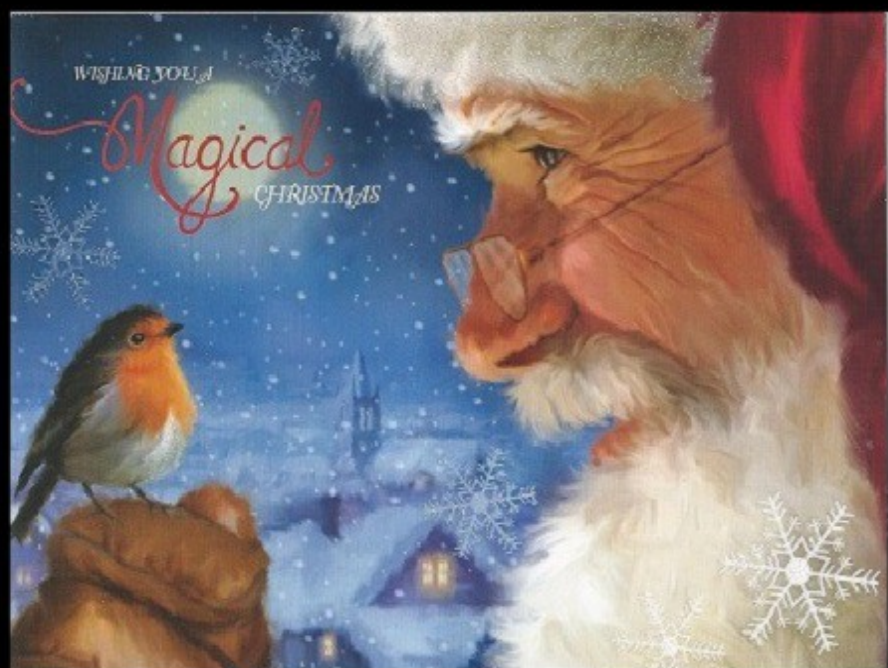


CHRISTMAS IN THE DOGHOUSE



John O'Loughlin

CHRISTMAS IN THE DOGHOUSE

Aphoristic Philosophy by
JOHN O'LOUGHLIN
Of Centretruths Digital Media

CDM Philosophy/Literature

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I

There are those of whom it could be said that he was less of a wolf in sheep's clothing than a hawk in the clothing of a dove.

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When a country turns away from religion, as from Roman Catholicism in the West, you end up with a situation, axially dominated by females, whereby women can do no wrong and men, by contrast, are adjudged to be the perpetrators of evil – the reverse, in actual fact, of a religious position characterized, as it will be, by male axial domination in church-hegemonic vein. Such, alas, has been the British situation for several centuries past – in fact, ever since the Reformation and the ensuing triumph of science over religion.

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I recall a neighbour, whom I had always regarded as a bit of an idiot, saying to me one day: “I don't believe women are any worse than men”. This neighbour was no Roman Catholic, nor even an Anglican or Nonconformist, but somebody who had been raised as a Jehovah Witness and, in secular repudiation of his upbringing, considered himself free of religious

superstition.

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Writing only when you get a worthwhile thought ... is the mark of a thinker, or philosopher. Writing for the sake of writing, on the other hand, is the mark of a ... writer who, as the literary equivalent of art for art's sake, may well be a novelist or even essayist. Like speaking, writing is on the female side of life, in contrast to both reading and thinking, those subjective modes of intellectual activity.

The actor speaks, the poet reads, the novelist writes, and the philosopher thinks ... at least in general terms, though this is not invariably the case. After all, the dramatist also writes, if principally for the speech of actors, while the poet necessarily has first to write what he subsequently reads aloud in public or even, if blessed with a good memory, recites to a captive audience. As a rule, speaking, writing, reading, and thinking are pretty interchangeable and interdependent, even if categorical generalizations are possible and – at least for the philosophical mind – logically inevitable!

Generally speaking, the dramatist writes to have his words spoken, the poet writes to have his words scanned or memorized, the novelist writes to have his words read, and the philosopher writes to have his ideas pondered, or thought about.

Scientists tell us that before 'the Universe', i.e., the Cosmos, was formed, even before the so-called 'Big Bang', there was a struggle between matter and anti-matter, elements and anti-elements, the one with a negative charge and the other charged positively, each of which, when they came into contact, as they were bound to, cancelled the other out. Sounds to me suspiciously like some rudimentary equivalent of gender, with opposite charges in conflict and tending, when collisions occur, to cancel one another out in terms of the resulting offspring, which combine aspects or elements of both within one or the other gender. For it seems to me that the struggle between 'matter' and 'anti-matter', as the scientists call it, doesn't stop with the 'Big Bang' and subsequent emergence of 'the Universe', but continues, after a fashion, to this day, not least in the guise of gender differentiation and the conflict of what is incompatible.

If 'matter' corresponds to electrons, as the scientists have suggested, then it could be argued that, in the mutually annihilating struggle between 'matter' and 'anti-matter' that apparently preceded 'the Universe', the former would correspond to what was proto-female and the latter to what was proto-male, since I have always been led to understand that electrons bear a negative charge,

like women, who are effectively more vacuum than plenum and, hence, more objective than subjective.

Also, this distinction between 'matter' and 'anti-matter' suggests to me the rudiments of that between 'soma' and 'psyche', body and mind, which, to me, would have gender connotations in which 'matter' correlated with 'soma' and 'anti-matter' with 'psyche', though obviously on terms that have little in common with the subsequent development of 'soma' and 'psyche' in relation to the ensuing gender struggles between females and males, with the vacuous objectivity, ever expressive, of the one, and the plenum-like (or 'plenumous') subjectivity, ever impressive, of the other, corresponding, in my estimation, to negative and positive charges, the ethereal will and corporeal spirit of the former ever warring upon the corporeal ego and ethereal soul of the latter, with will against soul (ethereal) and spirit against ego (corporeal), so that one can infer a kind of class distinction between the upper planes of will and soul, corresponding to metachemistry and metaphysics, and the lower planes of spirit and ego, corresponding to chemistry and physics, as between space and time on the one hand and volume and mass on the other.

If the war by the objective upon the subjective is successful, one finds space and pseudo-time (noumenal) and volume and pseudo-mass (phenomenal). If, however, it is unsuccessful, presumably because of a greater degree of subjectivity than objectivity can conquer, then the results will be either time and pseudo-

space (noumenal) or mass and pseudo-volume (phenomenal) depending, as it were, upon the class context or elemental plane. But in axial terms time and pseudo-space will be polar to volume and pseudo-mass, with a strict gender polarity (male) between time and pseudo-mass in the one case and a like gender polarity (female) between pseudo-space and volume in the other case in relation to what can be described as church-hegemonic/state-subordinate axial criteria, the very antithesis of the polarity of space and pseudo-time to mass and pseudo-volume, with a strict gender polarity (female) between space and pseudo-volume in the one case and a similar polarity (male) between pseudo-time and mass in the other case in relation to state-hegemonic/church-subordinate axial criteria. For such axes, being diagonal, contrast noumenal sensibility/pseudo-sensuality with phenomenal sensuality/pseudo-sensibility on the one hand, that of the church-hegemonic, and noumenal sensuality/pseudo-sensibility with phenomenal sensibility/pseudo-sensuality on the other hand, that of the state-hegemonic, and remain mutually incompatible.

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It may be an uncomfortable fact, if not exactly a painful truth, that life is a consequence of sex, and sex can be reduced – can it not? – to the female's need to reproduce in order both to justify the menstrual and other inconveniences that come with a vacuum, or womb-like vacuous disposition, and to acquire, as a temporary

solution to and even reprieve from this, a surrogate plenum in the guise of offspring. Sex, in short, boils down to women, who are the bearers of children and, hence, the means whereby living matter (though not necessarily materialism) is perpetuated.

3

Outrageousness is an artist's prerogative, a protest against the herd-like mediocrity of the generality, who do not like to make decisions for themselves and become too individualistic, since for them sanity is objective or, in the male (actually pseudo-male) case, conditioned by objectivity to a degree which precludes anything approaching the subjectivity of the artist.

The artist as philosopher; outrageous from an academic point-of-view, since less dependent upon scholarship and more self-reliant.

In his struggle with mediocrity, the artist must constantly re-invent himself and, hence, the nature and practice of his art.

The artist is not only ahead of the people, he is effectively contrary to them, since he lives from within, whereas they live from without, dominated by others rather than thinking for themselves.

The artist is not merely once removed from the unthinking herd, like the thinking herd of the bourgeoisie, nor even twice removed from it, like the unthinking individual (more likely an autocrat), but effectively thrice removed from it as a thinking individual whose thoughts, or capacity for thinking, can prove especially alarming to those, including individuals, or individualized persons, who don't think. One recalls the expression 'cat amongst the pigeons' with a degree of ironic resignation in view of the kind of effect one's thoughts or thinking processes can have on those in the neighbourhood or social vicinity who don't think and are so seemingly allergic to thinking, so sensitive to the occurrence of thought in others, as to be inclined to react, in what may often be a censoriously thumping manner, against anyone who does think, thereby intending to combat and, if possible, preclude or at least inhibit it from a standpoint rooted in objectivity.

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That man who cannot extricate himself from the masses will be sucked down by them, as by a swamp of human quicksand. That man who cannot extricate himself from the masses, even as physically he lives amongst them, will never become an artist, but simply remain or become the opposite of one, namely an apologist of social conformity through female domination, whether from the standpoints of science or of politics.

The concept of “people's artist” is a blatant contradiction in terms, since absolutely failing to do justice to the nature of art, which is anything but populist or sensationalist, never mind proletarian. One can be an artiste in relation to popular culture, but never an artist! For subjective individualism leads, inevitably, towards metaphysics, and hence away from the people in the transcendence of 'the world' of physical and chemical (not to mention subordinately pseudo-chemical and pseudo-physical) norms.

Even metachemistry, being objectively individualist in character, would fail to meet the requirements of art, which is not only 'high' but antithetical to science and, hence, the empirical view of the world which tends to its domination, not, manifestly not, to its transcendence!

An age dominated by science, as by various manifestations of metachemical autocracy, will necessarily be inimical to art, as to metaphysics and inner values generally. But so, for that matter, will ages or societies characterized by the predominance of chemistry or the preponderance of physics, if in opposite ways; that is, less in respect of science than, more mundanely, of politics or economics.

The artist who is in any degree genuine, or metaphysical, in ages dominated by metachemistry, chemistry, or physics (if not all three, in varying degrees, together), will be a pariah, an outsider if not outcast whose work, having religious connotations, will be slighted and spurned by those for whom science, politics, or

economics is their *raison d'être* and criterion by which life is evaluated and effectively understood. But the artist who, fearing his work will be misunderstood or shunned, 'sells out' – presuming, as I am, that he was not a sham to begin with and therefore unaware of his position – to one or another of the prevailing ungodly tendencies is, in truth, no artist at all but, at best, an artiste and, at worst, a dilettante or fake, whose 'art' will be little more than propaganda in the service of externals.

The painful truth is that, in an age when the inner values of religion are no longer in vogue (metaphysically limited to bound soma at the expense of free psyche as those inner values may traditionally have been), most people can get on perfectly well without art and, thus, artists, not least when they take the form of the philosopher-artist, the self-appointed freelance theoretician who is anathema even to so-called academic philosophers, meaning those PhDs who are accounted 'chairs' and more usually given to some 'bovaryzation' of philosophy not incompatible with a scientific, political, or economic turn-of-mind within civilized frameworks long beholden to 'false gods', the kinds of 'gods' that Nietzsche, himself a freelancer, railed against with such phlegmatic distinction. And did so, moreover, as a philosopher-artist, or philosophical artist, not as an artist-philosopher, a mere artistic philosopher whose books are rarely if ever entirely free of scholarly references, but tend, rather, to derive from other books to the detriment of original thought.

Ordinarily in the world there is so much objective pressure brought to bear on subjectivity that it is nothing short of miraculous that subjectivity can survive at all, never mind flourish in the guise of the artist.

Life appears determined to thwart 'transvaluations', 'rebirths', 're-evaluations', and other endeavours to 'turn the tables' on the objective status quo from a subjective