conceptual biases and import them into their work. The two telling examples are Derek Freeman's powerful critique of Margaret Mead's early work in Samoa (29) and the recent dispute about Yanomamo research outlined in *Science* (30). Also, I just completed a review of a cultural anthropologist's research on genetic testing which showed acknowledged influence of her feminist and political assumptions, without any attempt to correct for her conceptual contamination (31). The conceptual contamination of such research makes any conclusion invalid.

The premises of the mythological or religious interpretation argument are probably false, or at least quite questionable. We know from full histories of the ancient classic world and Mideast civilizations that human beings were involved in many ways in the world, not just a religious way. Some of what is characterized as superstition or magic could equally be seen as early science, and much of their scientific and mathematical knowledge was impressive. Human beings at that time tried to make the same distinctions we make between visions and reality, between madness and reality, and were generally successful. The temple was a significant institution and deities were worshipped, but this did not constitute all of the ancient texts we now call sacred texts. There was also attention to history, political science, social customs, and individual biographies, as well as early attempts at scientific explanations. These texts did not reflect only religious concerns, but a wide range of life events. (Not every unknown object unearthed from an ancient civilization must have religious significance or use, as is too often assumed without reason.) Rudolf Anthes gives an excellent refutation of our current lack of understanding of the ancient world and ancient history and/or mythology (32). Speaking of Egypt in 3000 B.C.: “This was not a period of primitive men. The idea that a qualitative change of the human mode of thinking took place in history, from a ‘magical,’ ‘prelogical,’ or ‘mythopoetic’ mind in the past to a rational and scientific mind in our period, is not supported by the history of Egypt. Medicine in the third millennium B.C. apparently did without magic... The oracle of the god does not appear to have intruded into the rational administration of the law... The pyramids...were not built by magic means... The decisive criterion of the employment of logic and reason by the earliest Egyptians is the fact that they achieved so much in spite of their lack of those physical and intellectual tools which are available to us after 5000 years of development. If we apply this standard, we cannot but have the highest esteem for the power of their logical and creative minds.”

Nor can we discount the Sumerians or Babylonians and reduce their civilizations to poets and mystics writing of transcendent deities. Their deities, for one thing, are not omnipotent, omniscient, all-good, or even immortal. Dumuzi dies, Kingu dies, Enki comes very near death and would have died if not saved by Ninhursag, and even the powerful Inanna is a corpse during her stay in the Netherworld (33). Like the Egyptians

understanding of the infinity of space, the old texts may be talking about something and some beings far different than the abstract, philosophically-created deity of monotheism. The texts may have a greater probability of being remnants of an actual history, rather than mythological poetry or theological abstraction. They would be remnants of a very alien history, however; and one not all that human or Earth-centered. The conceptual preponderance of evidence is not on the side of mythology or religion, but of history and sentient beings from other celestial bodies, as strange as that first sounds. It may in fact sound so strange because it is a concept that has been suppressed throughout much of modern history, but it would not have seemed so strange to the human beings who called the subjects of these texts beings who came from the sky -- and these human beings were not simplistic, superstitious primitives with brains so inferior to ours.

Think carefully of how odd the Sumerian myths really are if read without any *a priori* assumptions and in the context of human brains functioning similar to ours. The Enki myths lasted, for one thing, for 3000 years. Some remarkable individual conceived the idea of ditches, channels of irrigation, control of the floodwaves. Some beings manipulated the sex act: putting semen into one woman, another woman taking it from the first and using it to generate plant life-forms. These powerful individuals, called "gods" by us, can kill each other. They have been forced to provide food for their own dining halls, to labor, to carry baskets, to dig canals, to grind wheat -- and they unhappily grumble. They may decree the fates (have enormous control of the natural world), but they complain bitterly. These players with fate ask the smartest of them to solve the problem, and like a good user of applied science he does. He makes humans specifically to do the work as ordered. In a drunken contest, two of these beings actually make defective workers, to challenge each other to still have the workers function. They terraform the planet and teach the humans arts and crafts (music, metallurgy, agriculture, astronomy, medicine, magic, construction and administration of cities, warfare, writing). They live among the humans and divide up spheres of influence. But their interests and human interests are not the same. Only the wise and crafty one who made humans seems to have a fond attachment to them, and even he is ambivalent and limited in how far he can oppose the others for the needs of his humans: "You are the venom of a viper set against humankind. His word is the venom of a lion that does not come out for the sake

of humans...” (34); “...the shrewd one of the land...change the speech of their mouths, he having set up contention in it, in the human speech that had been one” (35); “Why annihilate the humans? Do they not give the gods offerings and burn cedar wood for you? If the humans were destroyed for her, the gods would no longer rest from work, and no one would contribute bread and drink to you any longer. It will turn out that the storm-god...the plow will take up himself! Ishtar and Hebat will turn the mill themselves!” (36).

Despite his best negotiation, one of the beings unilaterally decides to destroy humans because of overpopulation and disturbance -- and perhaps fear. The smart being takes a big risk and saves some humans as well as the seed (fertilized eggs) of every living thing. But his civilization has been destroyed, and he must start again. Despite the cataclysm of the flood and Babel, the “flood story...demonstrates a textual continuity through many different times and religions” (37), yet there is no evidence on this planet of a global flood ever occurring. There is increasing evidence of a global flood on another planet, however. In a Greek version written by Berossus millennia later, a voice “tells the survivors they are to dig up writings in the city of Sippar and ‘distribute them to humankind!’” (38) Something was not to be forgotten or lost. Or suppressed.

But even when the tablets are dug up, even when the Nag Hammadi library enclosed in the large jar is found by the shovel, with a hardness of evidence from stones and scribes which cannot be shattered, it may still be forgotten, lost or suppressed. The one hypothesis that is allowed, the command to think only one way, forces all the ancient texts into interpretation as literature, poetry, mythology, theology -- as postmodern stories that can be read in any way we wish, *except* as empirical, historical accounts. We can have inspiration, multiple contradictions, beautiful poetry, psychoanalytic theory; but we cannot have reality. Yet the Sumerian tablets of Gilgamesh contain a description of hominids, the prior evolutionary state of beings like Enkidu, human-like, but covered in fur and living like animals. Where did Sumerians obtain the concept of hominids preceding modern humans? A natural description -- not a myth or poem.

Or consider Mallory’s linguistic reconstruction of the earliest Indo-European language groups and their “religions” or “mythologies”, based on Proto-Indo-European language (39). Mallory opens with a quote from Paul Thieme describing this Neolithic worship as a “hospitable reception with a meal...the ‘celestials’ coming...on a visit with ‘the earthly

ones’.” He then goes on to list the many cognates for Sky Father (dyaus pita, zeu pater, dei patyros) that give the ancient, reconstructed “dyeus pater”. He gives two interpretations. Sky Father might mean the “progenitor of gods or man,” or it could mean only a designation of authority, as in paterfamilias. This reconstruction might even include a final battle (Kuruksetra in Indic, Second Battle of Mag Tured in Irish), in which the “nepots’ (nephew) fights against an evil opponent. But Mallory then considers a comparative mythology in place of linguistic reconstruction, based on Emile Durkheim’s sociological rather than literal or empirical approach, and reduces the text and reconstruction history to Dumezil’s “tripartition of Indo-European society.” Mallory recognizes the problems with such an assumptive reading of linguistic reconstruction, however; as much or more of a problem as a literal, historic reading. It is arbitrary and without hard evidence. Only the data of an archaeological record can validate a textual reading over all others. In this case, the alternative hypothesis is viable: Celestial beings and their anticipated visits may be recorded in these old texts and in the reconstructed language of a Neolithic Indo-European group of humans over 6,500 years ago. Sky Father may be the equivalent of the Great White Father terms used to denote embassies of Americans sent from Washington to the territories of the Plains Indians, on perhaps similar business.

I can conclude, then, that a premise that requires opposing arguments to be either proved absolutely or be considered false is a nonsense premise, and gives us no ground to demand that a mythological or religious interpretation have prima facie acceptance. The dismissal of a naturalistic interpretation that involves other star civilizations is purely assumptive, and often has resort to ad hominem arguments, impugning the sanity, rationality or empiricism of those who propose it. The appeal to the common wisdom or standard model as true because of consensus or longevity is also weak. But even if all these premises were true, it is the use of this argument to support censorship or suppression that is most frightening. Even if we currently would find the argument for a mythological or religious interpretation the most probable, it does not at all follow that alternative interpretations must be suppressed. That would be highly unscientific, a miscarriage of the scientific method. It also would be very bad philosophy and ethics. The suppression of questioning and consideration of a range of experiences and

interpretations or hypotheses cannot be justified. It is a threat to the learning program and to our species survival because of that. It requires unethical means to maintain the suppression, means that limit freedom of thought and freedom of cognitive, cultural and practical behavior. The Lucifer stories, if properly read as more than myth or religion, or even if read as myth and religion, make the case against such suppression of thinking, such denial of knowledge of good and evil.

Yet there is some reason to think there may be continuing suppression of certain roads of thinking, certain interpretations of texts, and certain investigations of natural experience. Lucifer's fight for an open, dynamic cosmic system is an ongoing battle.

**“The men will be like those angels, for they
are not strangers to them.”**

**The Apocalypse of Adam, The Nag Hammadi
Library**