



Solar Night: A Creation Myth

by Larry N. Mayer

“All usable forms of energy on the Earth’s surface—with the exception of atomic and thermonuclear energy—are directly or indirectly due to the storing or conversion of energy received from the Sun; this unquestionably, and emphatically, includes cosmic religious feeling, as well as magnetism, chemical, creative, and sexual energy.”

—Albert Einstein, *First World Energy Summit*,
January 17, 1956, Los Braces, New Mexico

In the winter of 1956, the already famous Chuck Berry makes a huge smash hit with the song, “Roll Over Beethoven”—in both the US and the UK. By that time, skiffle —the British form of banging on a tin-canned broomstick—is reaching its height, and has only one course to follow. “Cha-Cha-Boom.” Yup. “Be-Bop-A-Lula.” Uhuh, uhuh. “Heartbreak Hotel.” Yul Brynner is the celluloid king of Siam. On February 23, Elvis collapses in the parking lot after his first show in Jacksonville, and is rushed to a Florida hospital where the doctor diagnoses exhaustion, and tells the 21-year-old he better slow down. Two days later, Norma Jean changes her legal name to Marilyn, returns to Hollywood, and records one thankfully brief song for her film *The Prince and the Showgirl*. The queen of England, whom she’ll soon meet, is in Nigeria, doing her thing, quelling any notions of anti-colonial rebellion. And Dwight Eisenhower, after suffering *myocardial infarction* announces his plans to seek reelection. Buddy Holly? For the moment: still alive.