

# **FLOPSIDED CONVERSATIONS**



**Collected Dialogues Vol.2**

**JOHN O'LOUGHLIN**

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Collected Dialogues Vol.2 by

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## PREFACE

The ironically entitled *Flopsided Conversations* is intended as a kind of sequel to *Lopsided Conversations* (1976–82), insofar as that was Volume 1 and this is Volume 2 of my ‘collected dialogues’ and, like its predecessor, it reflects a concern with metaphysical speculation and religious instruction that overlaps with the ideological philosophy of Social Transcendentalism in a number of respects, being a comparatively early manifestation of the philosophy that was to become increasingly metaphysical, and therefore aphoristic, in the course of time.

This volume is derived from four prior publications, starting with *Future Transformations* and progressing, via *Post-Atomic Perspectives* and *The Will to Truth*, to *Social Transcendentalism*, my first stated articulation of the philosophy that was to preoccupy me long after I had abandoned these dialogues, dating from 1982–4, for more elevated structures with which to express my developing concern with metaphysics and all things or, rather, no-things godly.

No such structures, meaning principally aphorisms, are discernible here, but this is nonetheless beyond the material contained in the aforementioned *Lopsided Conversations*, including the aphoristic appendix, and should only be broached after one has sufficiently

familiarized oneself with its contents to wish to proceed deeper into the roots of the philosophy in question, and therefore acquire the foundations with which to climb beyond dialogues to the aphoristic heights of metaphysics proper.

John O'Loughlin, London 2007 (Revised 2022)

## *A CHANGING WORLD*

DONALD: I have always been puzzled by the uncertainty that exists – and has long existed – in philosophical -orientated circles about the extent to which external reality is actually there, outside ourselves, and the extent to which our appreciation of it is conditioned by consciousness – in other words, about the extent to which objective reality is really objective and not partly a creation of our subjective minds.

MATTHEW: You have good reason to be puzzled about this matter, since it isn't one that permits of a straightforward, eternally unchangeable answer. Rather, one has to answer it provisionally by saying that the respective ingredients in the determination of objective/subjective reality will vary according to the evolutionary position of the psyche in any given age, so that no fixed ratio of objective to subjective is possible.

DONALD: You therefore agree that our awareness of the external world is partly conditioned by consciousness.

MATTHEW: Of course! Reality isn't just 'out there'. It is also in the mind, and consequently external reality depends, to a certain extent, on the applicability of this mind for its elucidation – as, indeed, philosophers have known for quite some time! And not only philosophers but also scientists, who, like Konrad Lorenz, would never dream of completely detaching external reality from the internal world.

DONALD: Yet the doubt apparently lies with the extent to which the one conditions or is conditioned by the other?

MATTHEW: Yes, and not altogether surprisingly since, as already remarked, the extent varies from age to age, as from individual to individual. Let me attempt to clarify this point by dividing the history of the human psyche into three distinct stages, viz. a pre-dualistic, a dualistic, and a post-dualistic. The psyche, it should be remembered, is divisible into a subconscious and a superconscious mind, with consciousness being the product of a fusion of these two minds in the ego, or in-between realm of the psyche. If you accept this proposition, we can continue.

DONALD: I think I can accept it.

MATTHEW: Good! Now the first, or pre-dualistic stage will be one in which the subconscious predominates over the superconscious in the ratio of approximately 3:1, since at that juncture in time man is dominated by nature and insufficiently civilized, in consequence, to lead an independent spiritual existence beyond it. The ego, or conscious mind, of pagan man will therefore be relatively dark, as befits the psychic ratio just described, and, accordingly, the ratio of the external objective world to the internal subjective one will also be in the region of 3:1, which is to say, his consciousness of the external world will be very little affected by internal subjective reality, since that reality will be insufficiently evolved to colour or condition it to any significant extent. Rather, the subconsciously-orientated objective psyche will cause him to invest nature with hidden and



usually malevolent powers, including demons. But the external world will appear to him basically as it is – a materialistic world at no great remove from himself.

DONALD: Hence we get animism or pantheism at this primitive stage of evolution?

MATTHEW: Precisely! But the next, or dualistic, stage reflects a psyche more-or-less balanced between the subconscious and the superconscious, in which consciousness comes to reflect a kind of twilight state and, by dint of environmental progress away from nature, man is in a position to distinguish between the mundane world and a transcendent one separate from it, which he invests with supernatural and usually benevolent powers, including angels. Now because the ratio of subconscious to superconscious mind is approximately 2:2, it follows that the external objective world will be conditioned by the internal subjective one to a greater extent than formerly, so that man inclines to distinguish himself from nature (to the extent that he previously identified with it) and thereby ceases to fear it.

DONALD: Thus the demons or whatever that formerly infested nature are transformed into angels and other benevolent powers who belong to a separate transcendent realm, as determined by the growth of superconscious mind?

MATTHEW: Yes, though not entirely! For some malevolent powers are still associated with nature, in accordance with the dualistic criteria of this stage of partly subjective psychic evolution. But, fortunately, human progress in the face of nature eventually leads to

a situation, such as we find today, in which the superconscious is getting the upper-hand over the subconscious and a psychic ratio emerges which is the converse of the pre-dualistic one. In this post-dualistic age, the ego of transcendental man is relatively light, reflecting three times as much superconscious as subconscious influence, and so the external world is accordingly coloured by the internal one to a greater extent than ever before, which makes for a complete reversal of pagan criteria in an assessment of nature and matter in terms of the transcendent rather than the mundane, the divine rather than the diabolic. Indeed, we cannot now speak of an external objective world and of an internal objective one, as formerly, but are obliged to reverse the qualities of these worlds in response to the superconsciously-biased subjective nature of the modern psyche. Hence it is the external world that becomes subjective and the internal one that is seen to represent the higher, truer reality of the spirit. What we see outside ourselves is conditioned by our transcendent psyche to a greater extent than ever before, becoming, in the course of time, but pale abstractions of palpable materiality, which are to be explained away in terms of mystical generalizations stemming from our internal subjectivity. For instead of being brute matter now, nature must conform to our spiritual bias and display a similarly-biased constitution. To make it do this or, at any rate, appear to do this ... we invent machines like the Bubble Chamber and ideas such as the quantum theory, which goad nature into conforming, seemingly, to our wishes. A people without a spiritual bias would never

have got around to it. But we impose our bias on the external world as a matter of course, quite happy to deceive ourselves as to its actual nature. Thus from being a reality to which our ancestors applied idealistic theories involving demons and evil spirits, nature has become a repository for an idealism abstracted from the higher reality of our superconsciously-biased psyche.

Where, formerly, we abstracted from materialistic objectivity, we now abstract from spiritualistic subjectivity, and accordingly bend nature to our desires. To speak of an objective internal world now would be an anachronism or, at best, a partial truth applying to that part of the psyche which conforms to the subconscious. Consequently there is no justification for our using the expression 'objective' vis-à-vis the internal world. For now it is the external, traditionally objective world which becomes subjective reality for us, and it does so because the subjective reality of the post-egocentric psyche stands to it in the ratio of approximately 3:1, making our interpretations of it correspondingly biased on the side of internal subjective reality, which is to say, on the side of mysticism ... with a spiritualistic integrity.

It is as though, at some propitious future occasion, matter will dissolve altogether if only we stare at it long enough from our superconsciously-biased psyche. But, in reality, matter hasn't changed one iota since our distant ancestors encountered it under pressure of subconscious, objective domination and invested it with demonic powers. Only we have changed and so drawn away from it, in accordance with evolutionary progress. DONALD: This is incredible! Are you really saying that

the external world isn't literally what our foremost scientists would have us believe?

MATTHEW: Absolutely! And I am saying this *in camera*, to the chosen few who can be trusted to appreciate and respect the fact. Not for a moment would I wish things to be any different – don't think otherwise! But I am too much a man of truth to be wholly satisfied with the relative 'truths' of scientific idealism. I can now see why they should exist and am thus in a better position to uphold them. For it is no good imagining that a return can be made to scientific realism in the objective spirit of Newtonian man. The age necessarily belongs to Einstein and must continue to do so in the future, whatever the extremism of scientific subjectivity may happen to be and, needless to say, irrespective of any Marxist materialist opposition in the short term. For the psyche cannot now be expected to regress to a predominantly objective status, but must continue to grow ever more subjective as the superconscious is developed further.

DONALD: And thus we must oppose purely materialist interpretations of the external world which, though literal, are obsolescent from a transcendent standpoint?

MATTHEW: Indeed, and which, if upheld, would constitute a grave obstacle to our spiritual aspirations. But, of course, such materialistic interpretations can only be upheld in a materialist state where, under Marxist-Leninist influence, transcendentalism is supposed not to exist. Hence in the former Soviet Union, traditionally, it wasn't so much curved space ... as force and mass that explained the workings of the Solar System from an

orthodox, or Newtonian, point-of-view. Perfectly correct, of course, from an objective angle, but on a lower evolutionary plane than the Einsteinian subjectivity which was to characterize Western science in the twentieth century. Yet such subjectivity is only relevant to a society that to some extent acknowledges transcendentalism, not to one that outlaws it. In other words, such subjectivity is relevant to civilization, which is politics plus religion, not just politics! More specifically, it is relevant to the transitional (dualistic/post-dualistic) civilization which the leading Western countries, including America and Germany, signify. That there will be a final, or post-dualistic, civilization in the future, I haven't the slightest doubt, and when it comes you can be certain that scientific subjectivity will be pushed to the limit, as it abstracts from the higher subjectivity of the transcendent psyche. We haven't seen the last of materialistic idealism yet, believe me!

DONALD: But, presumably, we *have* seen the last of spiritualistic idealism, the religious idealism of our ancestors, who were under subconscious domination to an extent which made religious realism impossible.

MATTHEW: Yes, there can't be too many people left in the more-advanced parts of the world, these days, who believe everything recorded in the Bible, even though the Bible still officially prevails in the West. What might be defined as lower mysticism, in which objective interpretations of and abstractions from external reality apply, is increasingly being superseded by the higher, subjective mysticism which has conditioned the findings

of modern science. Religious objectivity isn't particularly influential in intellectual circles these days, whether scientific or literary.

DONALD: So you don't subscribe to the Fall of Man, which is essentially a pagan concept?

MATTHEW: No, although I do respect the doctrine of Original Sin, which is a Christian one. The Fall of Man, however, could only apply to a pre-dualistic context, in which a guilt complex exists as a consequence of the development from animal to man which evolutionary progress imposed upon man in the face of nature. With the advent of man, the close identification with nature, peculiar to the animal world, is lost, and so the distinction he then feels between nature and himself is interpreted as a fall – it being remembered that, at such an early stage of psychic evolution, the subconscious predominates ... with its naturalistic affiliation. To have fallen out of nature's bosom is regarded as more of a curse than a blessing, since pagan man lacked an evolutionary sense corresponding to the transcendent and, in consequence, could only regard his fate in terms of his immediate circumstances. Only with the advent of dualism was it possible for man to look towards the transcendent for his (future) salvation, rather than simply to regret that he had fallen out of nature. And in an incipiently post-dualistic age it should be obvious that man is on the rise towards the supernatural and therefore towards his transformation, in due course, into the Superman, as a life form one stage closer than man to the ultimate Oneness of the heavenly Beyond.

DONALD: And what of Original Sin?

MATTHEW: That is destined to be left behind with the future transformation of man. Not that I adopt an orthodox attitude to it, as if one should avoid sexual contact altogether. For, after all, it is only through sexual contact, resulting in propagation, that mankind survives and thereby evolves towards Heaven. If now, as formerly, sex is essentially an evil or sensual phenomenon it is nevertheless a necessary evil which has to be endured for the sake, above all, of evolutionary continuity. Life abounds in such necessary evils, and while the odd individual here and there is entitled, in his capacity of saint, to rebel against them to the extent he can, the majority of people must bow to them in the interests of survival. These days, however, the justification for sainthood is more fragile than at any former time in the history of civilized man. For whereas the majority of Christian saints firmly believed they would be rewarded for their mundane hardships in a transcendent afterlife, living as we do, in a more-advanced age, we lack this incentive and can only take a more realistic, down-to-earth attitude to salvation in consequence. Like it or not, salvation will only come about with spiritual transcendence at some more fortunate future age, not happen following death. And knowing this, we would be extremely foolish to starve ourselves of sensual needs for the mere sake of starvation. The Christian saints were at least wise enough to starve themselves or, more correctly, eat only the most frugal meals ... for an ulterior purpose, which is