

*the*  
INNER LIFE  
*of the*  
EARTH

*Exploring the Mysteries of  
Nature, Subnature & Supranature*

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# INTRODUCTION

PAUL V. O'LEARY

**I**F YOU COULD ASK an angel what he or she found to be remarkable about human beings, the likely reply would be, “We are fascinated that humans are split in two, that they live their lives divided within themselves. How do they stand it? How can they manage all that conflict? And how do they live without knowing their purpose, without knowing why they are alive?”

From the angelic viewpoint, humans present themselves as an immediate and obvious duality. Angels are not divided beings; they are unitary and not composite, as we are. Angels and the other Hierarchies of Good exist apart from, yet have their reflection or counter-pole in, the Hierarchies of Evil. Together, both echelons of spiritual beings comprise a duality, but not separately. The Hierarchies of Good can do good, or do better, but they cannot harbor a good and evil thought at the same time, as we humans can. The Hierarchies of Evil have a similar but polar perspective. Neither group is both good and evil, as we are, who bear our polaric sides within the same being—ourselves: hence, the uniqueness of specifically human conscience.<sup>1</sup> Only human beings can experience freedom.

Angels stand in awe of our normal, everyday situation, where we can intuit multiple, yet contrary, ideas, motives, and emotions at the same time. Have you ever had a powerful experience in which your reactions run the gamut from fear, anger, revenge, and shock to bewilderment, confusion, compassion, forgiveness,

and willingness to sacrifice? Have all these thoughts and emotions happened almost or actually simultaneously? Of course, you have; you are a human being. Angels, archangels, and so forth have no experience of this; it is outside their realm. Schizophrenia belongs to human beings and to human beings alone. It is unique to the human condition.

Our dual nature is a primal phenomenon, an Ur-phenomenon of our very being. It is our signature and marks us out for what we truly are: the microcosm of the macrocosm. The split of the universe into spirit and matter, inner and outer, darkness and light, or the “matter” and “anti-matter” of contemporary physics, is reflected in our inner nature in the duality of percept-concept, mind-body, thought-will, good-evil, life-death, and so on. “There is an important occult axiom: every quality has two opposite poles. So, we find, just as positive and negative electricity complement one another, so we have warmth and cold, day and night, light and darkness, and so on.”<sup>2</sup>

Everyone has a “dark side,” a “shadow,” which is revealed in every sphere of life. Saint Paul famously describes the division in his soul: “For I do not the good that I wish, but the evil that I do not wish, that I perform . . . unhappy man that I am!”<sup>3</sup> The poetic form of the same lament is Goethe’s famous “Two souls, alas, reside within my breast; the one from the other would be parted.”<sup>4</sup> It is you and it is I, every time we act less morally than we know to be our best. It is the rift manifest in the twin opposites of higher self and lower self. Why we cannot *be* as “good” or as “moral” as we can *think*; and why our thoughts, emotions, and actions are out of sync with one another: these issues reveal the fundamental problem. On the other hand, we experience our ego most intensely precisely through the encounter with our own polarity.

“One does not usually notice that a human being is a duality,” notes Rudolf Steiner. Nevertheless, we are doubtlessly a duality. Moreover, that fact pervades the spiritual-scientific worldview from anthroposophic medicine to biodynamic agriculture, from

the description of the constellations of the zodiac to the description of the various members of the human being. With its sister concepts “polarity” and “metamorphosis,” this dynamic drives evolution itself through the cultural epochs and from ancient Saturn to future Vulcan. It stands behind the esoteric mantra: “That which is above is like to that which is below, and that which is below is like to that which is above.”<sup>5</sup> This is true within the human being as well.

Continuing from the quote on duality, we learn from Steiner that what appears in the lower part of one’s organism always corresponds to something in the upper part of the organism; that certain organs could not come into being in the upper part unless parallel organs—in a certain sense, opposing organs—were able to have a place in the lower part as the opposite pole; that there is an inner relationship between the form of the intestine and the form of the brain and that the intestinal organs are truly the reverse side of the brain.<sup>6</sup>

The macrocosm and microcosm mirror each other. The phenomenon of the human being’s dual nature is shown by the Earth as seen floating in space. The Earth has no light of its own, but receives its light from the Sun and stars and from the reflected light of the Moon. Half of the Earth is always in darkness, while the other half is flooded with light. From a Goethean point of view, where physical facts simultaneously represent spiritual reality, this picture portrays the essence of polarity. For Goethe, natural phenomena are living expressions of the theory (idea) that created them. “The best of all would be to realize that every fact is already theory. The blue of the sky shows us the principals of color. We need not look for anything behind phenomena; they themselves are the doctrine.”<sup>7</sup> If the phenomena are the theory, then the dark and light Earth revolving through space perfectly expresses both the dynamic of polarity and our human nature.

What has all this to do with the subject of this book, the realm of the subterranean spheres and the interior of the Earth?

The goal of human evolution is that we develop an independent, free “I,” or self. We are to evolve from created beings to creative beings, motivated and permeated by love, an energy that will be comprised of the transformed wisdom we have learned through our many incarnations. This new form of love will be an objective, cosmic force, universal in scope and not subjective, personal, and limited as it is now. To that extent, we must acquire self-knowledge. “Know thy Self” is the profound esoteric mandate of the past, present, and future. At the event known in the Bible as the Fall, Lucifer provided our initial self and imbued humankind with a selfish nature in our astral body. This permeation by selfishness, or egotism, however, also provided the basis of our freedom; “freedom and evil have the same original source.”<sup>8</sup>

Selfishness transforms and reappears in the ether body as falsehood and lying, and descends further into the physical body, where it manifests as sickness and death. These forces, originating from selfishness, are found within the human subconscious, the subterranean spheres, and are the sources of evil. In order to transform these forces and overcome the Fall, we must first recognize them, acknowledge their existence, and bring them into full consciousness. We are slaves to our own nature and to the karmic web we live in because of our past lives. Freedom, as such, is currently not possible within the sphere of human will; freedom is possible only within the realm of thinking. Free thought can lead to freedom from enslaving emotions, urges, and passions. Free thought is the precondition for the moral transformation needed to become a free personality. To the degree we lack self-knowledge, we are controlled by our subconscious life. Steiner noted that where self-knowledge ends, self-love begins... and vice versa. Descent into the subterranean spheres is a descent into the lower self and the forces of egotism. Enhanced understanding of these forces is a prerequisite to increasing self-knowledge and facilitating purification and spiritualization of one’s all-too-human nature. Otherwise, we cannot avoid “the catastrophe of the lower nature.”<sup>9</sup>

Our very “I”-consciousness is possible because the mineral earth—the first layer of the interior of the Earth—and the other chthonic regions exist. Our human nature is a reflection of the subearthly and supraearthly realms that comprise the macrocosm and the microcosm. “The true meaning of the microcosm–macrocosm analogy is not that the human being is a little cosmos, but that the cosmos is a big human being.”<sup>10</sup> From this perspective it makes complete sense that the subterranean realms described by spiritual science live within the deepest realms of our human nature and subconscious life of darker feelings and will.<sup>11</sup> Deep within the human being, they radiate into the shadows of thought. This region is more familiarly known as Hell, Hades, or the Abyss. The subterranean spheres, then, are the Earth’s “dark side.” This perspective is clearly Manichean.

The energies that feed our irrational side pour forth from these depths. We can view human history, or simply everyday life, as a constant battle between the irrational and rational. We humans, individually and collectively, have a “self-destruct” impulse deep within our nature, whereby we destroy the things we hold most dear and kill those things we most love. Historical events since the dawn of the Age of Light in 1900, as well as the daily news headlines, provide overwhelming proof of this. Money, power, sensuality, and violence enthrall human beings. What was culturally unacceptable forty or even twenty years ago is now normal. The gradual, manifold, and seemingly inevitable degradation of cultural norms, sliding progressively down into the abyss, needs no additional documentation for the reader of this book. Thoughtful people question whether we should classify human beings as “rational creatures” at all. “A bevy of experiments in recent years suggests that the conscious mind is like a monkey riding a tiger of subconscious decisions and actions in progress, frenetically making up stories about being in control.”<sup>12</sup> Robert Kagan, a professor and historian at Yale, recently commented, “To me, the deepest message, the most tragic, is [Thucydides’] picture of civilization

as a very thin veneer. When you punch a hole in it, what you find underneath is hollow, the pre-civilized characteristics of the human race—animalistic in the worst possible way.”<sup>13</sup> More appropriate to this particular book is a picture of human nature as a volcano fueled by ancient energies from the subterranean spheres, capped and (ideally) controlled by the developing and newest member of human nature: the nascent ego, or “I.”

Two paths are available to penetrate the maya of existence toward genuine spiritual reality: the outer path through the outer world, and the inner path via one’s inner life. Tracing the chthonic energies to their source is, obviously, part of the inner path. Steiner warns of the dangers for those who would follow this path.<sup>14</sup> One can observe human beings who have become addicted to the lower passions through perverted sexuality, drugs, greed, gambling, the lust for power, and even rape and murder. The washed-out addict or serial killer appears hollow, an empty shell; the self is devoured while that person devours others by indulging in, or being dominated by, the passions. The depths of the subterranean realm eventually lead to the source of black magic, which Steiner defines as “magic based on egotism.”<sup>15</sup>

From a more global perspective, the Earth, as a planet within the solar system, is very much a living being. It was only with the advent of modern natural science that the Earth began to be seen as a dead, lifeless ball floating in the vacuum of space. Natural science knows less about the depths of our oceans than it does about the depths of outer space, and even less about the interior of the Earth. The materialistic worldview has reached its zenith; since the middle of the last century, new-age scientists and spiritually minded people have initiated countervailing concepts that the Earth has qualities of life,<sup>16</sup> or even that it is a “self-regulating, living being.”<sup>17</sup> For spiritual science “the evolution of the human being and the evolution of the Earth are a single process.”<sup>18</sup> They each condensed into physical substance through the same event—the Fall, also characterized as the fall into matter. Moreover, they mutually depend

upon the same polar event—the Mystery of Golgotha—for their transformation and spiritualization.

For those readers who wish to penetrate more deeply into the anthroposophic worldview concerning the interior of the Earth, two recent publications are useful. Sigismund von Gleich’s *Transformation of Evil*<sup>19</sup> provides an excellent summary of the spiritual-scientific picture of the interior of the Earth, the corresponding energies of evil and their counter-pole in the nine Beatitudes of the Sermon on the Mount. The other, *The Interior of the Earth: An Esoteric Study of the Subterranean Spheres*,<sup>20</sup> offers Rudolf Steiner’s only five lectures that address the topic directly. In addition, it contains relevant excerpts from five other lectures by Steiner, as well as material from Adolf Arenson and Countess von Keyserlingk. The present collection may be considered the third in that series.



In brief, the nine layers of the subterranean spheres are numbered and named as follows:

1. The mineral or solid earth (the Earth’s crust)
2. The fluid (soft) earth
3. The air (vapor) earth
4. The form earth
5. The fruit earth
6. The fire (passion) earth
7. The mirror earth (earth reverser)
8. The fragmenting (splintering, or explosive) earth
9. The earth core

According to Rudolf Steiner, “the ninth layer, immediately around the Earth’s center,”<sup>21</sup> encloses a tenth layer, the true center of the Earth, where Christ, the planetary spirit since the Mystery of Golgotha, has his abode. The true center of the Earth is made of gold.<sup>22</sup> It is the place where, at a subterranean altar, the spiritual Sword of Michael, is being forged.<sup>23</sup>

The subterranean spheres, whose forces are found within the human subconscious, are likewise the realm of the Apocalyptic beasts.<sup>24</sup> What frequently passes for “self-knowledge” is really a form of reflected self-love plus a collection of images from the outer world. Although artistic portrayals abound in literature, painting, and film, few persons have the strength and courage to penetrate these dark realms. The inner life of most people is really just the outer world poured into them, sitting atop a base of primal self-interest.

Ordinary consciousness, however, emerges only from what actually originated in outer sensory impressions and has been transformed by feeling and will. One finds only the reflections, or mirror images, of outer life, when looking into one’s inner being with ordinary consciousness; and, although the outer impressions are transformed by feeling and will, humankind still does not know how feeling and will actually work. Consequently, people often fail to recognize what they see in their inner being as a transformed mirror image of the outer world, taking it, perhaps, as a special message from the divine, eternal world. This is not the case, however. What appears to the ordinary consciousness of modern human beings as self-knowledge is only the transformed outer world, which is reflected out of the inner human being into one’s consciousness.

If people really wished to look into their inner being, they would (I have often used this image) have to break the inner mirror.... We can no more gaze into the inner human being with ordinary consciousness than we can look behind a mirror without breaking it.... For the purpose of developing the human, thought-filled “I,” we all bear within us—below the memory mirror—a fury of destruction and dissolution in relation to matter. There is no self-knowledge that does not point with the greatest intensity toward this inner human fact.... Humankind is the sheath for a source of destruction, and, in fact, the forces of decline can be transformed into the forces of ascent only when human beings become conscious of this—that we are a sheath for a source of destruction;...

the world that manifests as a source of destruction lies within, behind the memory mirror.<sup>25</sup>

This “source of destruction” originates in the subterranean spheres. These enormously powerful, terrifying, and overwhelming subearthly forces arose at the very beginning of our cosmic system, at humanity’s conception.<sup>26</sup> Steiner identifies these transformations of previous planetary evolutions as Goethe’s “realm of the Mothers” from *Faust*.<sup>27</sup> He “described the Mothers as personifications of the pure life force in its different aspects as it originated on ancient Saturn, ancient Sun and ancient Moon respectively:

Let us ask ourselves what the Greeks looked for in their three Mothers, Rea, Demeter, and Persephone. They saw in these three Mothers a picture of the forces that, working down from the cosmos, prepare the human cell. These forces, however, do not come from the part of the cosmos that belongs to the physical, but to the suprasensory. The Mothers—Demeter, Rea and Persephone—belong to the suprasensory world. No wonder then that Faust has the feeling that an unknown Kingdom is making its presence felt when the word *Mothers* is spoken. . . . All the forces that are in Saturn, Sun, and Moon are still working—working on into our own time.<sup>28</sup>

Ancient Saturn was comprised of warmth (fire or warmth ether). The ancient Sun developed both light (ether) and air (gas). Sound (ether) and water arose on the ancient Moon. Solid earth, along with its corresponding life ether, arose on Earth.<sup>29</sup> All of this is a further expression of the Law of Polarity.<sup>30</sup>

The deepest three layers of the subterranean spheres are the province of the Asuras and comprise a reverse or anti-Upper Devachan. The middle three chthonic layers comprise the realm of Ahriman, and are the counter-reflection of Lower Devachan. The upper three subterranean spheres, a counter Astral World, belong to Lucifer.<sup>31</sup> These realms are energized by ethers of which are polar to light,

sound, and life—which we know as electricity, magnetism, and forces of super-destruction (including nuclear energy). Electricity is “fallen” light “which destroys itself within matter.” Magnetism is the “fallen” chemical ether. The polaric counterpart to the life ether finds expression in nuclear energy, although its full expression has yet to be realized.<sup>32</sup> Yet all these forces may also be found within ourselves. “All that is light, sound and warmth is then akin to our conscious life, while all that goes on in the realms of electricity and magnetism is akin—intimately akin—to our unconscious life of will.”<sup>33</sup>

The telluric regions which lie below Nature are the province of God the Father. Steiner paints this picture:

Imagine we have Nature: then above it leads to a circle; below, it leads to a circle; and what is above joins to what is below. If we draw the circle larger and larger and continue to draw it larger, we finally get a straight line. A piece of circle that continues on, after it has gone into infinity, comes back from the other side. This shows that the terms “upper” and “lower” should not be understood as signs of rank, but simply as different ways that the gods come to human beings. They have been thought of as working in equal rank with one another, of striving to unite at a point in infinity. . . .

When we understand this we are able to bring into our own modern age what was present in human consciousness in olden times. If we ask what can be identified in modern consciousness with the realm of the lower gods, the answer must be: the Being whom we call the Father, when we think of the Divine Trinity. The Father belongs in the most eminent sense to subnature. . . . When we sleep, we enter the realm of the Father God, we enter subnature—the realm of the Father. . . .

So we see that the human being is organized on Earth in such a way that one is able to go out from nature in two directions: in the direction of subnature to the Father, and in the direction of super-nature to the spirit. Since the Mystery of Golgotha, Christ has been the mediator for both worlds.

He is the one who permeates the world of nature, the one who permeates normal human existence. He has always to create harmony between subnature and super-nature.<sup>34</sup>

The interior of the Earth is the realm of the Father forces within the Trinity, as Steiner notes in his opening lecture on the Foundation Stone Meditation: “For the Father-Spirit of the Heights holds sway / In the Depths of the world, begetting life.” These are “forces surging in the Depths, from the interior of the Earth, the forces working in our limbs.”<sup>35</sup>

The purpose of this collection of essays is to broaden the view on the whole topic of the earthly and subearthly worlds. The goal is to “put into play” facts, concepts, and ideas that contribute to filling out the spiritual-scientific worldview, so that its historical emphasis upon the suprasensory and celestial is balanced by additional considerations of the subsensory and terrestrial. It is time to extend the search for “self-knowledge” into our own subconscious and into our home planet. Expansion of our awareness of our Earth planet as a spiritual being, which has hidden depths rarely discussed, will lead to greater clarity and comprehension of our own subconscious life, which is permeated by forces streaming upward from those same depths. Here is the juncture where the inner meets the outer; self-knowledge becomes world knowledge, and visa versa.

Through the wide world there lives and moves  
The real human being,  
While in the innermost human core  
The mirror image of the world is living.

The “I” unites the two  
And thus fulfills the meaning of existence.<sup>36</sup>

## SUBTERRANEAN ESSAYS: A BRIEF REVIEW

We ought to praise the seven authors of the essays contained herein, if only for their courage in tackling so daunting a subject. As Steiner observes, “Even among esotericists, it is considered one of the most difficult things to speak about the mysterious configuration and composition of our planet Earth. . . . These things are part of the most advanced knowledge in esotericism.”<sup>37</sup> These seven articles stand on the leading edge of spiritual research. Several contributors are well known in their fields and have published numerous articles and books. Others are familiar only to their immediate colleagues. None would claim infallibility, however; all are open-minded to discover and share new insights and approaches to comprehend these mysterious realms.

It would be convenient to categorize these essays as addressed to one or another facet of the Earth’s interior—to the planetary aspect or to what one encounters along the path of inner development. However, these essays, like the topic itself, are more complex than that, and each addresses both aspects at various junctures.

David Mitchell offers a poetic yet philosophical exploration of the many phenomena he has discovered and experienced in science, art, and religion, which may be interpreted more profoundly by awareness of these terrestrial energies. In “Evil—Our Dance Partner through Life,” he leads us on a personal journey with and through the sub-terrestrial.

Dennis Klocek and Marko Pogačnik emphasize the planetary aspect of the Earth as a living being, though from very different viewpoints. Klocek is an artist, scientist, gardener, and genuine alchemist. He has spent decades conducting scientific research into the behavior of clouds, cyclones, wind, and all the phenomena of weather against the background of planetary and celestial influences streaming in from the unfathomable distances of outer space. His studies reveal that the Earth’s energy bodies, which extend hundreds of miles above the Earth’s crust, have parallels

and reflection in the nine subearthly layers first described by Rudolf Steiner. His findings are on the frontier of spiritual-scientific research, and he presents them in his essay, “As Above, so Below; As Below, so Above.”

Marko Pogačnik has an international reputation as a conceptual artist and geomancer. In “Portals to the Inner Earth,” he reports on his direct encounters with suprasensory phenomena. He has discovered “interdimensional portals” that lead to the Earth’s past, to antediluvian civilizations and their inhabitants, and to beings who reside within the subearthly regions. His research opens up communication with prehistoric civilizations that suffered destruction through natural catastrophes, offering the potential for our culture to learn from their experiences.

Robert Powell’s essay, “Subnature and the Second Coming,” shows the transition from the outer to the inner, from the consideration of the Earth as planet to the Earth, the interior life of which forms part of our own inner life. The law of polarity<sup>38</sup> is exhibited in the dynamic interplay of resurrection forces emanating from the etheric return of Christ, which give rise to corresponding counter-forces issuing from the depths. Powell carries this theme of “call and response” from the onset of the etheric Christ in 1933, through the decades of the last century, and to future events prophesied in the Apocalypse and in the writings of Rudolf Steiner. He documents archetypal cultural and spiritual phenomena associated with the various layers of the subterranean spheres, as each is penetrated by solar energy according to the twelve-year Jupiter rhythm. Apocalyptic events are foreordained by the penetration of the etheric return of Christ through the interior of the Earth.

In “The Transformation of Subearthly Energies through Eurythmy,” Rachel C. Ross, an educator and eurythmist of wide experience, provides us with a fresh look at the art and therapy of eurythmy. She probes the deeper reasons for the advent of eurythmy in the second decade of the twentieth century and gives concrete

examples of specific exercises designed to connect the suprasensory with the subsensory. It should be of great import to serious students of these matters that eurythmy can be employed as a means of therapeutic transformation and purification of the subearthly forces permeating our physical, etheric, and astral sheaths.

The Mineral Earth—the first terrestrial layer—is the focus of Paul O’Leary’s article, “The Mineral Earth as the Gateway to Freedom and the Subterranean Spheres: The Ministry of Jesus Christ.” He explores the connections between the Earth’s crust, the realm of death, “I”-consciousness, evil, and freedom, as exemplified by scenes from the earthly life of Jesus Christ.

The perspectives found in Christopher Bamford’s “Paradoxical Thoughts on Christ and Sophia in the Human Mystery of the Earth” are all-encompassing. Long experience with such topics and genuine erudition are required to pen such a piece. The parallel and unified (though seemingly separate) evolutions of the ideal human being (Anthropos), the Sophia, the Earth, and our cosmic system, are traced in a majestic panorama. There is much to ponder here, which is more meditation than essay.

Although these seven essays are extraordinary in their breadth and depth, they merely scratch the surface of esoteric truths concerning the regions known as the subterranean spheres. Their transformation lies within humanity’s collective mission as a whole. Yet their nature remains dark, as do the depths of our own subconscious will life. Their essence will be increasingly unveiled as we progress into the future. An extensive quote from a lecture on color by Rudolf Steiner reveals their comprehensive significance:

The cosmos, seen from inside, is light and, seen from outside through spiritual perception, is thought. The human head, seen from inside, is thought and, seen from outside, is light....

If I were to get outside the world, outside the light-filled world, and see it from beyond, I would see it as a thought image, a being consisting of thought. You see, light and

thought belong together; light and thought are the same thing, seen from different sides.

Now our thoughts are actually the part of us that comes from the past. They are our most mature aspect and are the result of earlier incarnations. What was once the will has become thought, and, as thought, it appears as light. You will be able to feel from this that where there is light there is thought. However, what is its nature? Thought is a world that is perpetually dying away. A past world dies away in thought, or we could say that a past world dies away in light. This is one of the world's secrets, or mysteries. We look out into the universe, and it is flooded with light. Thought lives in light, but it is a dying world that lives in this thought-filled light. The world is perpetually dying away in the light...

The will element is in our limbs. As I have often mentioned, our experience of will is the same as our experience of the world when we sleep. We experience the will element unconsciously. We are asleep to our will. Is there some way of looking at this element of will from outside, as we did with thought?... What does will look like when we see it with the developed power of clairvoyant vision? In this case, too, we can experience something externally. When we see thought with the power of clairvoyance, we experience light, luminous light. When we see the will with the power of clairvoyance, it condenses and becomes substance, or matter. On the inside, matter is will, just as, on the inside, light is thought. On the outside, will is matter, just as, on the outside, thought is light... If you delve into the nature of will, you will discover the true nature of matter... Moreover, in matter—that is, in will—you discover finally a continually beginning and continually germinating world.

You look out into the world, and there you are surrounded by light. In this light, a past world is dying away. You tread on hard matter, and the world's strength bears you up. Beauty shines forth as thought in the light. In the shining of beauty, the world of the past dies away. The world rises in its strength and its power, but also in its darkness. The worlds of the future rise in darkness, in the element of matter

and in will. . . . The future actually lies in the strength of matter. The past radiates in the beauty of light. . . .

We cannot understand what we ourselves are unless we see ourselves as seeds of the future enveloped in what comes from the past, the light aura of thought. We can say, from a spiritual point of view, that we are in the past to the extent that we have an aura of beauty; yet this aura of the past is enveloped in the darkness that accompanies the light from the past, and this carries us forward into the future. Light is the element that shines toward us from the past, and darkness points toward the future. . . . It must become very real to us today that the world, including humankind, is composed of a combination of thought-light, or light-thoughts, and will-matter, or matter-will, and that these, in innumerable variations and combinations, constitute the real world that confronts us. We must think about the cosmos in a qualitative way, not merely quantitatively; in this way, we will come to understand it. This cosmos is composed of both elements: a continual dying away—past dying away in light—and a future arising out of darkness. . . .

So you see there are these two world entities: light and darkness—light with its living thought and dying past, and darkness, in which the will germinates and the future comes into being. . . . Light contains death, a dying world. Light can give us a feeling of cosmic tragedy. Thus, we get away from mere abstraction, mere thought, and come into an element of movement. And in darkness we can see part of the future that is coming into being.<sup>39</sup>

# NOTES

## INTRODUCTION

1. “The beings immediately above humankind,...when they return to their inner being, they have nothing independent, nothing self-enclosed, like the inner life of human beings. Nevertheless, they feel, shining and springing forth in their inner being, the forces and beings of the higher hierarchies above them.... Thus, what we human beings call our independent inner life does not really exist in them.... These beings could hide nothing within them as the product of their own thought and feeling, for whatever they bring about in their inner being must show itself externally. They cannot lie; they cannot be untrue to their nature so that their thoughts and feelings did not harmonize with the external world. They cannot have an idea within them that does not agree with the external world. For any ideas that they have in their inner being are perceived by them in their manifestation. Now, however, let us just suppose that these beings had a desire to be untrue to their own nature. What would be the result?... If they wanted to be untrue, they would have to develop something in their inner being that would be inconsistent with their own nature.... To do so, they would have to assume another nature.... Angels have no life of their own” (Rudolf Steiner, April 8, 1912. *The Spiritual Beings in the Heavenly Bodies and in the Kingdoms of Nature*, North Vancouver, BC: Steiner Book Centre, 1981, p. 89 ff).
2. Rudolf Steiner, October 1, 1905, lecture 6, *Foundations of Esotericism*, London: Rudolf Steiner Press, 1983, pp. 41–42.
3. Romans 7:19, 24.
4. *Faust* part one, lines 775–776.
5. Hermes Trismegistus, *Corpus Hermeticum*, begins with these words.
6. Rudolf Steiner, March 24, 1920, lecture 4, *Spiritual Science and Medicine*, Blauvelt, NY: Garber 1989, p. 65. Cited in Karl König, *Earth and Man*, Wyoming, RI: BFGA, 1982, p. 267.
7. Quoted in Christopher Bamford, *An Endless Trace*, Great Barrington, MA: SteinerBooks, 2006, p. 57.

8. Rudolf Steiner, Nov. 22, 1906, *The Origin of Suffering; the Origin of Evil, Illness and Death*, N. Vancouver, BC: Steiner Book Centre, 1980, pp. 20–21.
9. Ehrenfried Pfeiffer, October 10, 1958. *Subnature and Super-nature in the Physiology of Plant and Man: the True Foundations of Nutrition*, Spring Valley, NY: Mercury Press, 1981, p. 25.
10. Christopher Bamford, “Paradoxical Thoughts on Christ and Sophia in the Human Mystery of the Earth” in this volume.
11. Our soul lives within the two poles of thought and will. Thought is lucid, transparent, and fully conscious. Will is opaque, dark, and unconscious. We are awake in our thoughts, but asleep in our will. Thoughts relate to our nervous-sensory system and the outer world. Will impulses relate to our limbs and metabolism and arise from the inner depths. Feelings link the two and may be more conscious or more asleep, related more to outer perception or to inner dynamics. See Rudolf Steiner’s lecture of April 29, 1922, in *The Human Soul in Relation to World Evolution*, Spring Valley, NY: Anthroposophic Press, 1984.
12. Maureen Dowd, January 7, 2007.
13. *New York Times*, May 29, 2007.
14. “If, with the normal consciousness of today, the soul feels that it can produce only ideas that are maya in the face of living reality, and if it is not as a squeezed lemon, acknowledging only the science of today, then it feels empty in the face of the real world. It certainly feels it can reach the further limits of the world with its ideas. . . . Doing so must involve a feeling of being spread out through an endless expanse of space with a set of weak ideas. The farther we expand thence into space, the thinner our ideas become, and we find ourselves eventually before an empty and bottomless abyss. That is an ordeal that the soul has to face. Those who thirst for reality, who seek to solve the riddles of the world, the ‘wonders of the world’ along the lines of abstract science, eventually find themselves standing before the cosmic void with their ideas dissipated entirely into spiritual vapor. Then one’s soul must experience an infinite terror in the presence of this void. One who is unable to experience this fear in the presence of the void has simply not advanced sufficiently to feel the truth about present-day consciousness. . . .

“There is another path open to the soul. It can descend into its own depths in such a way that it experiences the nature of its own organization. Under modern conditions of consciousness, the soul really experiences only what has been added to its organization

on the Earth. What it received on the ancient Moon as astral body remains subconscious; it lights up in the etheric body, but in normal consciousness, it is not experienced. Even less does one experience what was acquired during the Sun evolution as the etheric body, or what through Saturn, Sun, and Moon evolutions one has received in the physical body. These are regions closed to human beings. However, countless generations of gods, or the spiritual hierarchies, have labored upon these closed regions. Indeed, when, through clairvoyant knowledge and esoteric training, we descend into these regions and penetrate behind our “I”-consciousness into our own being—when we encounter the astral, etheric, and physical bodies within us—then we come not to a vacuum, but to a condensed world [universal] substance. There, we encounter everything that has worked into us human beings throughout millions and millions of years by innumerable spiritual hierarchies. But when, through the serious cultivation of self-knowledge as given by esoteric training, we try to enter and learn how to plunge into the work of countless generations through millions of years, we do not encounter a pure form of what the gods have created. Human beings have stamped into it all that they themselves have experienced through the generations as impulses, desires, passions, emotions, and instincts. In the course of terrestrial incarnations, what one has developed in this way has united with what is present below in the astral, etheric, and physical natures. Together, they form a dense mass, and one first enters this dense mass. What we ourselves have done to our divine nature veils it from us.

“Thus, when we plunge into ourselves, we find the opposite of what we find when we expand into cosmic space. When we expand into the expanse of space, there is the danger of eventually encountering the void. When we descend into ourselves, there is a danger of entering increasingly dense regions that we ourselves have condensed through impulses, desires, and passions. Just as we feel the matter of our consciousness scatter and disintegrate when we go out into cosmic distances, likewise, when we plunge into our own soul’s depths, we feel increasingly pushed back. We feel like a rubber ball resuming its shape after being squeezed. We are repeatedly repulsed when we try to penetrate into our own inner being. We can be very clearly aware of this. It is not just that our impulses, desires, and passions—which we encounter first when we penetrate ourselves—seem horrifying to us when we meet them face to face. However—added horror—at every moment they seem to be trying to capture us. They

become strong and powerful; their will nature comes to the fore. In ordinary consciousness, we may not obey one or another impulse or instinct, but as soon as we descend a little way into ourselves, those instincts develop their full strength and we must surrender to them. Repeatedly, the will of our lower nature grips us, and, more than ever, we are thrown back upon ourselves. That is the other danger; when we plunge into ourselves, we are confronted, as it were, by the density of our impulses and instincts.

“Thus we have to face formidable dangers. If we expand into universal space, we are in danger of dissolving with our consciousness into nothingness. If we plunge into ourselves, we are in danger of surrendering our consciousness to the impulses and instincts within us and of falling prey to the worst possible egotism. Those are the two poles, and between them lay all vicissitudes of soul—fear of the void and the collapse into egotism. All other ordeals are variations directed against what we may call dissolution into nothing, or against surrender to egotism. Even higher knowledge is dangerous in this connection; . . . when, in the esoteric life, we delve into our own inner being, we are overcome by the thought that we are, in fact, the aim and goal of the gods, that the gods have labored to create us. Here we confront the great danger of falling into immeasurable arrogance” (Rudolf Steiner, *Wonders of the World, Ordeals of the Soul, Revelations of the Spirit*, London: Rudolf Steiner Press, 1963, pp. 175–179).

15. Rudolf Steiner, June 12, 1906, “Earthquakes, Volcanoes and the Human Will,” in *The Interior of the Earth: An Esoteric Study of the Subterranean Spheres*, London: Rudolf Steiner Press, 2006, p. 22. See also, “Human beings who, out of their own cunning free will, have become black magicians by placing spiritual forces in the service of their own egotism” (Rudolf Steiner, May 20, 1909 *Reading the Pictures of the Apocalypse*, Hudson, NY: Anthroposophic Press, 1993, p. 128).
16. See Erwin Schrodinger, *What is Life?* (with *Mind and Matter* and *Autobiographical Sketches*), New York: Cambridge University Press, 1967.
17. See, for example, James Lovelock, *Gaia: A new Look at Life on Earth*, Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 2000.
18. Christopher Bamford, “Paradoxical Thoughts on Christ and Sophia In the Human Mystery of the Earth,” in this volume.
19. London: Temple Lodge Publishing, 2005.
20. London: Rudolf Steiner Press, 2006.

21. Rudolf Steiner, April 16, 1906, “The Interior of the Earth and Volcanic Eruptions,” in *The Interior of the Earth: An Esoteric Study of the Subterranean Spheres*, London: Rudolf Steiner Press, 2006, p. 12.
22. See “Excerpt from a Memoir by Countess Johanna Keyserlingk,” in *The Interior of the Earth*, p. 113.
23. Ibid, p. 109. Regarding the subterranean altar of Michael, see Rudolf Steiner’s lecture of June 17, 1924, *Agriculture Course: The Birth of the Biodynamic Method*, London: Rudolf Steiner Press, 2005.
24. Ibid, p. 110.
25. Rudolf Steiner, September 23, 1921, lecture one, *Cosmosophy: Cosmic Influences on the Human Being*, vol. 1, Spring Valley, NY: Anthroposophic Press, 1985, pp. 7, 9, 10, 13.
26. “At the beginning of the Saturn evolution (or rather before it began), there was a single etheric stream for the whole of humankind and for the whole of Earth’s evolution. At the very moment when the Saturn evolution started, a split occurred in the cosmic powers.... This duality in the whole of cosmic activity began only with the moment when Saturn began to develop.... The totality of the divine spiritual beings who influenced evolution when the development of the planet Saturn began split in two; thus, we now have one evolutionary stream, which is involved directly in everything that takes place through Saturn, Sun, and Moon evolutions, down to our Earth, and another stream side-by-side with this main one.... Thus, we have indicated two realms of gods: two spiritual realms, one of which plays a direct role in all that takes place successively in the Saturn, Sun, and Moon periods of evolution, while the other holds itself aloof, so to speak, and intervening only indirectly....

“You will get a better idea of this by first looking at the human being. Consider the human soul; it thinks. What does it mean to think? It means bringing about thoughts.... Now, human beings with their thoughts, even as beings of soul, are still at a relatively subordinate stage of world organization. However, the beings we just referred to as gods and divided into two streams are at a far higher stage. Imagine for a moment that we could not only grasp our thought purely as thought, but that the human soul was so strong that its thought could immediately become a being.... Imagine that we could not only think thoughts, but that with each thought brought forth a being. In this way, you can understand what takes place within the divine spiritual world. The gods who were living in the complete harmony—the perfect unity that existed among them before Saturn—represented themselves; they thought. However, their thoughts were not like human

thoughts, which we must call unreal. They were beings; they were other gods. Thus, we have generations of gods whose reality is original, and others who are merely the representations—the *real* ideas—of the gods associated directly with the Saturn, Sun, and Moon evolutions. They are the gods who surround the world sphere in the course of its development through the Saturn, Sun, and Moon evolutions.

“Thus we have two categories of gods: one is the thought world of the other. One of them, in fact, relates to the other as our thoughts relate to our real soul existence. What have we thus far usually called the gods who are merely the thoughts of the others? Owing to certain of their characteristics, we have called them luciferic beings.

“In a sense, what happens in our souls is a complete picture of this macrocosm. Only the pattern prefigured in the macrocosm occurs reversed in us. In our microcosm, we bear a copy of the division between the ranks of the gods, of whom one class is original and the other born out of this original class, existing so that the original gods may represent themselves to themselves. From this, you can see well that there must be a great difference between these two categories of gods. The difference is quite obvious through the fact that our entire self—including all that is unconscious in us, the whole comprehensive self from which our bodily organization has also sprung—derives from the original generation of gods. However, what we experience and what we can span with our everyday consciousness arises from the generation of gods who are only the thoughts of the original gods. Our being comes to us from two sides. Our organization as a whole, with all that is unconscious in us, comes from the original generation of gods. What lies in our awareness comes from the other side, the generation of gods who hover only around the Saturn, Sun, and Moon evolutions. Hence, when we closely examine our own life of ideation, we feel that the idea or mental representation is, in a higher sense, only the youngest daughter, as it were, of a line of gods. We feel the unreality, the merely notional transience, the elusiveness, of our conscious life. This also dawned upon the pupils of the Greek mysteries. . . . Those Greek pupils became clear that they must disregard their formal consciousness and turn to the ancient gods, also called the gods of the underworld—gods in whose nature Dionysus shared, for only thus would he be able to acquire knowledge of the true human being. . . .

“The fact is that, of the divine stream that hovered over the Saturn, Sun, and Moon evolutions, up to a certain point of time only what I have just described could enter human life. It flowed into human

- consciousness from outside, so to speak, without human beings descending into their inmost being, the region of the lower gods. Moreover, what flowed inward in this way was incapable of ever reaching true universal reality. It was not possible to reach the true world reality through external knowledge. In order to reach that, it would have been necessary for something to be instilled into what (through the long ages of the Saturn, Sun, and Moon evolutions) had entered our normal consciousness from without—something that was not just the thought life of the subearthly, chthonic deities, but something that was itself a reality” (Rudolf Steiner, August 25, 1911, in *Wonders of the World, Ordeals of the Soul, Revelations of the Spirit*, London: Rudolf Steiner Press, 1963, 145 ff).
27. Rudolf Steiner, March 12, 1909, *Goethe's Secret Revelation and the Riddle of Faust* Whitefish, MT: Kessinger Publishing, 2003, 113 ff.
  28. Sylvia Francke, *The Tree of Life and the Holy Grail: Ancient and Modern Spiritual Paths and the Mystery of Rennes-le-Château*, London: Temple Lodge, 2007, p. 45, citing Rudolf Steiner's lecture of November 2, 1917, “The Problem of Faust” typescript R.55, Rudolf Steiner House Library, London, pp. 5–6. These concepts explain the mysterious phenomena of the Black Madonnas that appear worldwide. The “blackness” of Rea “is reminiscent of the darkness of ancient Saturn, the primal origins of matter” (Francke, p. 46).
  29. See Edward Reaugh Smith, *The Burning Bush: Rudolf Steiner, Anthroposophy, and the Holy Scriptures: Terms & Phrases*, Great Barrington, MA: Anthroposophic Press, 1997, chart I-22, p. 584.
  30. See endnote 38.
  31. “We have the physical world, the astral world, lower Devachan, and higher Devachan. If the body is thrust down even lower than the physical world, it comes into the subphysical world, the lower astral world, the lower, or evil, level of the lower Devachan, and the lower, or evil, level of the higher Devachan. The evil astral world is the province of Lucifer; the evil lower Devachan is the province of Ahriman; while the evil higher Devachan is the province of the Asuras. When chemical action is driven down beneath the physical plane—into the evil devachanic world—magnetism arises. When light is thrust down into the submaterial—which is today, a stage lower than the material world—electricity arises. When what lives in the Harmony of the Spheres is thrust down even farther, into the province of the Asuras, an even more terrible force—one that cannot remain hidden much longer—is generated.” Rudolf Steiner, October 1, 1911, *The Etherization of the Blood*, London: Rudolf Steiner Press, 1985, p. 40.

32. Ibid. See Rudolf Steiner *The Etherization of the Blood*.
33. Rudolf Steiner, January 2, 1920, in *The Light Course*, Great Barrington, MA: Anthroposophic Press, 2001. In another lecture, Steiner connects the egotistical forces pouring up from below with the electrical forces in outer nature and within the human will. “Human beings will mature by being able for a time to develop in the lower ego bearer, through rampant egotism, what is even more harmful. . . . For those having spiritual insight into world evolution, this electrical age is at the same time a challenge to seek greater spiritual depth, or genuine spiritual deepening. To the force that remains outwardly unknown to sensory observation, there must be added the spiritual force in the soul, which lies as deeply hidden as the electrical forces, what also has to be awakened. Consider the mysterious nature of electrical power. Galvani and Volta first drew it out of its secret hiding places. Moreover, what lives in the human soul and is explored by spiritual science also lies hidden. *Both must come together, like North and South poles*. Just as surely as the electrical force, the force hidden in nature, is drawn out, the force hidden in and belonging to the soul that is sought by spiritual science will also be drawn forth.” See lecture of September 30, 1916, *Geisteswissenschaftliche Erläuterungen zu Goethes “Faust”* (Spiritual-scientific explanations to Goethe’s *Faust*), Bdn., band 2, *Das Faust-Problem* (GA 273).
34. Rudolf Steiner, September 18, 1924: *Broken Vessels: The Spiritual Structure of Human Frailty*, lecture 11, Great Barrington, MA: Anthroposophic Press, 2003, pp. 153ff.
35. For this and the previous quote, see Rudolf Steiner *The Foundation Stone Meditation*, London: Rudolf Steiner Press, 2005.
36. Rudolf Steiner, *Verses and Meditations*, London: Rudolf Steiner Press, 1961, p. 58.
37. From Steiner’s lecture of April 16, 1906 op. cit.
38. “When one force begins to work in the universe another force, opposed to the first, arises at the same moment. Everything that happens in the world is subject to the law of polarity.” See Adolf Arenson’s essay “The Interior of the Earth” in *The Interior of the Earth: An Esoteric Study of the Subterranean Spheres*, London: Rudolf Steiner Press, 2006, p. 94; see also Sigismund von Gleich, *The Transformation of Evil: And the Subterranean Spheres of the Earth*, London: Temple Lodge, 2005.
39. Rudolf Steiner: December 5, 1920. “Light and Darkness: Two World Entities,” *Colour*, London: Rudolf Steiner Press, 2005, pp. 87 ff.