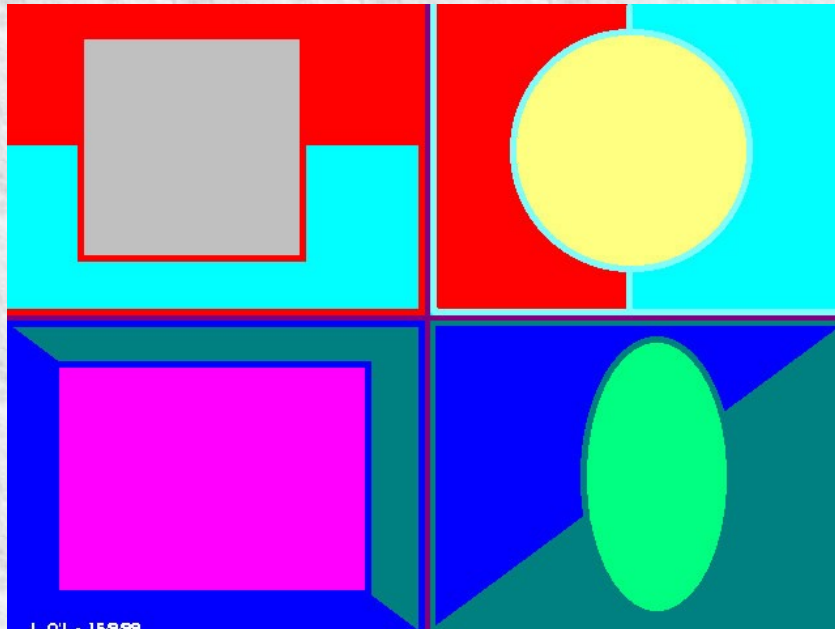


ELEMENTAL SPECTRA

A volume of aphoristic philosophy by
JOHN O'LOUGHLIN



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PREFACE

Unlike *Towards the Supernoumenon* (1988), its immediate forerunner, this more structurally advanced volume of aphoristic philosophy, dating from 1988-89, investigates the significance of the basic elements, viz. air, fire, water and earth, with regard to a variety of different contexts, including science, politics, economics and religion, and seeks to draw ideological and moral lessons from the perceived correlations. Of additional significance in relation to the Elements are the relationships between being and doing, awareness and emotion, mind and brain, nature and artifice, and individualism and collectivism. There is also, within *Elemental Spectra*, a critique of Arthur Koestler's tripartite theories, as developed in books like *The Act of Creation* and *Janus - A Summing Up*, as well as a refutation of his psychological pessimism concerning the dichotomous relationship between what he calls the 'old brain' (cerebellum) and the 'new brain' (cerebrum). In fact, Koestler is no less the principal philosophical target of this work than Schopenhauer was of the previous one, and although I acknowledge my debt to him as a significant influence on my thought, I was able to move beyond him at this point and accordingly dispense with a number of his theories.

John O'Loughlin, London 1989 (Revised 2008)

ELEMENTAL SPECTRA

1. Idealistic sadness/falsity on the negative divine pole, and joy/truth on the positive divine pole. Naturalistic hate/ugliness on the negative diabolic pole, and love/beauty on the positive diabolic pole. Materialistic humility/weakness on the negative worldly-alpha pole, and pride/strength on the positive worldly-omega pole. Realistic evil/pain on the negative alpha-worldly pole, and good/pleasure on the positive omega-worldly pole. Negative down and positive up, but negative and positive in both naturalistic and artificial manifestations of each spectrum, with the noumenon preceding the phenomenon in the one case, but the superphenomenon preceding the supernoumenon in the other case - qualities and quantities, superquantities and superqualities.
2. From the Cartesian mind/brain dichotomy to a brain absolutism via a mind-brain symbiosis - the declining path of Western civilization from bourgeois dualism to proletarian monism via a petty-bourgeois dualistic monism. Or, alternatively, from relativity to absolutism via a relativistic absolutism. In contrast to the theocratic civilization beyond, with its superbrain absolutism a precondition, via a brain-mind relativistic absolutism, of supermind absolutism - the supermind of the Holy Spirit.
3. Transcendental Socialist being-doing in space-time. Social Transcendentalist doing-being in time-space. Space-time is equivalent to supertime; time-space to superspace.
4. Transcendental Socialist light-heat in mind-brain. Social Transcendentalist heat-light in brain-mind. Mind-brain is equivalent to superbrain; brain-mind to supermind. Supermindful God and superbrainy Devil beyond the bodily/superbodily world.
5. Particle-suggesting status of records on account of their round, materialistic construction; wavicle-suggesting status of tapes on account of their elongated, idealistic construction. Devil and God?
6. Possibility, indeed probability, of conventional tapes as a Social-Democratic ideological equivalence in relation to Democratic Socialist long-playing albums, with microtapes a Social

Transcendentalist equivalence in relation to Transcendental Socialist compact discs. In both of these latter cases, a reduction in scale commensurate with theocratic centro-complexification.

7. Earth - air - fire - water: those time-honoured basic elements which, in relation to my philosophy, can be listed as follows: idealistic air, naturalistic fire, materialistic water, and realistic earth, with air and earth forming one pair of opposites, fire and water another - the former moral and amoral, both of the latter immoral. Hence, evaluating each element within a naturalistic framework, we may speak of divine air, diabolic fire, worldly-alpha water, and alpha-worldly earth, reserving, in each case, the possibility of a negative/positive option, as between negative air (wind) and positive air (oxygen); negative fire (raging flames) and positive fire (gentle flames); negative water (storm) and positive water (calm); negative earth (landslide, earthquake) and positive earth (soil). Moreover, I should like to draw attention to the connection between air and light, fire and heat, water and coldness, and earth and darkness, so that we can speak of an air/light vis-à-vis earth/darkness polarity on the one hand and of a fire/heat vis-à-vis water/coldness polarity on the other hand. Clearly, just as light and darkness are antithetical, so, by a like token, are heat and coldness. They are also adversaries locked-in to an age-old combat, with victory - as a rule temporary - going to the side with the highest ratio of whichever quantity/quality complement - whether air/light over earth/darkness or *vice versa*, and fire/heat over water/coldness or *vice versa*. Whether fire turns water to steam or water quenches fire will obviously depend upon the ratio of the one to the other, since these immoral polarities are, above all, the active adversaries, in contrast to the relatively more passive adversaries of air and earth, light and darkness, which passively oppose each other in their respective moral and amoral integrities.
8. In regard to artificial energy, however, the production of electricity may be regarded as paralleling our earth-water-fire-air distinctions according to whether it is produced via coal (conventional electricity), water (hydro-electricity), atomic fission (nuclear electricity), or air (turbo-electricity), with realistic, materialistic, naturalistic, and idealistic implications respectively. Thus the production of electricity through coal corresponds to worldly amorality; the production of electricity through water corresponds to worldly immorality; the production of electricity

through atomic fission corresponds to diabolic immorality; and, finally, the production of electricity through air or gas corresponds to divine morality. Consequently a realistic country like Britain should favour the first option; a materialistic country like the United States should favour the second option; a naturalistic country like Russia should favour the third option; and an idealistic country like Ireland should favour the fourth option. Hopefully, it will be the fourth option which ultimately prevails, as the world is gradually brought to divine criteria. Yet all energy production, whether natural or artificial, corresponds to the negative pole of any given spectrum (be it divine, diabolic, or worldly); for energy thrives on friction and therefore is inherently reactive. It is power, purely and simply. All the more reason why we should harness it sensibly and responsibly in the centuries to come!

9. As to the connection between air and light, which is not at first so apparent as the one between fire and heat, we have the experience of daylight to draw upon, since such light is only perceptible because of the air it travels through, which has the effect of 'highlighting' it. For without the atmosphere surrounding the earth, sunlight would no more be perceptible here than it is in interstellar space or, for that matter, on the surface of the moon, where the sun is just another star shining in the distance. It is because of this intimate connection between air and light that traditional meditation techniques like those associated with the *Tao te Ching* have stressed the importance of preliminary deep-breathing exercises; for an increased intake of oxygen into the blood will lead to an increase of consciousness, or spiritual light, in the mind, which is the *raison d'être* of meditation. On the other hand, such latter-day forms of meditation as eschew preliminary breathing exercises are simply indicative of spiritual decadence, being, in effect, wordless prayer rather than a dynamic meditational commitment, and may therefore be regarded as symptomatic of a Beckettian void, a Sartrean *neant*, a Schopenhaurian will-less passivity which finds its artistic parallel in much abstract art of the twentieth century.... Not that I am here implying that the West should adopt Taoism at the expense of Christianity or its decadent successor; for that would be a vain attempt to reverse time and seek to accommodate itself to oriental tradition. But I am convinced that when meditation is resurrected on a properly transcendentalist basis in the future, it will be far more dynamic than passive, if on artificial rather than naturalistic

terms, as relative to the use of industrially-produced oxygen, breathing masks, etc.

10. To distinguish between smiling with lips closed as positive Divine and smiling with lips parted as positive Diabolic, i.e. as Christic and Antichristic equivalents, by dint of the wavicle connotation of closed lips and the particle connotation of parted lips or, more specifically, the teeth which are exposed in consequence of a slightly open mouth, each tooth, whether upper or lower, implying a particle status. Thus an electron-wavicle equivalence in the former case and an electron-particle equivalence in the latter one. Divine and diabolic because of the head nature, or confinement to the face, of smiling, which, unlike laughing, doesn't involve the body. But if smiling is divisible in this way, then so is its opposite - namely, the condition of being 'down in the mouth', which is usually termed scowling, whether gloomily or angrily, depending on whether the lips are closed or parted, making a wavicle impression or creating a particle impression (through exposed teeth). In the one case a negative divine status commensurate with a proton-wavicle equivalence, in the other case a negative diabolic status commensurate with a proton-particle equivalence. Fatheristic and Satanic equivalents vis-à-vis the Christic and Antichristic equivalents discussed above.
11. With the world, however, the body is more involved and therefore worldly equivalents are less mental than bodily in character, whether in terms of crying or laughing. For crying is to laughing what scowling is to smiling - the alpha-stemming antithesis of an omega-oriented norm, a minus in contrast to a plus. Whether we then divide crying and laughing into materialistic and realistic alternatives, as between, say, loud crying and/or laughing on the one hand, and quiet crying and/or laughing on the other hand (with correspondingly disparate physical pressures on one or another part of the body, viz. neck or lungs, ribs or stomach), the fact nevertheless remains that crying corresponds to an alpha-stemming worldly equivalence and laughing to an omega-oriented one, in contrast to both scowling and smiling, whether diabolic or divine. Thus whereas these latter alternatives are inherently elitist, or the prerogative of 'heads', crying and laughing are inherently populist, and therefore more characteristic of 'bodies', or the mass man, with alpha and omega implications. Indeed, it could be argued that women are more partial to crying than men, since of a comparatively alpha-stemming disposition. However

that may be, neither worldly equivalent will be found, as a rule, among men of intellectual or spiritual distinction (Christ Himself is reputed never to have laughed), since, as 'heads', they relate more to either God or the Devil rather than to the world, which is generally beneath their pale. A laughing saint would be as incongruous as a smiling 'man of the world' (sinner), whether or not the latter parted his lips.

12. To conclude: let us therefore distinguish between: a) idealistic scowling and/or smiling (lips closed); b) naturalistic scowling and/or smiling (lips parted); c) materialistic crying and/or laughing (loud/heavy); d) realistic crying and/or laughing (soft/light); with the first and fourth moral and amoral respectively, but the second and third immoral, as in the sense that we formerly distinguished between divine morality, both negative (alpha stemming) and positive (omega orientated); diabolic immorality, both negative and positive; worldly-alpha and worldly-omega immorality; alpha-worldly and omega-worldly amorality. Although some men are fairly balanced between one or another of these three basic extremes, it cannot be said of all men; for evolutionary pressures are increasingly making for an omega-oriented one-sidedness, in which either laughing or smiling, depending on the type of man, is the preponderating norm - a norm which attests to an electron bias.