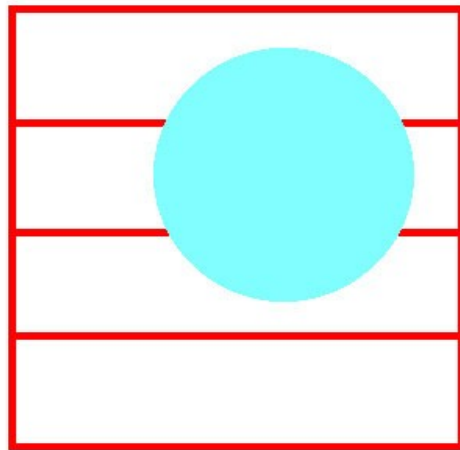


DEVIL AND GOD - The Omega Book

A volume of aphoristic philosophy by
JOHN O'LOUGHLIN



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PREFACE

This volume of so-called aphoristic philosophy is largely composed of what I am wont to call supernotes - a sort of aphoristically-biased cross between essays and maxims - and is not written in the usual linear fashion of a straightforward progression from idea to idea but follows a spiralling course towards a kind of ideological summit which is both an ending and a beginning, an achievement and an aspiration. In such fashion, ideas are not stated and abandoned, as in the linear mode of writing, but are introduced on one level of the spiral and taken-up again on another, higher level later on, where they are reworked in more detail or clarified and consummated, as the case may be. Sometimes a particular idea, or theme, will pass through three or more turns of the ascending spiral before finally being abandoned; one might argue that such an idea is major rather than minor and forms a kind of *leitmotiv* to the work as a whole, appearing first in one way, then in another, modified by changing perspectives as much as by position in the literary edifice. For why should one confine oneself merely to a single point of view? Or expect the reader to recall everything stated on an earlier page when he is over half-way through the work? Restatement enhances the idea's credibility, lends it extra weight, and keeps it fresh in the mind. I have never despised repetition, nor contradiction, or what may appear as such. An idea tentatively expressed lower down the literary edifice may be but an introduction, an exploration of unknown and, by its peculiar nature, hazardous or controversial material. Re-expressed in slightly different and firmer terms higher up the spiralling edifice, such an idea acquires the mantle of conviction, of ideological certitude. In such fashion, philosophical progress is made. And the reader, mindful of the contrast between the earlier and later perspectives, is left in no doubt of it! He becomes the chief witness of the unfolding and maturation of higher truth - what I am wont to call supertruth, which is above and beyond all illusion.

John O'Loughlin, London 1986 (Revised 2008)

DEVIL AND GOD – THE OMEGA BOOK

1. Woman: nature, realism. Man: free to be either antinatural or supernatural.
2. Woman is of the world; her kingdom is the world.
3. True art: supernatural. Worldly art: natural. False art: antinatural.
4. World: ancient Rome; modern London. Two distinct evolutionary stages of civilized naturalism. Roman Empire; British Empire: both necessarily worldly phenomena.
5. God and the Devil have this much in common: neither of them much likes 'the world'.
6. God (the Father) did not create nature: it grew out of the world as a sort of middle ground in between the subnatural and the supernatural.
7. Atheism is a philosophy of the Devil; only the Devil denies God.
8. Sense in which blue-collar workers are communistic and white-collar workers fascistic. A particle/wavicle dichotomy of manual/intellectual work which, in each case, lies beyond the bourgeois managerial pale.
9. Grand bourgeois - bourgeois - petty bourgeois: three stages and/or degrees of owner/manager exploitation of the working class, whether the latter be industrial and proletarian or commercial and folksy or, rather, folkish. What lies beyond the parliamentary tradition effectively transcends it, whether of the Communist Far Left or of the Fascist Far Right. You cannot speak of Communists in the Labour Party or of Fascists in the Conservative Party, for the simple reason that genuine Communists and Fascists would never deign to compromise with parliamentarianism, being external to it. Thus there is no such thing as a Labour Communist or a Tory Fascist; though each of the parties will harbour their own respective extremes.

10. What parliament is to political tradition, painterly art is to aesthetic tradition: a bourgeois genre standing in-between the evolutionary extremes of sculpture and holography. Thus no more than a parliamentarian can be described as a Communist or a Fascist (even if by chance or design he erroneously thinks of himself in either of these extreme terms), can a painting be so described. For, with the paradoxical exception of Socialist Realism, canvas art is by definition bourgeois and incapable of extending beyond a petty-bourgeois level of abstraction, whether of the Abstract Impressionist Extreme Right (a Radical Conservative equivalence), or of the Abstract Expressionist Extreme Left (a Radical Labour equivalence). As in parliament, so also on canvas: work within an atomic tradition is constrained and defined by the nature of that tradition. If you want proletarian or folkish levels of art you must either turn to sculptural light art on the Far Left, or to free light art on the Far Right. An abstract painter who considers himself to be either a Communist or a Fascist, depending on his particular creative bent, is no less self-deluded than a parliamentarian of like opinion! So far as the genuine Communists and Fascists are concerned, such a man is no more than a petty-bourgeois painterly traditionalist, his work equivalent to one or other of the contemporary Western manifestations of parliamentary extremism. As modern history adequately attests, the Communist authorities of the (former) Soviet Union never thought too highly of abstract art. For, as the self-appointed guardians of a proletarian state, they had every right to castigate and prohibit works or genres of an alien class-status. The Soviet Union was officially beyond such art.
11. If light sculpture, or sculptural light art, is Marxist, then light art, as implying the use of slender neon tubing, could be described as Marxist-Leninist, i.e. less materialistic because of the infusion of a pseudo-theocratic element deriving from Lenin. A distinction, then, between the proletarian and the pseudo-proletarian, the Marxist Far Left and the Marxist-Leninist Right. By contrast, free light art, meaning spotlights trained on the night sky and/or laser shows, would be Fascist, since idealistic rather than materialistic, and we need not doubt that holography, or the projection of images into space through the refraction of light, lies beyond this as a kind of Social Transcendentalist equivalence indicative of a superfolkish status capable of leading, in due course, to a classless absolutism of pure idealism, once computer graphics become the accepted norm.

12. Novel writing: no less pertinent to a bourgeois democratic tradition than painterly art. The realistic novel, that artful combination of materialistic and idealistic elements, the literary mean, one now slighted and spurned by the (extremist) practitioners of the petty-bourgeois antinovel and supernovel respectively: the former given to a philosophical bias, which finds its parliamentary analogue in the Labour Party, the latter given to a poetical bias, which finds its parliamentary analogue in the Conservatives, each type of novelist contemptuous of the realistic tradition and, consciously or unconsciously, determined to extend literary decadence to the utmost materialistic and idealistic extents, depending on his particular bias, while the realistic novelist, clinging to bourgeois tradition as a matter of life-and-death, sits stranded on the rocks of his literary obsolescence as the conflicting currents of literary extremism rage all around and beyond him, threatening to submerge him beneath their all-pervasive decadence, to sweep away the entire literary tradition in the name of absolutist revolutions, albeit revolutions which, whether of the extreme left or right, remain intrinsically petty-bourgeois. For the true revolutionaries, the class partisans of either a proletarian or a superfolkish absolutism, avoid the novel genre altogether, content to leave its disintegration to petty-bourgeois extremists, while concentrating on their respective philosophical and poetical frameworks. No less than the philosophic Communist looks down on the literary materialist, so the poetic Fascist despises the literary idealist. For even the most materialistic or idealistic of novelists are still relative to a degree.
13. In music, the symphony holds the place of the novel and, for that matter, canvas art ... as the quintessentially democratic genre coming in-between autocratic dancing and theocratic concertos, i.e. materialistic and idealistic extremes which respectively focus on rhythm and pitch. Unlike those, the classical symphony signifies a realistic balance in regard to rhythm and pitch which takes the uniquely atomic form of a compromise between harmony and melody, the former subordinate to the latter, as is befitting in a materialistic/idealistic compromise. Hence the bourgeois symphony is a Liberal phenomenon reflecting an atomic realism. Not so, however, the petty-bourgeois symphony, which is divisible into preponderantly materialistic, i.e. rhythmic, and preponderantly idealistic, i.e. pitch-oriented, distinctions, depending on the composer's ideological bias. Here the

symphony attains to its post-Liberal decadence, as it parts company with realism in the name of either materialistic or idealistic extremes, a Labour/Conservative dichotomy opening up that forces the symphony apart, breaks it up, in the musical equivalent of nuclear fission, with ballet-like rhythmical abstractions on the extreme left, and concerto-like pitch-oriented abstractions on the extreme right - an avant-garde dichotomy which parallels the splits in literature and art, the symphony no longer recognizable as such but assuming absolutist dimensions. And yet, no matter how radically rhythmic or pitch-orientated the avant-garde work may happen to be, it is still connected to the symphonic tradition - orchestral works being by definition bourgeois and therefore incapable of either a Communist or a Fascist status. Like the experimental painter or novelist, the avant-garde symphonist is a petty-bourgeois artist whose work will approximate to either a Labour or a Conservative political equivalence but never, under any circumstances, to what lies beyond the parliamentary tradition and ultimately transcends it! The radical symphonist who considers himself to be either a Communist or a Fascist is deceiving himself, no less than the painter or novelist of similar extremist predilection. At the very least he is hyping himself up. Of course, the symphony-proper, as a harmonic/melodic Liberal compromise, continues to exist and to be composed and performed throughout the duration of a petty-bourgeois epoch. Bourgeois composers have no less of a right to existence in an extreme open society than their revolutionary detractors. But, as a rule, even their works, conventional by contemporary standards, will be decadent by traditional classical standards, i.e. given to too much harmony and too little melody, or vice versa, with certain 'modernist' ingredients or tendencies thrown-in for good measure. Where there is no longer a kind of simultaneous balance between harmony and melody, but an oscillatory balance favouring now harmony or, more often, disharmony, now melody or, more usually, atonality, we can talk, I believe, of a Liberal Democratic equivalence, which will adhere to an extreme realistic framework, now veering towards Labour materialism, now veering in the opposite direction ... towards a Conservative idealism, the bourgeois in a petty-bourgeois epoch, his relativity stretched in an absolutist direction.

14. Clearly, since Communism and Fascism are People's ideologies lying beyond the democratic pale, the only music worthy of being termed Communist or Fascist will likewise lie beyond the

symphonic pale, transcending acoustic naturalism in either an antinatural or a supernatural electronic direction, depending, as a rule, on whether the music in question is predominantly rhythmic, like rock, or predominantly pitch-orientated, like jazz. If the former, then we can speak of a Communist equivalence - the reduction of electric music to the lowest-common-denominator of rhythmic materialism, which will be all-the-more absolutist the purer the rock, i.e. the less it is diluted by pitch-oriented jazz tendencies that suggest not so much a Marxist as a Marxist-Leninist equivalence, symptomatic of jazz-rock. If the latter, however, then we can speak of a Fascist equivalence - the elevation of electric music to the highest level of a pitch-oriented idealism; a kind of musical superidealism that will be all-the-more absolutist the purer the jazz, i.e. the less it is diluted by rhythmical rock tendencies, which suggest not so much a Fascist as a Social Transcendentalist equivalence, symptomatic of rock-jazz. Whatever the case, whether we are dealing with rock and jazz-rock on the one hand or with jazz and rock-jazz on the other, we have music that transcends the symphonic pale. Thus true People's music or, more exactly, music of the intellectual/revolutionary elites who in one way or another aspire to leading the People (with their more popular tastes), being symptomatic of a Communist/Fascist dichotomy, is also, on that account, indicative of a distinction between the Devil and God on the proletarian and folkish levels of evolutionary extremism. Whether the Devil be diluted by God or God by the Devil, as in Transcendental Socialism and Social Transcendentalism respectively, this distinction still holds true and is the key to the intrinsic nature of the two types of music - the one 'evil' because rhythmic and antinatural, the other 'good' because pitch-orientated and supernatural.