Enlightening Endarkenment

selected web resources on the challenge to comprehension

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References

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Introduction

This is an exercise in detecting web resources referring in some way to "endarkenment" ("ensombrement" in French, or "Verfinsterung" in German). These are marked below with ##. Within the quoted phrases containing such a reference, "endarkenment" is placed in bold font for convenience -- even though this was not done in the original version. The resources were selected because of the insights into usage rather than because they formed part of a comprehensive study of the question by a recognized authority. The length of any quotation included is such as to give a sense of context for the particular understanding of endarkenment.

The items selected are tentatively clustered into 10 different "modes" of understanding of "endarkenment" as contrasted with "enlightenment". These modes are further clustered into 4 "groups". The clustering, discussed below, is also tentatively associated with the insights into enlightenment and endarkenment offered by the 10 Zen Ox-herding pictures. It is also tentatively related to the insights from depth psychology regarding the alchemical process, notably that of the nigredo.

Experimental clustering

The modes below indicate how "light" and "dark" are variously comprehended through their metaphorical equivalents (positive and negative, good and evil, etc). They could be understood as stages in a learning process. Any such separation into "higher" and lower" levels of comprehension can however be a trap. The preference here is to treat them as modes of understanding that may have greater or lesser value and appropriateness under particular circumstances. However it is also the case that those who identify more particularly with one mode may well perceive any other as a dangerous heresy. Those more distant from any particular mode might be considered even more dangerous aberrations.

Each mode might well be considered characteristic of a particular "religious" belief -- or a spiritual understanding within a "religious" belief. Most references to endarkenment are associated with Modes 2 and 3.

Tentatively in each case, in order to relate to non-western styles of thought, a possible comparison is suggested here to one of the ten classic Zen "ox-herding pictures", whose black and white patterning could be understood as a meditational challenge to comprehending...
the relationship between enlightenment and endarkenment. These pictures have been the subject of extensive commentary and reflection down the centuries. This could potentially enrich considerably the tentative brief notes associated with each mode below. With regard to the extensive commentary of Kabota Jiun (Ten Ox-herding Pictures with the Verses Composed by Kakuan Zenji; 1996) to which the specific links are made, he notes:

Here, our essential self is compared to an ox. We seek the ox, grasp it, tame it and finally the self which has always been seeking becomes completely one with the ox. But this also is forgotten so that we now simply carry on our ordinary lives.... The Ten Ox-herding Pictures have concretely depicted the process in which the imperfect, limited, and relative self (the little child) awakens to the perfect, unlimited, and absolute essential self (the ox), grasps it, tames it, forgets it, and completely incorporates it into the personality. But we must stress that these pictures and verses are merely an indication of the way to practice and not an object for conceptual thought.

The 10 modes of endarkenment identified have been tentatively clustered into 4 groups:

- **Group A**: These modes are concerned with the developing recognition of endarkenment as "evil" -- as it is to be found in others and in the environment perceived as a threat (and provided one commits oneself appropriately to the "good"). This group may be understood in terms of disengagement from the world and the mundane -- notably facilitating the extremes of exploitation of the latter.

- **Group B**: It is in these modes that recognition emerges that, despite one's efforts, the seeds of "evil" are notably to be found within oneself and those one believes to have been uniquely identified as exemplars of the "good". The modes give form to the challenge of how to reframe one's understanding of human endarkenment with compassion and forgiveness, recognizing that differences in understanding have a vital function in a healthy and meaningful society -- despite one's own problematic engagement with it. This group may be understood in terms of disembodiment -- disengagement from the body and its mundane implications -- to enable a non-material "re-embodiment" as an affective or intellectual being. This ensures a disassociation from the extremes of exploitation of the body, whilst cultivating a belief in the quality of life and well-being.

- **Group C**: In these modes there is the engagement in practice with healing processes (as a necessary consequence of the previous group) associated with the "endarkenment" (namely what had been repressed) as part of a larger cycle whose paradoxical and mysterious nature becomes apparent. This group may be understood as a re-engagement with the body -- a re-embodiment of the phenomenal body (if only for health reasons), giving expression in practice to the quality of life for oneself, for others, and for the entities of the environment.

- **Group D**: In this mode the polarity between enlightenment and endarkenment is finally transcended experientially in such a way as to give meaning to the range of modes as an expression of that understanding -- whether through endarkenment or enlightenment. This group may be understood as a re-embodiment of the world, taking responsibility for the quality of the environment as one actually experiences and engenders it.

In avoiding the level trap, it is useful to explore the associations of the different groups with different periods of time, preferably in a cycle, if only metaphorically. This points to the recurrence of certain modes thought to have been left behind, and the paradoxical and unpredictable emergence of others. It also avoids the sense in which particular modes are considered to be only accessible after forms of effort and discipline to which few may believe they have access. The period associations are then:

- **Group A** might be metaphorically associated in time with the period in the daily cycle from midnight to the experience of a new dawn, waking up after the terrors of the small hours of the night -- or as the period in the lifecycle from birth to adulthood.
- **Group B** might be metaphorically associated in time with the period in the daily cycle from dawn until noon in which the "darkness within" becomes apparent, despite the light without -- or as in the period in the lifecycle of early adulthood.
- **Group C** might be metaphorically associated in time with the period in the daily cycle from noon to dusk in which the perspective and ambiguity associated with the experience of the darkness within enriches the actual quality of life -- or as in the period in the lifecycle of late adulthood.
- **Group D** might be metaphorically associated in time with the period in the daily cycle from dusk to midnight, interweaving light and darkness meaningfully without attachment to either -- as in one's elder years in the lifecycle.

The only discipline to give serious attention to the processes associated with "endarkenment" might be said to be depth psychology and its attention to the challenge of integration of the "shadow" [more]. For depth psychology, the shadow is a part of the unconscious mind which is mysterious and often disagreeable to the conscious mind, but which is also relatively close to the conscious mind. It may be (in part) one's original self, which is superseded during early childhood by the conscious mind; afterwards it comes to contain thoughts that are repressed by the conscious mind. The shadow is instinctive and irrational, but is not necessarily evil even when it might appear to be so. [more]

Following the efforts of Carl Jung (Alchemical Studies, Psychology and Alchemy, and a final volume Mysterium Coniunctionis), the nigredo (or "blackening") is identified by depth psychology as the first of the three stages in the alchemical process through which a fourth condition emerges [more]. It is therefore worth considering how those stages might be related to the group of modes identified here. Three possibilities were considered:

- Directly associating the alchemical stages with the groups: Group A (nigredo), Group B (albedo), Group C (rubedo), Group D (outcome). This best reflects the first awareness of the problematic conditions projected onto the external world.
- Associating the last three groups with the three stages: Group B (nigredo), Group C (albedo), Group D (rubedo). This reflects the
A characteristic feature of this mode is that the "light" may be seen differently by different groups -- who are then highly articulate in justifying this perception (e.g., women, homosexuals, handicapped, unemployed, foreigners, etc.). Those of dark skin, for example, may tend to be automatically labelled as "bad". This has been evident in various understandings of endarkenment in symbol systems. For example in the I Ching ("The Book of Changes"), hexagram 36 is specifically associated with "the Darkening of the Light", on which it comments:

In adversity it furthers one to be persevering. The light has sunk into the earth: The image of Darkening of the Light. Thus does the superior man live with the great mass: He veils his light, yet still shines. [more]

The approach here derives in part from much earlier involvement of the author with the Committee for Conceptual and Terminological Analysis (COCTA), although here the compilation is very preliminary and primarily intended as a trigger for further reflection.

**Group A: Distinguishing endarkenment through projection**

This group is concerned with the identification of the nature of light and its meaningful separation from dark. Understood metaphorically, this is extended to positive vs negative, right vs wrong, etc.

These modes are concerned with the developing recognition of endarkenment as "evil" -- as it is to be found in others and the environment and others perceived as a threat, and provided one commits oneself to the "good". This group may be understood in terms of disengagement from the world and the mundane -- notably facilitating the extremes of exploitation of the latter.

Metaphorically the group might be associated in time with the period from midnight to the experience of a new dawn, waking up after the terrors of the small hours of the night -- or as the period from birth to adulthood.

**Mode 1: Confused "agnosticism" -- ignorance of where, when, why or what is light or dark**

This mode might be compared to the first of the 10 Zen ox-herding pictures entitled: Seeking the Ox

### Tim Burkowski. *New word — Endarkenment*, 2003

This word seems at the moment to have been used in rather random ways on the web. Citations I found ranged from strange new agey religions, to people talking about hair, to people complaining about rock and rolls afro-carib roots. In fact as much as I like the sound of the word, I probably won't use it much as I don't like the company this word seems to keep at the moment.

**Mode 2: Recognition of "badness" -- and the light at the end of the tunnel of darkness**

The apparently inimical forces of the environment are recognized as a source of pain. Nature exemplifies badness. Through fear and suffering the possibility of something else is articulated and recognized. It is an attractor under conditions of despair and hopelessness. It is clearly easier to see the light from its shadow than directly from within the light, and what about the light with which one sees?

This mode might be compared to the second of the 10 Zen ox-herding pictures entitled: Finding the Tracks

### Lance Morrow. *The Real Meaning of Evil*. Time Magazine, 18 February 2003:

But even if it's elusive and even if the term is used brainlessly, evil is still there — a mystery, a black hole into which reason and sunshine vanish but nonetheless … there. Talk to the children with chopped-off hands in Sierra Leone. It is as fatuous to deny the existence of evil as it is to toss the word around irresponsibly. The children of the Enlightenment sometimes have an inadequate understanding of the possibilities of the Endarkenment. The question is how evil exists, how it works.

**Mode 3: Embodied light contrasted with embodied badness -- negative collective trends**

As a result of identification with the values and conditions associated with light, they are effectively embodied through a "conversion" process -- possibly as a godly person, a person of righteousness, or an enlightened person of "brilliance". The contrasting conditions are clearly seen as embodied by "bad people" -- possibly even understood as under the influence of demonic forces. The more clearly others are experienced as "bad", the more powerfully any personal sense of "goodness" is reinforced. The more darkness that can be distinguished in others, the more light must necessarily characterize the perceiver. People see themselves as belonging to a select group of the righteous … those who have "seen the light" -- to be contrasted with those who have not and may well be misleading others.

This clear polarization into light and dark favours a process of associative projection through which "others" are identified as bearers of badness, darkness or even "evil". Any "difference" may be used to justify this perception (e.g., women, homosexuals, handicapped, unemployed, foreigners, etc.). Those of dark skin, for example, may tend to be automatically labelled as "bad". This has been evident in the attitude of Caucasians to other races. It also evident in the ready association of terrorists with those of Arab extraction. The clarity of the polarized separation makes any suggestion of relativity deeply suspect. There can be no moral relativism. Righteousness is absolute. Those "who are not with us are necessarily against us". Enlightenment effectively becomes a religious monopoly.

A characteristic feature of this mode is that the "light" may be seen differently by different groups -- who are then highly articulate in...
labelling each other as representing demonic or satanic forces. Particularly curious is that the historic period known as the "Enlightenment" is now labelled by some as the Endarkenment -- now terminated by the increasing political influence of Christian fundamentalists as bearers of enlightenment. On the other hand, the impact of that same fundamentalism has in turn been labelled as initiating a period of Endarkenment following the so-called historic period of Enlightenment.

This mode might be compared to the third of the 10 Zen ox-herding pictures entitled: Catching Sight of the Ox

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In overcoming the dangerous medieval haziness of thinking -- in carrying out the 18th century's response to that challenge, fatuously called the Enlightenment -- these scientists created the twentieth century's far more dangerous challenge: our deep Ensombrement, which Lippmann calls The Eclipse of the Public Philosophy (Walter Lippmann. *The Public Philosophy--On the Decline and Revival of Western Democracy*, 1955, Chapter VIII). This was not due to viciousness or stupidity, but to the structure of evolution, inherent in the Systems-hierarchy, which poets have called the darkness before the dawn.32

As late as the eighteenth century, men held what Lippmann calls the doctrine of natural law: the certainty that there is law "above the ruler and the sovereign people. . . . above the whole community of mortals." But in the twentieth century's Ensombrement there is "a plurality of incompatible faiths" and multitudes of agnostic, existentialistic and nihilistic people. And far worse yet, there are millions of idealists in the totalitarian countries and infiltrated throughout the egalitarian democratic states for whom strong Circles of Perfection had been closed prematurely, and incorrectly, back in the 19th century: namely, Marxists and fascists.

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**Linda Deak.** *The Endarkenment*. onlinejournal.com, 27 October 2004

It is a shock to the people of Europe that this election is even a contest. How can people in these times, in the Information Age, have their collective heads in the sand and believe the nonsense that Bush spews on the campaign trail? The truth is out there and has to be eschewed by people supporting Bush... exhalation of breath from the outside world when Kerry is elected. The relief will be palpable and felt by all. We are all going to have to help America come out of this Endarkenment. We are going to have to start with media reform, election reform, business reform, tax reform, healthcare reform, education reform and restoration of relationships with our allies from around the world.

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**Gary L. Morella.** *Catholic Philosophy Responds to the Modernist Assault on Faith and Reason - A Detailed Blueprint for Catholic Action*

The crisis of modern civilization, which is the unprecedented assault on faith and reason resulting in the total eclipse of reason, and subsequent loss of faith, due to God's eternal marriage of faith and reason being divorced by man, has one underlying current. Its genesis is rooted in the confusion of "genuine authentic freedom," the freedom to do what we ought, with "license," the freedom to do what we want.... Regardless of whether we are talking about radical sexuality, feminism, literary criticism also known as deconstructionism, or any of the other "radicals" as characterized by the worst excesses of political correctness, this seminal truth that freedom is license for the disciples of The Enlightenment, which in reality is better titled The Endarkenment, becomes their "first principle" in ushering in a new world order where the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob is replaced with the "god in the mirror." This explains the animus of liberal ideologues towards Holy Mother Church who makes them uncomfortable with their vices by holding them to a higher Truth, Who is a Someone, not a something.... The command to suspend reason has not come from Sacred Scripture or the Tradition of the Church but rather from the liberal disciples of The Endarkenment. They tell us that truth is relative not absolute.

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**Vishal Mangalwadi.** *From Enlightenment to Endarkenment*

The New Age Movement represents a widespread and influential worldview and spirituality in the West as well as beyond. May we be challenged to reach the numerous men and women who embrace this "Endarkenment." May we reach them with the glorious light of the Good News of Jesus Christ and usher them into true spirituality. (*International Journal of Frontier Missions*)

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**Christopher Walker.** *Live with Spirit*, 2002

They claim we are in the age of enlightenment. No way. This is the age of endarkenment, where truth is hidden from the mass and models are sold as hawkers once sold snake oil remedies, from people who have not even questioned their beliefs.

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**P. G. Mathew.** *The Holy Anointing*, 29 April 2001

When we speak about spiritual enlightenment, we are not speaking about the Enlightenment of the eighteenth century. That has nothing to do with true enlightenment. In fact, to me such philosophies are endarkenment. We are speaking about the Holy Spirit of God removing blindness from us, regenerating us, and enabling us to understand the wonderful truth of the gospel.
The histrionics are interesting and important reading, though not in a way Kreeft intends... This book is packed with insights into the philosophical shibboleths of the contemporary religious right in America and beyond. Early on, he tells us that the enlightenment should be called the "endarkenment" since it privileged reason over faith, and by the book's end, he has connected supposed errors in Ockham, Hume, Kant, and others with the rise of deconstructionism, Nazism... the sexual revolution... No doubt the self-proclaimed ethical "absolutists" in Tehran, Mecca, and Kabul would find plenty of common ground with Kreeft's denunciation of the endarkenment, and would nod along with Kreeft's call to shun reason and get back to the prayer mats.

### Michael Lind. Red-State Sneer. New America Foundation, 16 December 2004

Even the most appealing economic programme cannot save American liberalism if it is associated with values that most Americans reject. Fortunately for the Democrats, most Americans are found in the political and moral centre, not on the far right. Bush's Protestant fundamentalist constituents may despise the Enlightenment as the "endarkenment", but Bush and the Republicans won the election only by appealing to centrist Americans on the basis of their Enlightenment republican values.

### Gray Brechin. The Great Endarkenment 9/11 Inquiry, 26 March 2004

I said that the United States was the product of the eighteenth century Enlightenment. What we are seeing in the twenty-first century is The Great Endarkenment. Let me end, then, by going back to Mesopotamia less than a year ago as U.S. forces shocked and awed Iraqis with a massive bombardment and moved into Baghdad. In less than a week, Baghdad's National Museum was looted and trashed. You heard about that. But did you hear that Mosul's museum was also trashed, and that Iraq's universities were sacked and burned, and that its great archaeological sites continue to be looted? Moreover, the Iraq National Library and the Koranic Library were looted and burned while American soldiers were ordered to guard the records in the Oil Ministry...

There is a great deal that those who have taken over Washington do not want you to know about what has been and is being done in your name, and the great danger to which those actions are exposing us all in order to get more energy, and to build yet greater fortunes for themselves and their colleagues. That is why I call this period The Great Endarkenment, and it is perhaps the greatest of all betrayals of the founding ideals of this nation, and the monopolized mass media shares a great deal of responsibility for propagating this giddy ignorance, and this justified fear of what is to come.

Erich Neumann. Depth Psychology and a New Ethic, 1969

The shadow, which is in conflict with the acknowledged values, cannot be accepted as a negative part of one's own psyche and is therefore projected—that is, it is transferred to the outside world and experienced as an outside object. It is combated, punished, and exterminated as 'the alien out there' instead of being dealt with as one's own inner problem.

### Group B: Disembodied reflection and insight

Having apparently successfully distinguished light from dark, positive from negative, and right from wrong -- by separating out the unwanted and projecting it onto others "without"; the following group of modes is faced with the challenge of why more complete enlightenment is inhibited from "within", and why the constraints are to some degree innate. Others are not the only carriers of darkness, and are not solely to be blamed.

It is in these modes that recognition emerges that, despite one's efforts, the seeds of "evil" are notably to be found within oneself and those one believes to have been uniquely identified as exemplars of the "good". The modes give form to the challenge of how to reframe one's understanding of human endarkenment with compassion and forgiveness, recognizing that differences in understanding have a vital function in a healthy and meaningful society -- despite one's own problematic engagement with it. This group may be understood in terms of disembodiment -- disengagement from the body and its mundane implications -- to enable a non-material "re-embodiment" as an affective or intellectual being. This ensures a disassociation from the extremes of exploitation of the body, whilst cultivating a belief in the quality of life and well-being.

Metaphorically the group might be associated in time with the period from dawn until noon in which the "darkness within" becomes apparent, despite the light without -- or as in the period of early adulthood.

### Mode 4: The inner challenge to enlightenment: "negative thoughts"

The focus is increasingly on the light within and what constrains its recognition. There is recognition of the constraints on the effective embodiment of enlightened being, even by those convinced of its merits. There is acknowledgement of personal fallibility -- "we are all sinners". Personal "badness" is notably associated with the temptations of the body -- which must necessarily be transcended. The functions of the body are then associated with endarkenment. This recognition tends to be projected (typically by dominant males) onto relations with the opposite sex -- considered to embody the temptations of endarkenment. Any thinking that does not celebrate the positive, and exclude the negative, is suspect of facilitating endarkenment. Holding to the certainty of the light is a means of excluding the uncertainties of the dark -- and the eroding effects of doubt.
This mode might be compared to the fourth of the 10 Zen ox-herding pictures entitled: Seizing the Ox

## Charles T. Tart. Mind Science: Meditation Training for Practical People

Concentrative Meditation: A lot of people, including me, are interested in reaching "enlightenment." Personally I know I’m far from whatever enlightenment is, and I don’t really know what enlightenment is, but I am an expert on endarkenment. I’ve had more than fifty years of personal practice and professional study of endarkenment! Knowing how to generate high levels of endarkenment, I figure that the less of that stuff that we do, the less endarkenment we generate, that moves us in the direction of whatever enlightenment is! If you don’t make noise, it’s naturally quieter. So if you really have to cough, cough. If you have to move, move (mindfully) and get it over with and then go right back to the meditation practice, don’t worry about the fact that you moved or coughed or whatever. Everything you add above what is simply necessary to do the action and then come back to the practice is just that much more distraction, that much more endarkenment.

## Charles Tart. Enlightenment and Spiritual Growth: Reflections from the Bottom Up, 2003

A tendency to all-or-none thinking, you're either enlightened or you're not at all enlightened, confuses our understanding of possible aspects of spiritual growth. These ordinary state reflections begin with the difficulties of defining enlightenment, showing how it is clearer to consider endarkenment and work away from that all too common condition...... What altered states of consciousness can a person access that are appropriate to various situations? (How effectively are you using it?) ... A person might be relatively enlightened with one particular state ... or a person might have access to many altered states of consciousness but function neurotically in all of them...

## Greg Swann. peaceofmind.net, 2005

Libertarians despair that there is nothing that they can do to forestall an imaginary bogeyman, called "endarkenment" by some, but one of the most vitally important things any libertarian can do to change the world is to live, breathe and especially teach the values of the middle class... I think I have established that the idea of an "endarkenment" is absurd. History is driven by people, not by nebulous Hegelian trends.... The idea of "endarkenment" is inherently fatalistic. We hear the word "fatalistic" and we think of "fatal," of a morose conviction in the inevitability of morbidity. But the root of "fatalistic" is fatalis, fate. The opposite of fatalism is not optimism. The opposite of fatalism is free will.... There is no "endarkenment", and there is no justification for despair. The world gets progressively better... What is professed to be an "endarkenment" is simply willful self-destruction in an elaborate disguise. A correctable malady, although the time lost to it is irredeemable.

## Liz Greene

You see the issue of the Shadow isn't a question of admitting faults. It's a question of being shaken right down to your foundations by realizing that you are not as you appear -- not to others, but also to yourself.


Part of the motivation for our refusal to assimilate the "shadow" is the pervasive ideal of "purity," an ideal closely related to classical Western theology. Going beyond Neumann here, we must note that often the ideal of purity has meant the repression of ambiguity, duality, polarity, and internal contradiction. This "purity" and a simplistic metaphysical dualism are intimate associates. Immunity to the "imperfections" of multiplicity, temporality, bodiliness, and relativity is the philosophical expression of this vacuous purity and perfection.

### Mode 5: Balance and complementarity

In this mode there is increasing understanding of the complementarity of the functions associated with light and dark (exemplified by circadian rhythms), positive and negative (exemplified by electricity), right and wrong (exemplified by the stages of learning processes), male and female (exemplified by relationships). In conventional spirituality it may be associated with forgiveness and compassion. In religious terms this may be associated with gnostic beliefs or tantra

This mode might be compared to the fifth of the 10 Zen ox-herding pictures entitled: Taming the Ox

## Michael Ventura. Letters at 3 am: Reports on Endarkenment, 1993

Comment: His opinion is that modern music forces physical expression of repressed sexual forces in dancing and thus heals the mind-body split caused by Christianity and western 'mental' emphasis. Though that idea resonates through his early work, his later writing talks of a process of "endarkenment", the fascination with evil which permeates much of American music and society. We have only to look at who gets the most attention in the media and movies: it is mass murderers, convicted felons, rock musicians, and corrupt politicians.[more]

Comment on the author's views: He considers that we're already into the new day, albeit the darkest, scariest part of it. In Whole Earth Review he wrote that we are living in an "age of endarkenment." What each of us must do is cleave to what we find most beautiful in the human heritage - and pass it on. The implied metaphor here links us with the monks of the Middle Ages:

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10 Zen ox-herding pictures: Zen ox-herding pictures
Letters at 3 am: Reports on Endarkenment: Taming the Ox
Mind Science: Meditation Training for Practical People
Enlightenment and Spiritual Growth: Reflections from the Bottom Up
peaceofmind.net
Dipolar Theism: Psychological Considerations (Process Studies, Spring, 1976)
Whole Earth Review
when the endarkenment eventually ends, ...those precious things we've passed on will still be alive. [more]

## Mark Domenic Amadeo Tripp Pesce. Interfaces to the Sublime, 1995

**From Enlightenment to Endarkenment: Decartes’ Golem and Oroboros:** ... We're entering an age which will see use of more emotional terms, like de Chardin's Noosphere - defining the layer of being (thought, emotion, action) which surrounds the planet. It's time to integrate our metaphors, especially when discussing something as profound as the Noosphere.... So now we earnestly seek not enlightenment but endarkenment. We know our lighter natures so well that our darker sides could easily kill us. We must study the dark, because it is also of us. As the yogi moves toward enlightenment, he achieves endarkenment, and sees his worst nature outlined. This is purely natural and absolutely upsetting. This is also one of the functions of art, particularly of sacred art.

The dark being of the enlightenment is the body. It's that which the Cartesian nature would transcend to become wholly being without body. Yet, the further we travel in our technological development, the more we understand that the body has a transcendentental nature which is absolutely vital to the being of man; you can not discard it, any more than you can discard the brain. We are not growing out of the body; we're finding out how to live within it. Like Oroboros, the snake who consumes his own tail, we reach out for the essence of the spiritual and come back firmly grasping our own flesh. This flesh is the ground for a new articulation of the sacred.


Triah T. Minh-ha (Woman Native Other, 1989) also argues that theory that relies on reason—man’s reason—cannot be used by women to liberate them... She critiques the quest for a higher truth explaining that knowledge:

leads no more to openings than to closure. The idealized quest for knowledge and power makes it often difficult to admit that enlightenment (as exemplified by the West) often brings about endarkenment.... Theory oppresses, when it wills or perpetuates existing power relations, when it presents itself as a means to exert authority -- the voice of knowledge.

Here theory and knowledge, in their patriarchal sense presented as the only valid theory, become problematic not just for women, but for any group working outside the "existing power relations." As the term "closure" suggests, theory as "the voice of knowledge" closes the arena for any critique that works from different perspectives.

## Elaine N. Aron. Sensitive Spirituality: HSPs, Meditation, and Enlightenment. Comfort Zone Online, May 2004:

Identifying with the Self as archetype may be the most dangerous confusion of an ego with an archetype. Acting from that position, the ego begins to make serious mistakes, like thinking it knows how to make others enlightened or how to change the world. It may even think it blesses others by having sexual union with them, or by giving others the chance to merge their egos with itself, becoming a sort of robot extension of the enlightened person. (Jung said that the way to know you are in the hands of a cult is when the leader tells you to dismiss your own dreams as unimportant, and forces you to live out the symbolism of his or her dreams.) Suddenly enlightenment looks like endarkenment. As Jung said, I believe, the brighter the light, the darker the shadow. Or he should have said that.

## J Bull. Hither and Yon, 6 April 2004

But in [Dane] Rudhyar's interpretation of the cycles ... Running time forward, individuation moves toward enlightenment as a cycle moves from conjunction to opposition. Still running time forward, a cycle moves from light into darkness as it moves from opposition to conjunction. The second half... of a cycle is about endarkenment - release of enlightenment.

## Shepherd Bliss. Celebrating The Holidays During America's Dark Age. CommonDreams.org, 19 December 2004

In a Dark Time by the late American poet Theodore Roethke starts as follows: "In a dark time, the eye begins to see. I meet my shadow in the deepening shade." Many of us have denied things about America for too long, stuffing them into a "shadow." Now they are catching up with us. We are entering a time of endarkenment, which may eventually evolve into enlightenment. Much can be revealed to us in the darkness about reality and our real selves that can guide us into a better future.

We can look realistically at darkness, cope with it and continue to live joyously and express gratitude for the many gifts that remain during these holidays. We also have hard work ahead of us, which some resting during this season can help prepare us to do.

## Unitarian Universalist Men's Network. The Revolutionary Manifesto, 2002
To maintain spiritual and structural equilibrium, the Network encourages its members to encounter the deeper demons and desires of existence, to be mystical activists as well as discerning fools, to embrace life and consent to die, to honor family and welcome the stranger, to delve deeply into poetics as well as ethics, to cherish the treasures of endarkenment and enlightenment, to confess our vulnerability while claiming our might.

### Jivanjili. *Awakening*, 5 July 2005

And yes, "enlightenment"... as long as you use a word, we talk also about its opposite. As long as we say "day", there must be a "night". So as long as we say "enlightenment", with the notion of a "state of enlightenment", we're also talking about "endarkenment". And in reality there is no such a thing: how could it be?

### Edward C. Whitmont

The Shadow cannot be eliminated. It is the ever-present dark brother or sister. Whenever we fail to see where it stands, there is likely to be trouble afoot. For then it is certain to be standing behind us. The adequate question therefore never is: Have I a shadow problem? Have I a negative side? But rather: Where does it happen to be right now? When we cannot see it, it is time to beware! And it is helpful to remember Jung's formulation that a complex is not pathological per se. It becomes pathological only when we assume that we do not have it; because then it has us!

**Mode 6: Conceptual insight and explanation**

The systemic relationships of light and dark in the development of human understanding are articulated. Examples include recognition of the role of the "shadow" in psychotherapy and the theoretical understanding of the needs for its integration. Symbol systems such as alchemy (with its specific recognition of the nigredo) may be used to hold the complexity of the processes which necessarily call into question any simplistic logical analysis.

This mode might be compared to the sixth of the 10 *Zen ox-herding pictures* entitled: *Riding the Ox Home*

### Christopher Reynolds. *Intercede: the Urrealist Manifesto.*

Breton was never able to allow into Surrealism the idea that enlightenment included endarkenment. Had he done so, Surrealism might have fared better after the Second World War when the movement was eclipsed by the Existentialists, who were not afraid to come to terms with human atrocity. Urperson, a wholeness with its sense of inferiority and shadow is a paradox, an enigma that forces a facet of life's mystery upon us; that we and our universe suffer chronic evil, incompleteness, and division to remain whole.


### Report of First Meeting, International Futures Forum, April 2001

The first enlightenment is usually characterised as being the age of reason, meant to be the light of reason but there is also the shadow of reason. If the light shines too strongly it actually produces an endarkenment where there is enlightenment, and by that I mean the finer part of the mind, the intuitive part of the mind, what is traditionally known as the intellect in terms of being able to see things in their oneness not in their separation is being obscured by concentration of reason, so my suggestion is the second enlightenment is really about integration. Integrating these different sides of the mind.


I do not need to rehearse the objections to positivism here. I would, however, re-iterate Bohm and Peat's (*Science, Order and Creativity*, 1988) distinction between positivist "endarkenment" and a type of research "enlightenment" which is a reaction towards insightful change, is active, and contributes to relevance, implementation and understanding.


So the more fragile ecstatics are redefined as "light" or "dark" to use the simplest polarities, thereby entering the ego realm of divided consciousness and fragmenting an experience whose essence is wholeness. The author of the beginning of Genesis led the way. The first line in the Old Testament states: "And God saw the light, that it was good: and God divided the light from the darkness." Through the filter of a consciousness that divides, The Lord of Light and the Lord of Darkness become opposites, then enemies. Light stands for heaven, for love and for "enlightenment," dark is synonymous with evil, hell, and damnation. There is no word "endarkenment" but if there was, it would mean something very bad! ... And because ecstatic knowledge feels true, it produces true believers for whom knowledge itself is final and therefore limited, perhaps the most onerous form of polarization. So we learn to discredit our own experience and honor the separating Gods.
The dark ecstatic, then, is that part of ecstatic experience which is edited, repressed and excluded, then relegated to the unknowable and unredeemable. Reveling in accessing what is eschewed by others; creative artists regularly look toward the ecstatic darkness for inspiration. In a very real sense, these experiences I have categorized as the dark ecstatic have the most to teach us for they deal with what our conscious culture has thus far excluded, what we edit from our personal and societal consciousness, what is most mysterious and unknown. One beautiful evocation of the dark ecstatic is referred to as "the dark night of the soul" a psychological state of profound suffering familiar to most of us that often brings powerful knowledge. The dark ecstatic like the continent of Antarctica conjures a frozen place, but where else are the stars so much like diamonds and the wilderness so untouched. The dark ecstatic is what can’t be learned from light, from brilliance, from quiet harmonies and from a gentle child’s voice.

To find such states in ourselves and all around us is horrible, delicious, and profound; but all is an ego illusion, a defense against seeing the unbroken fabric of life, for in the ecstatic moment there is no darkness or light but a larger whole which includes it all.

### William Irwin Thompson. Imaginary Landscapes, 1989

Part of our process of endarkenment is to pose problems that are projections of an inappropriate geometry. People who feel that they are trapped in, scream to be let out; people who believe that power is at the top, struggle to climb up; they focus on only the illusionary power of a king or president and fail to understand the chaos dynamics through which a polity behaves and through which a cultural change of directions unfolds without benefit of a political leader. People who think in terms of centers and peripheries imagine that culture is restricted to institutions like the church or university, and they fail to see the actual creative process through which art, religion, and science reveal themselves in a civilization. Part of the process of enlightenment or discovery is, therefore, the projection of a new geometry which reveals the life of the phenomena in question, be it Indra's Net or the benzene ring.


In the course of his exploration of the relation between matter and mind, Bohm [Knowledge as Endarkenment, 1980] comes to see that each human is trapped, through their cultural patterning, in a vicious circle of illusion. Our basic assumptions lead us into conflict, conflict evokes emotion, and the strength of the emotion seems to reinforce our basic assumptions. Yet now "[humanity] is suddenly entering a situation where the whole idea of this mode of life is evidently absurd." Individual intellectual activity provides no way out of this trap. It is useless to say "I must think about it to solve it" because "thought is the problem." Yet until one is freed from the multiplicity of these mental traps, all apparent knowledge is "endarkenment."


His dual phrase for our "Quantum Tsunami" is "The Quantum Crisis". He tells us about this crisis in his Introduction. What modern scientists call "The (French) Enlightenment" was actually an endarkenment. Classical methods of thing-king and classical languages are impediments to understanding quantum reality. Our crisis is to leave said endarkenment and enter a novel (e.g., Quantonic) realm of genuine quantum understanding and Quantum Lightings. But in order to do so, we must first realize that quantum reality, as David Bohm told us so many years ago, is NOT a mechanical reality! All our tools and languages and thing-king methods, at Millennium III's commencement, are mechanical, though. How do we rapidly evolve nearly all Earth's cultures away from classical concepts toward novel and apparently paradoxical quantum memes?


Still today where men seek enlightenment wise women such as Marion Woodman instead seek the feminine counterpart of endarkenment. These two fourfolds of the Mythopoetic inscribed in Myth and Epic of the Indo-European tradition enter into a mystery conjunctus to give our current metaphysical worldview with its own nihilistic separation of aspects of Being into excrescent from holoidal states. Within the Metaphysical era there is a conspiracy between the nihilistic duals to hide nonduality of Primal Archetypal Wholeness. And there is a conspiracy of the Non-dual Primal Archetypal Wholeness in its two manifestations of the Dark and Dao to hide the inherent non-duality of the duals themselves as they enter into yin/yang relations with each other despite their separation and artificial radicality of opposition to each other. So ultimately the nihilistic apparatus itself submerges into the sea of infinite complementarities that we learn about by studying the meta-system. But this negative background at the domain level within the fourfold of the world, what Jung called the Quadrality of Aion reveals is manifestation of the Sifat and nonmanifestation of Dhat or Sharia and Haqq from another perspective. So these four schemas from General Schemas Theory are tied intimately together by the structure of the non-duals which are socially constructed as the antidote of the extreme and intensifying nihilism of the Western Tradition. Their nesting is mutually elucidating and their inner coherence is mutually supportive. And their implications for our understanding of our place in the world is profound.

It is precisely when the dark side of life is accepted that possibilities of new experience begin to open up -- not only in ethics but also in religion. These possibilities run counter, it is true, to the old ethic and the old type of religion associated with it; they have the advantage, however, that they are in a position to combine the vitality of our new image of man with the new and transformed image of God which is emerging....

The new ethic of appropriating, rather than casting off the "shadow side" of human existence is in agreement with the original conception of Judaism, according to which the Deity created light and darkness, good and evil, and in which God and Satan were not separated from one another, but were interrelated aspects of the numinous. This apparently primitive trait in the Jewish conception of God implies that, side by side with the image of God the Father, God's irrational power aspect was explicitly retained, as a matter of living experience....

Such an ambiguous ("impure") notion of God puts an end once and for all to the naiveté of the traditional ethical conception that renders God's world asunder into light and darkness, pure and impure, healthy and sick. The creator of light and darkness, of the good and of the evil instinct, of health and sickness, confronts modern man in the unity of hisnuminous ambivalence with an unfathomable power, in comparison with which the orientation of the old ethic is clearly exposed as an excessively self-assured and infantile standpoint.

As expressed by Sam Keen:

Depth psychology has presented us with the undeniable wisdom that the enemy is constructed from denied aspects of the self. Therefore, the radical commandment "Love your enemy as yourself" points the way toward both self-knowledge and peace. We do, in fact, love or hate our enemies to the same degree that we love or hate ourselves. In the image of the enemy, we will find the mirror in which we may see our own face most clearly.

**Group C: Experiential processes**

In these modes there is the engagement in practice with healing processes (as a necessary consequence of the previous group) associated with the "endarkenment" (namely what had been repressed) as part of a larger cycle whose paradoxical and mysterious nature becomes apparent. This group may be understood as a re-engagement with the body -- a re-embodiment of the phenomenal body (if only for health reasons), giving expression in practice to the quality of life for oneself, for others, and for the entities of the environment.

Metaphorically the group might be associated in time with the period from noon to dusk in which the perspective and ambiguity associated with the experience of the darkness within enriches the actual quality of life -- or as in the period of late adulthood.

**Mode 7: Therapeutic processes**

Here the focus is on the actual experiential processes and engagement in them. The body is rediscovered and re-engaged. The disassociation is remedied.

This mode might be compared to the seventh of the 10 Zen ox-herding pictures entitled: Ox Forgotten - Person Remaining

As noted earlier, with respect to the alchemical symbolism so extensively explored by C G Jung and his successors from a depth psychology perspective [more], it is worth considering the relation of this mode to the first stage of the alchemical process, the *nigredo*:

At the beginning is the so-called "dragon", the chthonic spirit, the "devil" or "blackness". The nigredo, as the initial stage, is either present as a quality of the *prima materia* (or original substance), or else produced by the separation (*solutio*, *separatio*, *putrefactio*) of the elements. Either way, the encounter with "blackness" destroys the original form to produce chaos, suffering or pain. [more]

For Jung:

Self-knowledge is an adventure that carries us unexpectedly far and deep. Even a moderately comprehensive knowledge of the shadow can cause a good deal of confusion and mental darkness, since it gives rise to personality problems which one had never remotely imagined before. For this reason alone we can understand why the alchemists called their *nigredo* melancholia, "a black blacker than black," night, an affliction of the soul, confusion, etc., or, more pointedly, the "black raven." For us the raven seems only a funny allegory, but for the medieval adept it was . . . a well-known allegory of the devil. [The Conjunction, Collected Works, vol 14, par. 741.]

As expressed by Bernard D S Butler:

In the Nigredo (black) phase, we start to become aware of all those parts of ourselves of which we were hitherto unaware. Most of those parts are bits we would dearly love to deny in ourselves and only see in others; that is, they represent shadow material for us.... First, we realise that we aren't the pure-living, decent rational person we imagined, so we become understandably depressed. Second, because the ego represents not only our idea of what we are, but is also bound up with our body image, we feel our old attitudes dying, but may even feel our body itself is dying.... Many people at this stage feel they are becoming rotten, repulsive, or loathsome, and may often have persistent unpleasant images of death, graveyards, and dismemberment. What is
actually happening of course is that the previous neatly organised personality is undergoing a process of breaking down, and we perceive that process as if it were happening to our body, not just to our ego. If this confusion between body and psyche persists, images come of being reduced to a bare skeleton, which is then ground to dust, which is then cast to the winds. That gives a measure of how completely the old personality has to be dismantled before its new integrated version can form in its place. [more]

### Michael A. Harvey. *The Hazards of Empathy: Vicarious Trauma of Interpreters for the Deaf*

A Jungian analyst, Jean Shinoda Bolen once led a group of women into an underground cavern. They were told to sit still for hours without light or discussion. Upon returning to the "light," nobody reported enjoying the experience of darkness; everyone experienced degrees of terror. But they all reported benefiting tremendously from the ordeal. The group coined the term "endarkenment" to describe the archetypal wisdom that comes with going into the darkness and coming back again.

**Mode 8: Spiritual quest: enlightenment through endarkenment**

Here the capacity to learn through the dark is engaged deliberately (through variants of the *Via Negativa*) or through such experiences as the "dark night of the soul".

This mode might be compared to the eighth of the 10 *Zen* ox-herding pictures entitled: *Person and Ox Both Forgotten*

Again, in terms of the alchemical symbolism explored by C G Jung from a depth psychology perspective, this mode may be considered in relation to the second stage of the alchemical process, the *albedo*:

In alchemical language, matter suffers until the *nigredo* disappears and a new day dawns. The material slowly starts coming back to life. The *albedo*, the second stage, was said to result from the washing (*ablutio, baptismia*) of the products of this *nigredo*. Psychologically, it represents the later stages of shadow integration within the intimacy of the analytic "retort" -- the process of washing one's dirty linen in public; it being in the gross matter or "shadow" of our worldly affairs where contamination has taken place. [more]

### Rabbi Fern Feldman. *Endarkenment as a Spiritual Practice* (Chevruta)

### Yossi Chajes. *Jewish Religiosity and the Quest for Endarkenment*

The "Quest for Endarkenment" session is a chance to look at how Jewish spiritual ideas may be very different from the religious ideals of other spiritual traditions most of which seek "enlightenment" in one way or another. It's meant to be something of a challenge to the Jewish-Buddhist trip. [more]

### The Jews of the Near East (the *Donmeh*) who followed Sabbatai Zevi into Islam in 1666, as part of the *Sabbatean Movement*, secretly continuing to practice Jewish rituals, instituted one called "The Darkening of the Light."

### Mantak Chia. *Darkness Technology: Darkness Techniques for Enlightenment*. Universal Tao Center, 2002

All spiritual traditions have used Dark Room techniques in the pursuit of enlightenment. In Europe, the dark room often appeared in underground form as a network of tunnels, in Egypt as the Pyramids, in Rome as the catacombs, and by the Essenes, near the Dead Sea in Israel, as caves. In the Taoist tradition caves have been used throughout the ages for higher level practices. In the Tao, the cave, the Immortal Mountain, the Wu San, represents the Perfect Inner Alchemy Chamber. Meditating and fasting in the cave is the final journey of spiritual work. The caves are the Earth Mother and its energy lines. Like the hollowing bones, caves contain the earliest information of life stored inside the Earth. Caves contain the vital essence of the Earth Power. The *Tao* says: "When you go into the dark and this becomes total, the darkness soon turns into light."


Letting go of busyness is a true challenge for many of us. Fox coins an arresting term in the following quotation: "If it is true that the ground of the soul is dark, then the human race cannot continue to afford to flee the dark-ness and to embrace an Enlightenment that does not include an Endarkenment."... Western Civilization has embraced the Enlightenment for the last several hundred years. While it brought many blessings to our society, it also presents challenges. Let us allow the idea of Endarkenment to mellow in our minds, to stir our hearts, to inform our actions, and to bring balance into our living.

### Peter Collins (*Secrets of the Night*) clarifies:

Though the "Dark Night of the Soul" is often used in a more loosely defined sense, it is most properly associated with this stage which involves the intense erosion of the deepest conceptual structures. In its extreme form this is an exceptionally harrowing experience, which involves a kind of obscure anguish and psychological distress with no real parallel in other experiences. Due to the negation of all conscious phenomena one must learn to live entirely by faith. (This is interior illumination - concealed as
Collins usefully distinguishes five phases of the experience -- relating these to the quadrant schema of Ken Wilber (An Integral Theory of Consciousness, 1997). He also offers a formalization in the light of his interest in holistic mathematics. He then explores at some length a very interesting comparison -- in terms of "remarkable unrecognized structural characteristics" -- between the "Dark Night" of psychospiritual development and the Black Hole of Physics. He argues that in the "Dark Night" process:

... the structures of the personality collapse under a massive internal spiritual gravitational pull. No light can escape and this explains the prolonged darkness and the considerable difficulty with conscious communication. Also additional psychic matter in one's immediate experience, is continually sucked inwards. Anyone, who has gone through this stage, will recognize the powerful one-way direction of experience, whereby it seems as if the whole world is drawn under this intense "great attractor" inside one's psyche. Not surprisingly this creates an enormous feeling of internal psychological congestion.

### Peter Kingsley (Reality, The Golden Sufi Center, 2003), in an extensive description of a mystical tradition at the roots of western culture, focuses on the role of Parmenides, conventionally understood as the founder of western logic (in the light of much studied poem of his), notes the following:

In short, the Daughters of the Sun have come along to fetch him from the world of the living and take him right back to where they belong. This is no journey from confusion to clarity; from darkness to light. On the contrary, the journey Parmenides is describing is exactly the opposite. He is travelling straight into the ultimate night that no human being could possibly survive without divine protection. He is being taken to the heart of the underworld, the world of the dead...

There was a specific and established technique among various groups of people for making the journey to the world of the dead, for dying before you died. It involved isolating yourself in a dark place, lying down in complete stillness, staying motionless for hours or days. First the body would go silent, then eventually the mind. And this stillness is what gave access to another world, a world of utter paradox, to a totally different state of awareness.... And there was a name that the Greeks, and then the Romans, gave to this technique. They called it incubation.

### Ray Flowers (Incubation: Within 2 Other Within. San Graal School of Sacred Geometry, 2002) provides further insight into the relation between incubation and darkness, citing the biblical reference "And there contained in the darkness is the Light, and the darkness knoweth it not." (John 1:5):

The idea that Consciousness attains Self Awareness by going inside to see what is outside is fundamental in approaching incubation. The Flower of Life Geometries speak metaphorically of how mitosis and incubation occur, and suggest great possibilities of what is inside and ultimately outside the Egg.

The geometric approach suggests a fruitful association between "incubation" and "cube", namely the need to go through a cubically constrained space, understood as darkness, in order for birth to occur into spaces characterized by more complex geometries. Elsewhere Flowers also sees the cube as the ultimate magic container: "It is The Box and the Incubator in which breeds the Putrefacation of the seed of First Light, the concept by which we believe in death and resurrection". [more]

There is a certain irony in the current widespread use of "incubator" to refer to a business-research zone in which innovation is facilitated -- when the architecture in such zones is typically cubic. More generally it might be argued that the cubic pattern, characteristic of so much of modern architectural and conceptual organization, could be understood as a place of darkness and endarkenment through which new modes of understanding will be born -- represented metaphorically by more complex cognitive geometries. In this light modern civilization, and its associated thinking patterns, could be understood as the cubification of the environment (cf Charles de Bovelles on the cubification of the sphere) -- justifying its description as a process of endarkenment. Given the mindsets typical of innovation incubators, feminists might also explore the association with the "incubus" of European folklore: a male demon (or evil spirit) who visits women in their sleep to lie with them in ghostly sexual intercourse. The term derives from the Latin for nightmare -- a tempting link to the first line of the Orphic poem so extensively explored by Peter Kingsley (cf The source of light is at home in the darkness, 2003) in his studies of incubation (In the Dark Places of Wisdom, 1999):

The mares that carry me as far as longing can reach rode on, once they had come and fetched me onto the legendary road of the divinity that carries the man who knows through the vast and dark unknown.

### Starhawk. (Dreaming the Dark: magic, sex, and politics. Beacon Press, 1997, 15th ed.)

**Mode 9: Embracing the dark**

This is the mode most characteristic of nature religions. It is also the mode most readily labelled as failing to distinguish appropriately the light from the dark -- notably when its proponents indeed fail to do so, and embrace the dark to the exclusion of the light. Just as there is a challenge associated with "wallowing in the light", there is a corresponding challenge with "wallowing in the dark". However it is this mode that has the best articulation of the experiential relation to both light and dark as they characterize the gestalt of circadian rhythms and the rhythms of human relationships.
This mode might be compared to the ninth of the 10 Zen ox-herding pictures entitled: Returning to the Source

Again, in terms of the alchemical symbolism explored by C G Jung from a depth psychology perspective, this mode may be considered in relation to the third stage of the alchemical process, the *rubedo*:

To make the opus come alive into a fully human mode of existence it must have "blood", or what the alchemists call the *rubedo* or "redness" of life. In this final stage, the white becomes united with red through the raising of the heat in the fire. The white is associated with the Queen and the red with the King, who now arise out of the mercurial, transformatrice "waters" of the unconscious to perform their *coniunctio oppositorum*, the union of all opposites as symbolised by the conjunction of the archetypal masculine and feminine in the "chymical marriage", the *hieros gamos*.

The poet John Keats (*Negative Capability*, 21 December 1817) is renowned for recognition of the essence of maturity in terms of "negative capability". This is the capacity of "being in uncertainties, mysteries, doubts, without any irritable reaching after fact and reason".

### Rani. *Enlightenment, before, during and after*. Sannyas News

Enlightenment comes to life when we embrace our *endarkenment* in the very same way. We realize deeply that our human reality will always be here, that pain will always be here, that suffering is an integral part of human life. Either we suffer unconsciously or we do it consciously. We realize that the freedom we thought we had found in the bliss and joy of the Enlightenment high is not the real freedom at all. It is much deeper. It is truly accepting what IS.

### Anna. *Nurturing Magic: Restoring the concept of 'Black' to its rightful place.*

I used to go around on the workshop circuit years ago, when there was even more talk about enlightenment and the glory of white and the light and people wanting to get in touch with their higher selves and all that, then there is now. I had fun offering some workshops in *endarkenment* and 'consciousness lowering'. It's not that I think there is anything wrong with 'white' and 'enlightenment', but I felt that the old black womb needed someone to speak kindly about her. I feel still deeply that the colour and concept of 'Black' needs reclaiming by all of us as an essential complement of 'White'. Without the two of them being equally valued, we can never achieve balance and harmony within ourselves or society.

### Bonnie Hoag. *Chiaroscuro: In Defense of Darkness* (extract from *Snake Medicine, 2001*)

Imagine, now, with me, how our overall health could improve if we could release our "addiction" to light. Imagine how the land could rest again at night, without the creeping light of cities, shopping malls, prisons. Imagine the possible implications of welcoming the darkness, of dwelling in it, returning to a rhythm which allows night, and darkness. I would feel safer in a world that does not sanctify light above darkness. The production of electricity, our main defense against the dark and fear, is costly in many ways. Imagine the desirable consequences for our air, water and land if we did not fear the dark but learned to work with it and to sleep and dream when the earth and sky called us to do so.

We seek enlightenment. When will we also seek *endarkenment*? Darkness is the dreamtime, whether at night cozy in our beds or when entering the journey, the alpha state of what is called non-ordinary reality. Darkness is what was feared in women, the very womb as replicated in the tradition of the sweat lodge, and in the moon, coming and going through its phases, dropping us sometimes into total darkness. In many cultures the moon is symbolic of woman. Is it the darkness in woman that has led to her oppression around the earth? Is it something so primal in us as fearing the dark mystery, the potential of the womb?

### Hyun Kyung. *ZH Interviews*. Zion's Herald, September/October 2003:

Western logocentric enlightenment was very one-sided in its development of human life. It valued only light -- light skin, white people, white people's science, white people's philosophy. I think in order to really heal the world we need the "wisdom of darkness." This can be the Third World, dark people, women, or our "shadows," to use Carl Jung’s term -- all the things we do not want to confront within ourselves, so we project them onto others and call them terrorists. So, I think that we need "*endarkenment*" for awhile, not enlightenment, to heal the world.

### Lauren Raine. *Death - Rebirth Oracle Painting*

In the beliefs of the pagan peoples of early Europe, lives revolved around the wheel of the year, the spiral dance of the natural world. Everything arose from the Earth, from Mater Dea (or matter) and eventually returned to the dark womb of the threefold Goddess. Agrarian people knew that everything must die beneath the snows of winter in order to be reborn in the spring. This was the original reason the dead were buried in the ground. They were thus returned to the generative womb of the Earth. Halloween, traditionally the end of the agrarian year, comes at the time of the last harvest and the first frost, and was once called "The Witch’s New Year". In Germany, this last month belonged to the Goddess Hell or Hella, Goddess of the underworld. In
Mexico, November 1st is still celebrated as "the Day of the Dead" - a time when the veils between this world and the other worlds are thin, a time to honor the ancestors.

Today we tend to be "afraid of the dark". We speak of "enlightenment" - but there is another way of knowing, another kind of wisdom, that might be called "endarkenment". This is the journey into night, into formlessness: into the Great mystery from which everything arises, passes away, and holds the promise of rebirth.

### Deborah Hoffman-Wade. *Endarkenment: The Celebration of Being with the Dark*, 2004

**Mystery and Reflection: Endarkenment** is the mystery of inner reflection and renewal. This is the time we spend becoming one with our shadow. Again we equate our shadow sides as those parts of us we keep hidden or are afraid of. Instead I look to find those parts of my self that are essential for the development of my inner self. Learning to balance the things that have not been part of my life which could contribute to my development is part of inner reflection.

Mystery is unclear. Mystery is just that, unexplainable, obscure, ambiguous, vague, and deeply spiritual. We, as a people, are constantly trying to solve the mystery, make clear the unclear and explain every detail. *Endarkenment* revels in the mystery. In contemplation of the sweetness of not ever knowing, *endarkenment* is celebration. It is taking some things on faith. It is resting in the presence of not knowing. It is mystery. It is the time for endarkenment. (Re-formed Congregation of the Goddess, International, 2004)

### Maze. *Kinesthetic Magick*

Enlightenment is the attainment of a pure Yang energy. The enlightened direct what they are doing, and know where they are going, and how to get there. The enlightened usually arrive where they are Heading. The energy is one of potential, of movement, of creativity. It is the active force in the matrix. *Endarkenment* is the attainment of a pure Yin energy. The endarkened finds something to do, and knows how to [literally] ride the flows of energy in the matrix. There is a powerful intuition attainable with endarkenment. The energy is one of acceptance, of being moved, of inspiration. It is the passive force in the matrix.

### Connie Zwieg and Jeremiah Abrams (Eds) *Meeting the Shadow*, 1991

Like Beauty embracing the Beast, our beauty is deepened as our beastliness is honored. The poet Rainer Maria Rilke realized this when he said he feared that if his devil's left him, his angels would take flight as well.

### F. David Peat. *Art and the Environment in Britain*

The English artist Anish Kapoor, whose extremely powerful work also has roots in sacred Hindu art, is particularly concerned with the creation of sacred spaces. His work involves powerful forms, voids to be inhabited by energies and powers, dark sculptural absences in which the mind can reach "endarkenment". His concern is with the dualities of the universe, yoni and lingam, light and dark, presence and absence, the power for creation held by Kali, Goddess of destruction.

**Group D: Beyond fixed distinctions**

In this mode the polarity between enlightenment and endarkenment is finally transcended experientially in such a way as to give meaning to the range of modes as an exression of that understanding -- whether through endarkenment or enlightenment. This group may be understood as a re-embodiment of the world, taking responsibility for the quality of the environment as one actually experiences and engenders it.

Metaphorically the group might be associated in time with the period from dusk to midnight, interweaving light and darkness meaningfully without attachment to either -- as in one's elder years.

**Mode 10: Enaction: "Laying down a path in walking"**

This mode is closely associated with the first. However the ignorance of the first here takes a form of conscious "unknowing". This may be exemplified by so-called "crazy wisdom" or the themes of *enactivism* (as used by Bateson, Maturana, Rosch, Thomson, and Varela to label their theories). It is exemplified by the much cited-verse of T.S. Eliot's *Little Gidding* (the last of the *Four Quartets*):

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We shall not cease from exploration
And the end of all our exploring
Will be to arrive where we started
And know the place for the first time.
Through the unknown, remembered gate
When the last of earth left to discover
Is that which was in the beginning...
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This mode might be compared to the tenth of the 10 Zen ox-herding pictures entitled: *Entering the Marketplace with Arms Hanging Loose*. The understanding that the unknowing of the transcendent darkness is actually the true knowing of the transcendent truth has
been known to many mystics, notably of the West.

Again, in terms of the alchemical symbolism explored by C G Jung from a depth psychology perspective, this mode may be considered in relation to the outcome of the third stage of the alchemical process associated with the previous mode:

This results in the grand climax, the achievement of the goal -- the lapis philosophorum, the hermaphrodite embodying the united King and Queen. This is the so-called "third thing", the "Rebis", the phenomenon of the union of love and soul itself, the soul that is engendered through love - this "divine birth" symbolising a re-awakening of psychological reality, a new ruling consciousness.

[more]

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## Jules. Locked into fear, we hate, not recognizing that the thing we hates is also us.

There is no answer to the question what is enlightenment and there is no answer either to the question of what is darkness. "Endarkenness" we could say. For both states of consciousness, enlightenment and endarkenness, are just expressions of the one mind that exists in all of us and what we get to do is to see what is the true mind of God in all cases and that of course we call enlightenment, and what is its function and its description is the whole of this book. And what is endarkenment is everything else.

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## Giuliano Di Bernardo. Enlightenment from the Ritual. Freemasonry Today

The masonic path may therefore be viewed as an ascending (raising) staircase of Light, with seven steps. The first light is the light man receives with initiation, in which the visible darkness is overcome, while the last is the light preceding the mystic union with God, when non-visible darkness is reached. The seven steps can be described as: perception, examination, reflection, knowledge, understanding, wisdom and truth.

When the mason achieves mystic union with God (in an allegorical sense), the light-darkness duality (the chequered floor) disappears. The union can no longer be described. The Great Architecte of the Universe becomes the En Sof of the Cabalist: the unknowable, alogical Depth which appears to be everything else.

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## On HarshaSatsangh. Nonduality Salon Highlights, #1090, 31 May 2002

I don't use the word enlightened anymore; it's a buzz word, it's a word which is a very, very tricky one, and I don't say I'm enlightened and you're endarkened. I do not say that. In fact, I don't feel that way. I don't feel myself to be enlightened in a world of endarkened people. I'm not familiar with the reasons why certain Teachers deny their capacity. For example, Tenzin Gyatso prefers to be referred to as a "simple monk" (hahaha). Perhaps it's a matter of finessing the students' entry onto the spiritual path. One result of denying one's enlightenment to would be students is to remove the "illusion" distance between enlightenment and endarkenment.

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## Sharon G. Mijares. Message. A Lesson to Learn, 9 January 2005

One famous Zen quotation is: "Before enlightenment: chopping wood, carrying water. After enlightenment: chopping wood, carrying water." The same could be said for endarkenment, the negative experiences in life.

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## Eight States of Jhana (Samatha Meditation). Dhamma collections from Buddhism Depot

Lastly, the meditation practices that the Buddha and other enlightened persons practiced after the enlightenment. After their liberation through voidness (Sunnata-vimokkha), they had no more truths to be liberated so they concentrated on the void (Sunnata-samadhi) as a kind of practices. This may be similar, as saying that in meditation, there is only reality and no experience of (more) truths. Emptiness is absolutely emptiness not because of there is nothing but there are no human's words in any dictionary to represent the emptiness and condition of this level. Only the person who attains this level will understand.

There is a kind of emptiness but it is from Moha Samadhi (Fake and not Right Meditation). This kind of practice should be avoided because it starts from no concentration or concentration on nothing then ends at no awareness. It likes day dreaming with blank mind that gains nothing. It may be called the process of endarkenment.

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## John Sherman, I Know Nothing At All. River Ganga Foundation, Public Meeting, 8 June 2002

When I considered enlightenment, I thought maybe enlightenment might be something different. It sounds like something different. You know, realization doesn't seem to have a counterpart: unrealization... Enlightenment does seem to have a counterpart: endarkenment, ignorance, or something of this nature.... It seems that these experiences of beauty, and peace, and clarity, and connection, and oneness come unbidden, not as the result of anything whatsoever I can do.... So I gave up on "enlightenment". And I advise you to do the same.... But in any event, the outcome of all of my investigations of a spiritual nature is that I don't know anything at all. So far as I can tell, there is nothing at all to be known.
There is another way of putting this, which is "I am already radiant, full, clear consciousness" and therefore, anything that I do to try to attain that is a moving away from that. Anything I do to try to seek knowledge and understanding of my identity, my being, is nothing more than suffering itself. But it seems somehow simpler to say that there is nothing to be known. There is nothing to do. If there is nothing to be known, and there is nothing to be gotten... the only thing standing between you and self-realization is the belief that you are not already fully realized, just as you are. So, if this is in fact the case, then there is nothing to be done.

## The Sunyatayana Of Samantabhadra: The Way of Voikness of the Primordial Ultimateless

The suchness which is written here has never really been written, nor has it ever needed to be written, spoken, known or thought of. Suchness is more immanent than the most primordial, beyond all implications of absolute ultimate transcendence, yet it is unexceptionally ordinary. Suchness is such that high indifference and complete absorption are equally void. Suchness is such that oneness and allness are equally void. Suchness is such that multiplicity, duality and nonduality are equally void. Suchness is such that nothing is knowledge or ignorance, consciousness or unconsciousness. Suchness is such that there is no one to be and not be. Suchness is such that enlightenment, endarkenment, dreaming and awake are equally void.

## Gregory of Nyssa (Life of Moses, 1978), as quoted by Andrew Louth (The Origins of the Christian Mystical Tradition, 1983) with reference to the "divine darkness" of Christianity as the final stage of the soul's journey, notes:

The progress is a progress from light to deeper and deeper darkness. The initial stage is the removal of the darkness (skotos) of error by the light of the truth. But, from then on, the farther the soul progresses the deeper is the darkness into which it enters, until eventually the soul is cut off from all that can be grasped by sense and reason....

It thus leaves all surface appearances, not only those that can be grasped by the senses but also those which the mind itself seems to see, and it keeps on going deeper until by the operation of the spirit it penetrates the invisible and the incomprehensible, and it is there that is sees God. The true vision and the true knowledge of what we seek consists precisely in not seeing, in an awareness that our goal transcends all knowledge and is everywhere cut off from us by the darkness of incomprehensibility.

Thus that profound evangelist, John, who penetrated into this luminous darkness, tells us that "no man hath seen God at any time" (John 1:18), greaching us by this negation that no man -- indeed no created intellect -- can attain a knowledge of God.

## A H Almaas (The Inner Journey Home: soul's realization of the unity of reality. Shambhala, 2004) considers that the concept of enlightenment and liberation has become the focus of the Eastern traditions, while that of union and annihilation in God has become that of the Western -- namely going from knowing to the darkness of unknowing. Unknowing is then merging with the divine darkness, while enlightenment is the clarity and light beyond mind. He notes:

It is interesting that the more we recognize the indeterminacy of the absolute, the deeper is its darkness, and the more luminous. We go further into the unfathomable depths as we accept its mysteriousness. Such darkness is pure bliss and realization, for even thought it is the absence of all being and knowing, it is enlightenment. Its darkness is luminous and brilliant; it is the spiritual midnight sun. This darkness bathes us, caresses us, melts us, dissolves us, annihilates us, until we are all gone; there remains only the majesty of the luminous crystal night. We realize then that this darkness of being and knowledge is God's knowledge of Himself. It is not normal knowledge, it is pure basic knowledge before any discrimination, before any conceptualization. It is nonconceptual knowledge, which is not what we ordinarily call knowledge. Thus the indeterminacy of the absolute is the same as the divine darkness, the inscrutable nature of the divine, the ultimate essence of Being.

## Henry Corbin (The Man of Light in Iranian Sufism, 1971) quotes a Persian Sufi, Lahiji:

I saw myself present in a world of light. Mountains and deserts were iridescent with lights of all colours... I was experiencing a consummate nostalgia for them; I was as though stricken with madness and snatched out of myself by the violence of the intimate emotion and feeling of the presence. Suddenly I saw that the black light was invading the entire universe. Heaven and Earth and everything that was there had wholly become black and, behold, I was totally absorbed in this light, losing consciousness. Then I came back to myself.

## Lee Rosenthal. Getting Up By the Same Ground By Which We Fall. Vista View Newsletter Online, March 2005

Buddha's enlightenment must be preceded by "endarkenment." The Law of Change must be seen within the context of our "mind." Once done, we cannot but help to see our deludedness. The ground by which we fall is the same ground by which stand.

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This thing of darkness I acknowledge mine. There is nothing more confining than the prison we don't know we are in. William Shakespeare

The real meaning of enlightenment is to gaze with undimmed eyes on all darkness. Nikos Kazantzakis
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