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The Divinity of Man in the Philosophy of Osho

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I dedicate my work:

to my children,

*Maria Chiara
Angelo
Francesco
who are my wealth*

to my grandchildren,

*Andrea
Mattia
who are my joy*

*to Giancarlo,
my fellow wayfarer*

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Curriculum Vitae of Francesca Ceccato

Francesca Ceccato is a woman, a mother and a grandmother.

She is, by virtue of her vocation, studies and profession, a primary-school teacher. She is a student of the philosopher Parmenides and of Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh, Osho.

Parmenides was a philosopher from ancient Greece. He was the founder and leading force of the school of Elea (a Greek colony in ancient Lucania, now recognised as the municipality of Ascea/Salerno), and dealt with man and his nature. Man was regarded as immortal, unique and eternal.

In order to support his thesis, Parmenides related and described this reality as an imaginary journey towards the dwelling of Dike, goddess of Justice, who was to lead him to Truth and Wisdom.

His philosophic strength lies in the concept that “nothing is created from nothing and nothing can be destroyed into nothing”.

Parmenides, a rationalist philosopher, compared man (Being) to a perfect sphere, unchanging in both time and space, closed and complete. For the ancient Greeks, “completeness” meant perfection. Parmenides’s sphere is the only geometric solid that does not show any differences either inside or to the gaze, because it is identical no matter from where it is looked at. The validity of this theory was acknowledged even by Albert Einstein.

According to Parmenides, therefore, nothing can exist outside the Being (man, woman, person). So thought (which belongs to the Being) is the main road for catching the truth of the Being.

Osho (1931-1990), on the other hand, is practically a contemporary philosopher. He too dealt with man, his values and his capability to be immortal.

Among the many things he wrote and related, he said: “L'uomo libero è come una nuvola bianca. Una nuvola bianca è un mistero. Si lascia trasportare dal vento, non resiste, non lotta e si libra al di sopra di ogni cosa. Tutte le dimensioni e tutte le direzioni le appartengono. Le nuvole bianche non hanno una provenienza precisa e non hanno una meta; il loro semplice essere in questo momento è perfezione.”

In order to study the philosopher Osho and acquire knowledge about him, Francesca Ceccato travelled repeatedly to India and stayed in the Pune ashram, place of meditation and reference for Osho’s

philosophy. She also took part in several projects in Italy, in order to increase the study and dissemination of Osho's philosophy in this country.

With her thesis *La divinità dell'uomo nella filosofia di Osho*, she bore witness concretely to the worth of man in his divine nature (an element that was shared by the philosophy of Parmenides and that of Osho).

Osho's "white cloud" best represents and describes the nature of man the Being, his need for freedom and his capability to "soar above everything". This has always been in opposition to organised society, particularly the present-day one, where the aim is to regulate, foresee and arrange everything for people, preventing them from thinking and dealing with their own Being.

Francesca Ceccato has also co-edited a book, *La mezza età: un nuovo inizio*, Edizioni Del Cigno. A reading of old age in the light of Osho's philosophy.

She is the president and leading force of the association "Effetto Europa way", which deals with the dissemination of culture and philosophic education among people (<http://www.effettoeuropaway.it>).



Giuseppe Goisis

The supervisor of the graduation thesis *La divinità dell'uomo nella filosofia di Osho* is Professor **GIUSEPPE GOISIS**, professor of political philosophy at the Dipartimento di Filosofia e Beni Culturali of the University of Venice.

In the course of his university career, he has also been a tenured assistant professor of pedagogics. He has carried out all the teaching and research functions relative to the various university subjects: history of political philosophy, political philosophy, racism and recognition logic (specialistic), and politics and ethics (specialistic).

As regards his educational activity, in addition to his work in the field of philosophy, he has held courses on racism and recognition logic, and on international political philosophy.

Professor Giuseppe Goisis has analytically and methodically oriented his teaching to shedding light above all on the relationships between politics and concrete everyday life, encouraging the diligence of his students to aim at a greater depth and independence in their opinions: thus the centre of reflection and teaching was gradually determined under the standard of political education.

He is the author of a great number of publications, articles and essays on philosophy, including a book on the “political path of Antonio Rosmini”, an Italian patriot who is regarded as the greatest nineteenth-century philosopher.

Foreword

Osho is an Indian philosopher. He was much loved by his students, and great numbers of them followed his lessons.

Besides the fascination radiated by his person, it was his concept of freedom that enthralled first the students, then all the people, both young and old (always in great numbers), who went to listen to his public speeches. Speaking, writing about him, is the same as writing about life. And one can write about life only by living it.

His teaching is at once theoretic and practical, precisely because of the law of the “not two”, that helps us read life, interpret it.

It comes naturally to me to compare him to Socrates, who “*lived*” his philosophy, and by living it explained it, because he demonstrated it by accepting death for the sake of consistency, as Osho did too.

When we wish to speak about life, interpret it, describe it, there is no starting point that is clear-cut or the same for everybody. Because we are life, and *we* are our own starting point! Life cannot be unfolded, cannot be defined more than partly. Because it is infinite and constantly in flux. So is man: infinite in his flux.

One lives in infinity living in the here and now, that is in the finite, in the limited.

The journey begins when the information and the explanations we have found are no longer able to trace a continuous line or to contain the project we had outlined; when, in other words, we can no longer see any means of overcoming the obstacles we meet.

It is necessary to change our route. It is necessary to relinquish our original project; but it is also necessary to meet a *Master* who can guide us on our new route.

The Master shows us the goal we can attain while experiencing everyday life: the goal does not diverge from the various activities that fill up a day. On the contrary, it helps us interpret our activities and enhance their value.

The first value is the *freedom* that is experienced, because man was born free and longs for freedom. Freedom in fully accepting what each of us is. Osho explains that

each of us, in his spiritual part, which is equated with the soul, is God. Osho has asserted, demonstrated the divinity of man. And for his essence man does not need symbols, rites, ceremonies... he does not need anything outward to reach his "inward". Emphasising the outward means not acknowledging the divine essence of man, his capability to be independent, to be responsible for his own life, and to have within himself (not outside) the potential he needs.

To attain this goal, man must eliminate the unnecessaries, constituted above all by the distorted mental picture of himself acquired since childhood, and by the suffering that is involved in it and has been justified in a manner that has led him even farther away from himself and his divinity.

Osho has given us directions for breaking out of this ordeal, out of the intricate web that all of us unconsciously create around ourselves and build around other people in order to defend ourselves and acquire the space we consider indispensable. The parable he has given us to simplify this concept is that each of us is a part of existence, like the drops that form the ocean. Each drop has its own life, but it finds its nourishment and reason for existence together with the other drops that form the ocean.

This awareness of being a soul (God) is the ground in which the concept of freedom takes root. Freedom to be what we are. This is the outlook in which the path to be followed takes shape.

Society is not based on this outlook: it has developed, on the contrary, by promoting everything that guarantees financial security, personal safety and survival, if necessary exploiting other people's lives, because one does not trust one's own life.

To this we must also add the outlook of the monotheistic religions that proclaim that man is a wretched sinner, subject and victim of his own weakness. For this reason, man must totally place his trust in a God who is powerful, rather than loving.

The concept that one's freedom ends where other people's freedom begins should be overcome. The reason for this is that the sphere in which freedom must be exerted, in Osho's view, is entirely within man: it is man himself who must gain the freedom to be what he already is – we might add, in Kant's words, to be what he potentially is.

The path for attaining the goal of being what one already is has a double track (the “not two” that will be discussed later): a) behaving like God, and b) overcoming the obstacles that arise as a result of this behaviour. That is, overcoming the deeply ingrained human belief that one is limited.

How did Osho reach the awareness of being God?

Through his enlightenment.

In what does enlightenment consist?

It may be regarded as close to the concept of “canonisation” that is typical of Christian saints.

The existence of the spiritual part of man represented by the *soul* is indubitable. And the soul craves to live on a level that belongs to it – that cannot be impaired by what is not enduring or eternal. Indeed, the soul is identical to eternity. And to everything that is not corruptible. This is what man longs for.

With Osho, who belonged to the culture of India, there is a reappearance of the group of “disciples” that characterised the ancient philosophers’ “court”, where the consistency of one’s life was the reliable proof of the soundness of the philosophic teaching of one’s “*Master-philosopher*”.

It is not easy for us, who belong to the Western, “Parmenidean” culture, to comply with the exhortation to take care of our own soul without constantly connecting it to the need to rationally demonstrate what we are asserting.

So can we lend consistency to our emotions, which, as such, reside in our soul?

Emotion and rationality may appear to be antithetic to each other, so much so that in the West rationality prevails over emotions, and the latter are disregarded in philosophy, because there is the need for the demonstration “Existence is...”. And it is a tangible demonstration, that Parmenides had to supply to those who checked his proceedings as an “infidel” in relation to the religious feelings of his time.

This inflexible approach is still the heritage to which Westerners cling for lending a basis to any philosophical belief. It is “labour” to be carried out by a chosen few.

The upheaval caused by Osho’s “existential” philosophy consists in this: being “elected” depends on each individual’s choice, because capability lies in the divinity

that is present in each man.

Since man lives immersed in conditioning (which is against his nature), just like a fish in water, Osho's task was difficult and dangerous, because the fact that he preached *deconditioning* was seen as an attempt to dry up the sea, leading to the death of the fish.

The tragic aspect, or the mystery, consists in man's capability (or weakness) to believe that his happiness resides in living in a struggle against his own nature and feeling guilty when he is not able to do it.

In Osho we see personal involvement, personal risk, and the display of his life, because he does not offer intellectual reasoning, but existential reality.

Creation is the expression of God, because God is in creation. Man, in his soul-God spiritual part, is its highest expression, and his capability to evolve constantly is the constant manifestation of God. In front of which there is the "wonder" of the philosophical soul.

What prevents us from living like God? But what do we know about how God lives? And how can we imagine God outside creation?

Plants and animals live like God, because they cannot help being faithful to what they are potentially in their being: they have no choice and do not want anything beyond what they are already. (A plant is a realised seed: what more could it want?) Not so for men! At least until they become aware of being God themselves in their spiritual part, the soul.

Perhaps it is difficult, if not impossible, for man to awaken to this reality of his. The culture of appearance, and the invention, by religious exponents, of rules and laws that spring from limited interpretations of the culture and tradition in force during that period, make it impossible to take this reality into consideration.

This was possible, on the contrary, for Osho in India, because there are no monotheistic religions there. But when consistency led him to explain that man should be accepted unconditionally, including his sexual reality, a boundary arose. On one side there were those who felt they had been freed from oppressive conditioning, on the other those who distanced themselves and created obstacles by means of various sorts of reports to the authorities.

Meditation, which has been practised in India since a distant past, appears to be the only possible remedy on which Osho counts in order to enable everyone to reach, on his own, the conclusion that is best for him. Yes, because everyone is his own teacher. And to meditate means to understand; to understand the truth about us; to give an identity to knowledge and to humanise it, thus getting in touch with our soul and with our thoughts as an expression of our soul. And to make thought concrete is to humanise it and to lend it substance.

Meditating is being with ourselves, on the basis of the surmise that we can trust ourselves, because in our soul we are God.

With meditation we thus get to the point of exploring our deepest part, through which we can sense our divine, eternal being.

Chapter 1 - India

1.1 – The context

« L'India non appartiene solo alla geografia o alla storia. Non è solo una nazione, un paese, un semplice pezzo di terra. È qualcosa di più: è una metafora, è una poesia, è qualcosa di invisibile, ma di molto tangibile. Vibra con campi energetici particolari che nessun'altra nazione può rivendicare. Qui, per diecimila anni migliaia di persone hanno raggiunto la suprema esplosione della consapevolezza: le loro vibrazioni sono ancora vive, il loro impatto è ancora presente nell'aria; devi solo avere una particolare capacità di percezione, una precisa ricettività per cogliere la sfera invisibile che circonda questa strana terra. »¹

India is strange, because it has given up everything, with a view to a single quest: the quest for truth.

Surprisingly, India has not produced great philosophers... Throughout its history not a single philosopher has emerged, yet an immense number of people have pursued the truth!

Undoubtedly their pursuit was quite different from the one carried out in other countries: elsewhere people thought about truth; in India people did not think about it... just as light can be seen but cannot be thought about, truth can be seen but cannot be thought about; this is why in India there is no word that resembles the word “philosophy”. Philosophy means thinking, and thought is circular: it goes round in circles, and never involves direct testing.

This country has never been interested in an objective research: here the goal has always been not the knowledge of otherness, but the knowledge of oneself. This is perhaps the only country that has been deeply interested only in the evolution of awareness. India has had a single purpose, a single goal: developing the awareness of man to the point where he meets the divine; bringing the human closer to the divine.

¹ OSHO, *India, un amore. Un viaggio spirituale nella terra dei Buddha*, Edizioni Cerchio della Luna, 2006.

² T. TERZANI, *Un altro giro di giostra*, Edizioni TEA, 2012.

It may be useful, in order to attempt a description of Indian spirituality, to quote what Tiziano Terzani wrote about India² as a prologue to his long journey into the Indian mystical dimension, whose ostensible purpose was to look for remedies for his mortal disease (cancer).

Terzani's journey came to an end at the feet of Himalaya, where he met a wise old man who had always lived there, without ever leaving that place. When Terzani asked for his help, the sage told him, in a peremptory but loving manner, that "the real guru is the one who is inside you. Everything is here (*turning towards Terzani and pressing his fingers on his chest, editor's note*). Do not search outside yourself. All you can find outside is intrinsically changeable, temporary. The only stability that can really help you is the inward one".

Osho asserts that all over the world people talk about God, but God has always been something remote, beyond the stars. Only India has stated that God is within man. And, by understanding that God is within man, only India has given man the capability, dignity and beauty of becoming, in himself, a temple, a sanctuary.

It is no coincidence that whenever someone thirsts for the truth, he is suddenly seized with interest in India and suddenly sets out towards the East. This is not a phenomenon of modern times: it is as old as mankind. Twenty-five centuries ago, Pythagoras travelled to India in quest of truth. Jesus Christ, too, went there for the same reason.

Terzani himself³, in order to give evidence to his readers and lend strength to his quest, makes a point of describing how Indians experience their country and their life.

« [...] Chi ama l'India lo sa. Non si sa esattamente perché la si ama. È sporca, è povera, è infetta; a volte è ladra e bugiarda, spesso maleodorante, corrotta, impietosa e indifferente. Eppure, una volta incontrata non se ne può fare a meno. Si soffre a starne lontani. Ma così è l'amore: istintivo, inspiegabile, disinteressato [...]. In nessun altro posto la contrapposizione degli opposti – bellezza e mostruosità, ricchezza e povertà – è così drammatica, così sfacciata come in India. Ma è stata proprio questa visione dell'inevitabile dualità dell'esistenza che spinge i rischi

³ Ibidem.

(cantori ispirati) a cercarne il significato recondito, che ancora oggi sembra agire come un catalizzatore spirituale in chi ci si avventura.

Basta metterci piede, in India, per provare questo mutamento. Innanzitutto ci si sente più in pace. Con se stessi e con il mondo. Io in India non avevo più bisogno di 'rimedi' per sentirmi in pari, per avere il mio, altrimenti instabile, caleidoscopio fisso su un colore piacevole. Il 'rimedio' era tutto intorno. In niente di specifico, ma in ogni dettaglio [...]. In India niente può essere dato per scontato: una linea telefonica è quasi sempre muta; l'elettricità manca per ore e ore; il fax si guasta in continuazione a causa degli sbalzi di tensione, e l'acqua può venire a scroscio nell'orinatoio pubblico davanti a casa, perché qualcuno si è portato via il rubinetto di plastica, e mancare così per giorni in tutti gli appartamenti. Ma in India ci si adatta, si accetta, e presto si entra in quella logica per cui niente è davvero drammatico, niente è terribilmente importante. In fondo tutto è già avvenuto, in maniera simile, tante altre volte prima e si sa che avverrà infinitamente volte dopo. L'India resta se stessa, e a suo modo questo è acquietante. L'India ti fa sentire semplicemente umano, naturalmente mortale; ti fa capire che sei una delle tante comparse in un grande, assurdo spettacolo di cui solo noi occidentali pensiamo di essere i registi e di poter decidere come va a finire. »

Osho, also known as Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh, could never have existed in the West.⁴ In India he did!

For thousands and thousands of years, in India and all over the East, religion existed as a deep science, and the exploration technique did not use laboratories, but meditation. While Western science practically completed the study of our planet and subsequently came out into space, bringing man on the moon and reaching even further out with its research, Eastern science was investigating beyond the mind, descending into the inward space of man and of his being. Western scientists have reached the moon, but the sun, the real centre, is still very distant. On the contrary, a long time ago, Eastern scientists reached the inward sun, enlightenment – *samadhi*, *sat-chit-ananda*, *nirvana* – the supreme state of cosmic awareness.

Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh (Osho) is enlightened. He is an Eastern scientist who has reached the inward sun. He is on the same level as that reached by Jesus and

⁴ OSHO, *La mia via - La Via delle Nuvole Bianche*, Edizioni Mediterranee, 1986.

Buddha: he is a “Godman”, as the Indian press put it, inventing this English word to present India’s great spiritual leaders.

Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh, too, is a Master. Like Buddha, who founded a religion in this land 2,500 years ago, Bhagwan established his own spiritual path that leads to enlightenment. And like Buddha, he devoted his life to helping people walk on the path he had traced and illuminated.

India is not a stretch of land, nor a political entity, nor a part of a sequence of historical events. It is not a crazy pursuit of money, power and prestige. India is an aspiration, the longing to attain truth – the truth that dwells in each throb of ours, that lies dormant under the level of our awareness, that belongs to us, but has been forgotten by us. Remembering it, claiming it: that is what India is about.⁵

1.2 Spirituality in India and my experiences

Why spirituality in India?

And why does India identify with spirituality?

One of the reasons lies in the main aspect, i.e. not owning things, so it was easy to practice it, since Indians did not own anything; and, vice versa, in the development of the creative part that requires, precisely, “non-possession”. Thus a great, not univocal, religiousness and spirituality was born.

Therefore it is easy to meet spiritual masters in India.

The earliest one, for me, was *Baba Bedy* (the name “*Baba*” is equivalent to “father”). He was an Indian, lived in Italy, and had Italian followers, to whom he had given and taught the instruments for healing the body and the mind, precisely on the basis of the “not two” principle explained in this work.

What fascinated me, through his instruments, was discovering the importance of the body for spiritual health and vice versa. In other words, discovering the commonality between physical and spiritual wellbeing in people made me feel confident, because it means that my wellbeing is in my hands.

This also explains the Indian people’s profound knowledge of the human body and of what exists in nature, both for preserving health and, in specific instances, for

⁵ OSHO, *India, un amore. Un viaggio spirituale nella terra dei Buddha*, cit.

healing diseases. Since body and mind are not two separate entities, all problems are psychosomatic: each problem must be tackled by working simultaneously on both sides. All this is present in Ayurvedic medicine, which is typical of Indian culture.

This medicine treats the spirit through the body.

Another experience of mine took place with *Say Baba* in his *ashram*, the place where his disciples (*sannyasins*) can meet and live near their Master. In this place, I found the simplicity and essence of existence. There were order, cleanliness, peace, and respect for other people.

It was a haven, in comparison both with the teeming of people, vendors and animals outside, and with the entirely Western questions I was carrying inside me.

It was like coming back to my childhood and youth; it was finding replies to questions and receiving confirmations of the existential conclusions I had reached at the age of fifty.

Having accepted this new philosophy, and as a result of it, I arrived, shortly afterwards, to *Osho's Commune*, which enabled me to make great progress in finding the responses to my existential needs. At last I had found the confirmation of my outlook on life, with all its diversified appendages; a mode I believed existed only in my unattainable wishes. On the contrary, I fulfilled and discovered needs and wishes I didn't even know I had.

What captivated and overwhelmed me was the fulfilment, the love that radiated from his person.

I was going through a period in which I was looking for the meaning of life, of my life. And I found it when I met Osho in his Commune, where it was easy for me to live without any superstructures, but in quest of my own "structure". And to understand, by experiencing it, that this was possible.

For me, meeting Osho (through videos, recorded speeches, books, his disciples and the entire experience of living in a commune) was meeting the person who was able to respond to my expectations of a life that was true because it was gratifying. There was no need to understand his words: just looking at him was enough, since it was his face, his person that spoke and transmitted the completeness of life.

I subsequently had the chance to visit some places that are typical and significant for the inborn spirituality of the Indian people, such as the caves of Ajanta and Ellora. They are a sequence of thirty to thirty-five great caves that have been dug in the mountain, and each of them has its own beauty. In my opinion they convey, “visually” and energetically, the colour of Indian spirituality, deposited with time in the places where the faithful and the devotees went to pray and meditate.

The atmosphere was rather like that of Western convents, because there were some cells that had been dug in the rock and in the past had been the dwelling of the guardians of each small temple.

At the entrance of the temples, in the space for shared devotion, there were statues of the various Buddhas: people who had attained *samadhi*, that is completeness and fulfilment. This was confirmed by their expression, at once contented and spiritual.

They depicted man, woman and child (family), also surrounded by the products of the earth: mankind was represented in its highest level of fulfilment.

In India there are many majestic sculptures, beautiful statues of men and women, whose purpose is meditation: the expression of their faces and their posture shows this very clearly.

« Basta guardare una statua del Buddha per avvertire serenità dentro noi stessi: la proporzione del Buddha, il corpo, la sua postura, il modo in cui è seduto, gli occhi semichiusi... Siediti tranquillamente, in silenzio, osserva quella statua e comincerai a cadere nel silenzio... »

I visited other temples in Khajuraho, where a great number (at least a hundred) of little round buildings like churches had been built in a vast meadow. In the past, these temples had been buried under small mud hills, then they had emerged. In this immense space there was an almost heavenly atmosphere of peace, due to the spiritual energy that had accumulated there with time.

The outside of the temples is covered with bas-reliefs that illustrate the various *tantric* (sexual) positions and expressions. For us Westerners it is unusual to see images of this sort in a religious context.

The purpose of these statues was not to satisfy repressed sexuality: on the contrary they were used as a tantric method to liberate sexuality, and meditating on them was

enough. The method consisted simply in sitting in silence. When the external images stopped conveying anything – not before – one could enter the temple. There the sexual images are less and less, and the physical love illustrated by the statues begins to change. There are still deeply amorous couples gazing into each other's eyes, holding hands or embracing, but there is no more sex. As we draw near the heart of the temple, there are no more images: the repository of the temple is empty. "The heart is meditation, the outside is sex": this is the representation of the entire human life according to the oriental outlook.

Chapter 2 – The divinity of man: truth, reality and freedom

Man has always needed a spiritual guide to take care of him.

He realised, in his everyday life, that he was not able to look after his own needs by himself. On the other hand, he noticed that there were inequalities in treatment, status and behaviour between individuals and within mankind.

A large part of his life was an unknown quantity, beyond his capability and knowledge (birth, death, grief, illness).

Hence the need to have someone stronger than him who could deal with this unknown part of his life that made him feel powerless.

This gave rise to the development of various deities and "practical", "concrete" gods. They are images, specific entities, bound to the everyday life of people and identified with it (the god of fire, of beauty, of hunting, of love...).

The rites were of a pagan nature, and were accompanied by concrete sacrifices for obtaining the gods' intercession. This behaviour and this procedure were typical of a farming culture: it was customary to bring gifts, tangible marks of appreciation to important people.

From deities there was a transition to religions that were more structured and where the figure of God is strong, invisible, omnipresent and omnipotent. A just God who knows and controls everything.

He is kind, tolerant, capable of giving what is fair to each person. People believe in him blindly and accept everything from him, even when it seems that his attention

and grace are not adequate to the supplicant's needs ("God's will be done").

The medium for man's relation with God is prayer. It is a way of appealing to him, both in requests and in thanks for his attentions.

Around his figure, "an army of supporters and fans" (the saints) built up. They were upright, wise people, who were able to intercede directly with him and help him in the administration of good and of divine justice. The "saints" had had an actual earthly life, a personal history of devotion and integrity, and had performed a series of concrete acts – the miracles – that bore witness to their ability to be near God and therefore act as direct interlocutors with him.

But these monotheistic religions also had the organisational need to have earthly representatives who were directly in touch with people and close to them.

These were the pope, the bishops, the priests, the nuns; or the imams or other individuals who entirely dedicated their lives to God. In order to be closer to God and different from common mortals, they dedicated their lives to God and to the faithful, by means of vows of chastity, poverty and obedience.

Having thus given up some of the comforts and pleasures of life, they escape the temptations of sin and of the devil, and become wise, righteous people who can undertake to be an example and a help to others.

Their entire earthly organisation has a pyramid structure that converges toward a single reference point, which, in the case of the Catholic religion, is the pope. The latter, in order to be the highest visible representative of God, in his religious service is also infallible, and his doctrine cannot be challenged.

Historically, in monotheistic religions a prize (heaven) is provided for those who are able to resemble God and be close to him. For unrepentant sinners, instead, there is an eternal punishment (hell), and in addition there is a place of temporary expiation (purgatory).

Prayer and an honest life are the means to establish a relationship with God.

When a "sin" has been committed, through a violation of the ethical, concrete laws, which in the Catholic religion are the ten Commandments, there is the possibility of redemption through confession, which consists in acknowledging one's sins (via a

mediator who has been defined and accepted by God) and in carrying out a penance represented by prayers.

Although God is kind – infinitely kind – and capable of understanding human limits, his organisation provides for an eternal sentence (hell).

However, for this and for other religious mysteries, “faith” is in force: it requires people not to argue and not to ask explanations about what they don’t understand.

In these monotheistic religions, although they recognise both that heaven is a beautiful, ideal place and that death is within the plans of God, people are greatly afraid of death. There is a culture, which is greater than needed, of the preservation and memory of departed people’s bodies. Less attention is paid to the real part, the immortal soul, which avoids the suffering of death. This is one of the contradictions of monotheistic religions.

In addition to the “category” of religious people (whether practising or not), there is also that of atheists and agnostics. Many of them, however, when they sense the approach of death, which is the ultimate unknown, choose to undergo a conversion, because they feel the need for a religious end-of-life approach.

In the East, and in our case in India, death is an integral, accepted part of life.

The spirituality of the Indians, which is highly individualistic, makes it possible for them to seek, on their own, the most suitable responses to their “soul needs”.

A great number of people carry out their own, personal quest, sometimes breaking away from common living (ascetics, gurus, holy men, *babas*). Many of them live in isolated places, in order to be able to keep away from the temptations of everyday life, and above all to meet the need to quickly attain a satisfactory harmony with themselves and to pursue a dialogue with their own soul.

The cult of the body is limited to the bare essentials, because what is valued is life, the soul, in other words spirituality.

Osho, who lived in this geographic context and in this conception of life, went beyond his own, individual need for spirituality, maintaining that “the spirit or the soul” of people embodies “God”, so in everything there is God and all people are God.

*« Dio non è separato da questo mondo: Dio è il mondo. Ti è sempre stato detto, fino ad esasperarti, che dio ha creato il mondo. Io ti dico: dio è il mondo. E non esiste altro dio, fatta eccezione per il mondo. Il creatore esiste nella sua creatività. Dio è semplicemente forza creativa. È creatività. Abbandona l'idea che sia un creatore. Pensalo, contemplalo come la creatività stessa. Ed è diffuso ovunque. »*⁶

So the real Knowledge is that of the soul, which surpasses every other knowledge. The other knowledge can help the soul's Knowledge, And since everyone has his own knowledge, it cannot be found in the other. So the soul's knowledge is the sublime knowledge.

With his writings and concrete examples, Osho has led people to be in harmony with their own God, i.e. their own soul. Because the real essence of people lies here; real life lies here. This is the dimension that leads to the discovery and life of the God that each person represents.

This is the crux of everyday life. It is its essence even if we are not able to experience it fully and, in our everyday life, desperately seek something that allows us to be alive and real.

The body and its earthly journey are a shell that permits incarnation. So it must be guarded, protected, preserved in a state of wellbeing, in order to make it possible, through meditation, to get in touch with one's spirituality and be on the same wavelength with it. This is an individual, personal goal, and nobody can replace anyone else in order to attain it.

In Osho's outlook, the spiritual universe is represented by the sea, which is made of many drops forming a mass. But each of these drops has its own independent life. In order to live and get on, a drop needs to be with other drops – just like the community of human beings – but, since it generates life, it also needs to be individual, just as spiritual life is individual. The starting points are different for each drop, but the spiritual level in which they live is the same. There are no collective or repeatable practices that work for everybody. Theories are of little use. What really is useful is trying to “impart” the values of life, each individual with his own specificity. So the drops are different, but are all indispensable to life, without

⁶ Osho Times n° 190 July-August 2012 – from: OSHO, *Philosophia perennis*, ECIG Ed. 1997.

demanding anything. In a drop there is all that is needed for life.

The concept of the flow of life can be represented in several manners: through sap – through energy – through the attraction between a drop and another one. For instance, energy passes between a grape and another one through the structure of the bunch. And all these types of “conduction” nourish existence: this goes to say that life needs each element that forms existence. Because when a grape or a drop “rots”, it no longer conducts life to other grapes or drops.

Vital energy passes also through man’s actions, words, thoughts: it is an energy that carries out the same function as that of sap in the bunch of grapes, but its quality is different, although it equally conveys and nourishes spiritual life. It is the mutual need to accommodate a seed and allow it to grow. A contact at any level – physical, verbal, written, spiritual, emotional – starts the thrust of life. It is the vital energy that uses the various forms of contact between people and gives rise to a fusion.

Believing that one is a drop, believing in its value and preserving one’s characteristics to the utmost, is good for the drop and for the universe to which it belongs; not only to the ocean, because the ocean is a part of the universe. For man, it is a matter of believing that one has “one’s own” characteristics, and of making all possible efforts to know them, preserve them and develop them. This involves, first of all, not abdicating one’s own being, for any reason or for anybody, in order not to fail in one’s wellbeing or in that of the universe.

These remarks are completely separate and divergent from the religious teaching that “shows” man as an incomplete being, therefore a sinner, therefore needy of divine mercy.

Diogenes maintained that the Wise Man does not need any divine help or otherworldly prizes, although he believed that the Deity exists and that “all is full of his presence”.

Why do we project life out of ourselves? Considering that we are the highest expression of life and therefore one and the same with it?

We exist, but we are in progress, so we address that “void” that is yet to be, but to which we tend to turn with our being, attempting to fill it up.

That “void” is like the magnetism of a magnet, so the natural resistance of a dragged body prevents us from moving with it. All this is solved by not offering any resistance, thus becoming lightweight, vulnerable, in communion with the magnetism that draws us toward the longed-for progress, which we blame for the lack of union, because we have not appropriated it yet. This union can only spring from our acceptance of union: an acceptance that must be total, since it is free, and since it arises from our awareness and understanding of the fact that our existence is in progress.

When this total acceptance – which corresponds to enlightenment – is absent, the suffering caused by this is so great (because it is essential, since it is vital) that we blame others, that is the exterior, for it. Thus we escape from the unbearable condition of being the cause of our unspeakable suffering. This, of course, is the unconscious response of an unconscious choice. And this is why even the unspeakable suffering is comprehensible and acceptable.

The essence of life consists of moving towards its development.

The fact that life moves towards its development makes it always new and increasingly great. This need is experienced by the human being, in himself, in other people, and in the rambling progress of society: the latter seems almost to undergo this need – the need to move towards its own development – understanding it only in a negative sense, as the need to survive. On the contrary, it is life itself that drags us, touching the uncontrollable part of us that, in any case and in spite of everything, leads us to live. We accept this part of us, unknowingly, because we cannot do without it: this is living in a dormant state. The contradiction is always present, even when one does not choose it, or would not like to choose it: isn't moving in a dormant state a contradiction?

In Osho's outlook there are no sins or mistakes. There is no prize or punishment. Those who are not in harmony with themselves, in their spiritual part which is always in progress, are in a condition of actual non-happiness. This is more than enough for suffering to replace joy. And it is not the conception that is experienced and practised in India, because many people there live in their spiritual dimension, having accepted “*the superiority of the soul*” and the consequent concept of *incarnation*.

2.1 Truth and reality

The divinity of man is the starting point and the point of arrival.

This statement has never been as outstandingly correct as it is in this case. How did Osho get to the point of making this statement, i.e. that man is God? But how can it be possible, otherwise, to justify the fact that God is on his throne and not in the creatures?

This is the starting point: God is in his creatures, not as a guest, but as a creature himself, in the “not two” pair.

« La verità è una – says Osho – non può essere altrimenti perché l'esistenza è un universo e non è un multiverso. È uno. È saldato insieme. È un'unità. È un cosmo. Ciò che tiene insieme l'universo è quello che chiamiamo verità, o tao, o dio. Il tao non è una persona, né dio lo è, ma è l'armonia che scorre attraverso tutte le cose, come il filo che passa attraverso una ghirlanda e tiene uniti i fiori. L'universo non è un cumulo di cose separate ... singole come isole. No, l'universo è uno, è unito e viene tenuto insieme ... non sta per cadere a pezzi. Ciò che lo tiene insieme è il divino, il tao.⁷

La questione fondamentale della religione non è dio. La questione fondamentale è il nostro essere; la ricerca della verità non è esteriore, è interiore. La verità può essere conseguita solo esplorando l'interiorità. Il tesoro della verità è nascosto qui dove siamo, dove è il nostro essere, dove è la nostra esistenza, invece noi continuiamo a cercarlo nelle scritture, ai piedi dei maestri, nelle parole, nei sistemi e non proviamo mai a cercarlo qui dove siamo.

Nessuno cerca mai la verità dentro di sé. Tutti la cercano nel Corano, nella Bibbia ... ma nessuno andrà mai a cercarla lì dove si trova. »

And the truth is always achieved here.

Every time the truth is attained, it is discovered within oneself. We go on looking for it outside, but we never reach it, and we wear ourselves out in this effort.

This is the truth for which we must strive; this is the truth that can reply to the question of the meaning of existence.

⁷ OSHO, TAO: *The Pathless Path*, Vol. #9, Ed. Saint Martin's Press, 2002.

Man must appropriate this truth, accepting as a principle that he is God, and accepting to demonstrate it, first, to himself; it is like being certain of possessing a treasure, but not knowing where it is.

And in order to find it, one must stir, one must be active: one must be a *searcher*.

Being God is the starting point and is the truth.

It is a starting point that obviously involves a route. An uphill route that one must negotiate with one's own strength, without any additional help. But the goal is clear and is the point of arrival.

It is like climbing a mountain that we know has a top, but we are also aware that the climb may be rough and full of unforeseen events: these events, however, may enrich our fund of knowledge, i.e. the conviction that we are God, which is our starting point, our essence, our reality.

Divinity is within each of us. Where can we spot it? In emotions, in thoughts, in intuitions.

Emotion arises from the part of us that is the truest, in my opinion the most instinctive one, because we cannot control or repress it before it has "shown up". Yes, because if divinity is within us, this means that it is a part of our "constitution": this is why it "comes out" instinctively – with the same "mechanism" as that of what we call instinct.

In the dimension of emotions lies the real part of man, the essential one. It is there that his natural dimension lives; his history, his present and his future are there. It is there that his life is imprinted, the real one. Emotions are the source from which desire and the strength of life spring.

Emotions cannot be recognised, cannot be seen: they are a part of us.

We start being God by accepting ourselves unconditionally, without any judgement or comparison, totally trusting in the fact that we are God. Without separating good actions from bad ones.

Divinity may also be equated with all the noble feelings of a superior love that does not ask for anything except to be experienced.

If God is within us, he is a part of us, and there is no point in imagining him outside.

He is inside us, that very God they have told us is outside and should be beseeched to grant us his protection. So how can we, at the same time, address the God who is within us, who is us? By relying on his omnipotence, therefore believing in our own omnipotence. So, what need is there to pray? There is the need, instead, to “act”, to practice omnipotence.

The right course is that of endeavouring to lend to any manifestation of ours, whether outward or inward, the highest value, the highest credibility, without any judgement apart from that of the highest value, and without any comparison.

The reason for this is that we cannot compare ourselves to other people, since each of us is different from everyone else, both because of different experiences and because of having followed different paths. The difference lies in emotions: the difference in the individual histories and the difference in the “drops” themselves have given rise to a difference in the nature of each person’s emotions.

Point of arrival. To know that one is God, as a starting point, is a theoretic piece of knowledge that may remain theoretic but is always waiting for the “go-ahead”. So it is frustrating and paralysing.

It may be experienced as intellectual fulfilment, but if it does not lead to anything else it may be a constant illusion and frustration. Because everything inside and outside urges us, forces us to climb the mountain. Because it is not in our nature to live as miserable sinners: our wish and ideal is to live like God and not to be harnessed to an abject behaviour resulting from the fear of not being able to face life. It cannot be true that there is a God who judges while few people receive his directions and many struggle desperately to comply with them even if they do not accept them.

There is no pyramid structure. There is the ocean, where the drops, though individual, are united as in symbiosis, because of their very nature and composition.

How can we attain the awareness of being God and reach the point from which we had started? By experiencing everyday life with the awareness that we are not precluded from anything, that nothing can overpower us, but everything should be welcomed and explored. This is a way of achieving boundless knowledge. It is an outlook that is characterised by the interest of a child who is just beginning to

explore life, but also by a greater awareness. It is the capability of welcoming adversities, in order to use them for finding the road to our fulfilment and returning to our starting point (or reaching it).

« Sei divino, ma ancora non lo sai, anzi, è proprio perché sei divino che è così difficile saperlo! Il tuo essere divino si trova proprio nel profondo del tuo cuore: se si trattasse di qualcosa che sta fuori da te, ormai l'avresti incontrato. Se fosse qualcosa di oggettivo, probabilmente l'avresti già visto. Ma non sta al di fuori e non è un oggetto: è la tua soggettività. Non è qualcosa che si vede, è nascosta a chi guarda... Non si può diventare divini se non lo si è già. Possiamo diventare solo ciò che siamo, perché il divenire non è altro che un dispiegarsi: ciò che è nascosto diventa manifesto. Ma ciò che è nascosto esiste tanto quanto ciò che è manifesto! E una volta che abbiamo compreso che alla sorgente siamo divini, dentro di noi nasce una grande fiducia: nulla può andare storto. Anche se ci allontaniamo il più lontano possibile dal nostro essere divini, rimaniamo comunque divini. Il peccatore è divino quanto il santo: alla radice, alla sorgente, non c'è alcuna distinzione...»⁸

2.2 Freedom

In what does freedom consist? In the possibility of choosing, obviously.

There is nothing loftier than freedom. Any other value is a by-product of freedom.

« ...cresci nella consapevolezza, cresci nella libertà, fai che ogni passo sia frutto di una tua scelta individuale: crea te stesso. Libertà significa – intrinsecamente – che sei capace di scegliere sia la cosa giusta, sia quella sbagliata. La libertà ti dà l'opportunità sia di cadere al di sotto del livello animale sia di innalzarti al livello degli angeli. Non ti dà alcuna disciplina perché ogni disciplina è una sottile forma di schiavitù. Non ti dà comandamenti perché qualsiasi comandamento dato da qualcun altro, che arriva dall'esterno, ti metterà in prigione, ti renderà schiavo.

Ti sto solo insegnando ad essere libero e poi lascio a te decidere cosa fare con la tua libertà. Se vuoi cadere al di sotto degli animali è la tua decisione ... è la tua vita. Ma se comprendi la libertà e il suo valore, non cadrà: non andrai al di sotto degli animali, comincerai ad innalzarti al di sopra degli angeli. »⁹

⁸ OSHO, *Dal cuore all'esistenza. L'enciclopedia dell'uomo nuovo*, Oshoba Libri, 2014.

⁹ Osho Times n°199, giugno 2013.

To feel free. To be free.

Inward freedom. Outward freedom.

A free environment helps us be free, because we *feel free*.

Because we are not afraid of other people's opinions. But we can feel free inside even if the environment does not allow it, when we believe in ourselves against other people's beliefs and judgements.

Living inwardly in freedom is an achievement; this is why the more the environment (which is made of people and space) is free, the more one is helped in this achievement, since the environment permits it.

This is precisely the goal that Osho had in mind when he "built" his commune. In a free environment, one can understand what freedom is, because it is possible to practice it, it is possible to choose. And in practicing freedom it is possible, on the basis of the results, to reach the awareness of one's being, of one's existing, of the truth of one's divinity.

« Devi cercare il tuo Dio nel tuo spazio interiore. Tu stesso devi essere quel Dio. Non sarà un Dio in antitesi alla tua umanità, anzi, ne sarà la massima realizzazione, il suo sbocciare, il suo fiorire, la sua maturazione.

*L'uomo ha sofferto troppo... ha accettato ideologie che fanno di lui soltanto un peccatore. E migliaia di anni di continui condizionamenti hanno lasciato ferite nel suo cuore e un profondo senso di colpa che non gli permette di vivere la vita totalmente, non gli permette di amare con intensità, di danzare con passione, ma lo ostacola e lo paralizza in tutti i modi ...».*¹⁰

Since guilt does not allow him to be free, to be himself.

Osho also says:¹¹ *« La responsabilità è sempre il primo passo della libertà. Scaricare le tue responsabilità sulle spalle altrui è come gettar via la possibilità di essere liberi. Non puoi dividere le due cose, sono inseparabilmente unite.*

Ma per accettare la responsabilità ci vuole coraggio: tutti vogliono la libertà, nessuno vuole la responsabilità. E il problema è che vanno sempre insieme. Se non vuoi responsabilità finirai per essere schiavo, in un modo o nell'altro ...»

¹⁰ OSO, *Il ribelle. Il sale della terra*, Oshoba Reprint 2009.

¹¹ Osho Times n° 200, luglio-agosto 2013.

The rationale of Osho's teaching is freedom.

Freedom to be what one is. It is like being born again.

And freedom is our greatest need. Here is the secret why Osho's disciples love their master: he has given life to them by indicating the value of freedom. Each individual experiences it as he can: in many cases, by believing that freedom means not having rules or principles... but the insight is there!

Osho's directions fell on a fertile soil, because people thirst desperately for the freedom of being themselves. And the response can only be acceptance, even if each individual accepts in his own way, understanding as far as he can in that moment.

2.3 The difficulty of understanding

In the middle of the “not two” there is our capability to decide, that allows us, in any difficult situation, to choose whether to consider ourselves paltry, inadequate beings, or to regard ourselves as divine, so that any difficulty, and our feeling of inadequacy, can be overcome. Undoubtedly the human situation in which we were born and grew up did not facilitate – quite the opposite – the liberating choice of being God that makes it possible to regard any obstacle as surmountable. On the contrary, it deprived us of the capability of making this choice, thus suffocating our real nature and forcing us to remain in a state of disquiet, suffering and powerlessness. And also of submission and guilt.

Yes, because the teaching we receive cannot be complied with or fulfilled: it is not logic, it is distant from our true nature. This is the origin of the negative judgement on us, the judgement that we are insignificant, consequently also of the reaction of rebelling against this injustice and this self-effacement.

Osho, in a comment on a *sutra* (aphorism) by Athisha (an Indian enlightened man) that says: “*Do not seek suffering in order to obtain a false well-being*”, thus translates its meaning: « *Anziché cercare un falso benessere, è molto meglio entrare nella propria sofferenza. Medita ed entra in profondità nella tua sofferenza. Non fuggire dalla tua infelicità, perché fuggendo non comprenderai mai la natura della tua sofferenza e non imparerai mai a trascenderla.*

La bellezza della comprensione è questa: se riesci a conoscere davvero la causa della tua sofferenza, proprio in quella stessa comprensione la trascendi, poiché la sofferenza è sempre e solo frutto dell'ignoranza. »

Jesus has said: "Truth liberates". This is one of the most important assertions that have ever been uttered, and it is extremely important for any researcher to understand it thoroughly. "Truth liberates". Not the truths we can find in the Holy Scripture, but the Truth we can meet through our personal experiences.

« Sei triste: entra nella tua tristezza, invece di fuggirla... voltandole le spalle, ma abbandona ogni attività. Chiudi gli occhi... osservane la natura e da dove proviene – osservalo senza condannarla, altrimenti non sarai in grado di vederla nella sua totalità, nella sua interezza...

Rimarrai sorpreso: più entrerai in profondità nella tristezza e più comincerà a diradarsi. Se riuscirai a scendere alle radici estreme della tua sofferenza, ti accorgerai che ogni sofferenza è evaporata. In questo evaporare della sofferenza, troverai la gioia e la beatitudine...»¹²

The suffering of life derives from the deviations from the "straight path", i.e. when we regard as true the deviations from a correct interpretation of our values, first of all the interpretation of our divinity, which frees us from conditioning, fear, uncertainty, addiction... from all types of slavery.

Our divinity, on the contrary, makes us capable of swimming against the tide, of bearing isolation, and of accepting solitude as a natural state of our unique being.

Looking at all this with a conscious gaze, that is with a gaze that is able to attribute the correct meaning to situations, leads us to accept what we meet with, and to choose what is useful for strengthening and fulfilling ourselves.

In what does our fulfilment consist?

In fully being what we already are: God. And man, inasmuch as he is God, does not surrender; on the contrary, he appreciates, accepts the various forms of awareness of the people around him, while mastering his own awareness.

Thus the difficulties we meet with become occasions for turning to our divine power and strengthening our conviction that nothing can injure us and that we do not have

¹² OSHO, *Il libro del risveglio – Addestrare la mente per comprendere se stessi e il mondo*, Ed. Il Cigno, 2006.

to demonstrate anything to anyone. All this is possible if our choice is in this direction. And it is a choice that must be accepted, renewed and carried out, in many cases without finding rational, valid reasons for doing it. It is like jumping into space. Particularly in the moments in which what we are faced with drives us back to disappointments, betrayals, rejections, injustices... or to our own limits and inefficiency.

But it is precisely in those moments that we can choose where to take sides: whether to decide that we will take advantage of this chance to strengthen our unconditional self-confidence; or to remain in the darkness and get lost.

It is a matter of practice, of knowing, and of being determined to start all over again every time we are faced with an obstacle in practising our talents or with an enemy who, sometimes insidiously, wants to eliminate us.

Here what comes into action is the awareness of *existence*, therefore of ourselves, who are a part of it. This awareness leads to self-confidence, consequently to accepting the fact that the others are different and have other ripening times.

2.4 The need to advance and grow in awareness

This refers to an entirely interior journey that coincides with growth or, rather, with the discovery of the values of which we are bearers and which we need for a balanced existence of our own that includes our fulfilment.

The human journey is commonly understood as marked by “stages” that society’s dominant culture has provided for its members: study, work, marriage, children, retirement... But this path, which has been predetermined (if one doesn’t follow it, one feels, and is made to feel, out of place), is reductive; it demeans individuality. It does not allow for the inner riches of each human being.

According to Indian philosophy, each human being descends onto the earth to follow a path of awareness. In other words, individuals come there to practice, in order to acquire knowledge and learn how to live according to their true nature, which is divine.

This is a path of learning that is “offered” to each human being precisely by the

varied, and sometimes very difficult, events of his life, and he will have to learn how to decipher them on the basis of the “cipher” that is typical of spiritual growth.

He will realise then that these events lead him increasingly to break away from what keeps him bound to earthly problems, allowing him to see in them the positive quality in his existence and lending more value to what gratifies him. He will understand that the events of everyday life, in all their varying degrees of difficulty, will be like the equipment of a gymnasium and will help him to remain strong, inwardly upright, not dominated or enslaved by other people’s lack of awareness.

I would like to mention, here, the image proposed to us by Osho, that of the seed: he says that “man is born as a seed”. In the seed there are the tree, the flower, the fruit, and many seeds that can reproduce other trees...

In the seed, wealth in the making is implied. A baby, when he is born, is like this too. He has an originality of his own, and asks for space and nourishment, in order to express himself, to become a man who fully develops his potential. That is, to fulfil himself. This is the real growth. This is the real journey.

2.5 Realisation problems

Life is movement in stability. And movement implies change.

No moment is like any other. Situations may reappear, but they are not identical. After all, life is a journey, and the view cannot ever be the same.

Growth implies movement, and movement implies change, which, in turn, represents the real obstacle to growth. The reason for this is that change brings difference, which essentially emerges, blends with other elements, goads them into changing. Therefore it is rejected, opposed, and sometimes attempts to nullify it are made. There is no lack of examples in history. The most outstanding case of difference was that of Christ.

Moving/changing involves losing the confidence that comes from what we already know how to manage. Change, on the contrary, forces us to move towards the unknown, and here we are faced with the fear of not being able to manage it precisely because it is unknown. This is the time to resort to our awareness of the fact that we are not prevented from doing anything.

Change, which is so necessary for growth, is the greatest obstacle we need to accept, because it means leaving the “known” in order to venture into the “unknown”. While we are familiar with the known, no matter how harsh and difficult it is, and have learnt how to manage it, the new that is inherently brought by change is an unknown quantity; as such, it creates uncertainty, insecurity and fear of not being able to cope with it. This happens because, after all, human beings equipped with capabilities and knowledge are afraid of failure, of the suffering they might incur when they leave what is a part of their experience; so they avoid treading on unfamiliar ground as much as they can. But they do not realise that the consequence of this is that monotony, and the withering resulting from repetitiveness, set in. Monotony leads to a certain measure of depression. On the contrary, change brings on a new vitality, a feeling of contentment because one is exploring new ground, discovering new capabilities and potentialities in oneself. One moves towards the fulfilment of the Ego, or, we might say, of the seed.

An animal who is the leader of the pack knows this, and pushes his pack towards a new ground, because he knows that new food is needed.

Change is inherent to existence, and man might follow this movement: it is forward, like that of the water of a river, which, no matter from where it starts, always ends up in the great ocean.

At this point, we can see clearly how difficult it is to “let go” of the past – the past that is “fixed” inside us and guides us, conditions us in future choices. Every new wound revives past wounds, and this obstacle is the most difficult to overcome. How are we to understand, to accept the fact that life is in the “new”? That the new cannot arrive unless we get rid of the past?

This is the real toil, the really tragic nature of human life. The past is deeply rooted, imprinted in our experience; it is what we know, what we have absorbed, because it belongs to us since birth. But we do not know that it is the “known” of those who have taken care of us, that it has been deposited in our true nature (our seed) and suffocates it.

« Come il serpente scivola dalla sua vecchia pelle, lasciandola completamente, senza nemmeno voltarsi, così l'uomo deve scivolare fuori dal suo passato, senza nemmeno voltarsi. È difficile, ma non difficile come distruggere la vita. Il passato è

pesante, il passato ha radici profonde, ma la vita e il desiderio di vivere sono molto più forti. È necessario togliere le radici, perché potare gli alberi non cambia nulla.»¹³

Chapter 3 – The need for spirituality

3.1 “Not two”

In the message left by Osho, it is important to highlight the need people feel to experience their spirituality: because it is an essential part of their own being. This can also be deduced by observing that, throughout the history of mankind, the need for spirituality has always been present in individuals, and they have endeavoured to give it a “structure” by organising it so as to make it concrete, representable, testifiable. Thus the various religions, Christianity, Judaism and Islamism, arose: they grew and flourished in relation to the places and cultures to which they belonged.

In the Indian concept of “not two”, man has, on the one hand, the strong (we called it essential) need for spirituality, and this is proved by the fact that every man has his own spiritual belief, including atheists, because denying something is asserting a need: “I am an atheist because I am afraid of being contaminated by a god.” Indirectly, atheists show they have a religion: that of not needing anybody. Therefore not believing in a god is a belief, too; a belief in not believing.

On the other hand, men make an effort to organise their lives so as not to need spirituality.

Human reality, we know, cannot be divided or separated into “parts”, because there is a “copresence”: in other words, in each man, to a certain degree, there is also a woman, and vice versa. In night there is also day, and vice versa. So in the human being there is a copresence of practicality/concreteness and spirituality, in spite of the fact that in most cases individuals tend to deny one of the two.

So, in what we experience as negative, we can and must also spot the positive

¹³ OSHO, *Ecologia interiore* - Monografie Osho Times, Vivalda Editori 2009.

quality, which we find only there, because both coexist.

While we almost always know what is good or bad for our health, our body, we neglect what is good for our spirit, because we underestimate it. Consequently we omit to take care of the health of our spirit, regarding it as less important, in spite of the fact that in actual fact it controls our bodily health.

« Il tuo corpo non è solo fisico. Nei tuoi muscoli, nella struttura del corpo, molte altre cose sono penetrate a causa della repressione: se reprimi la rabbia, quel veleno va a finire nel corpo; va nei muscoli, penetra nel sangue. Se reprimi una qualunque cosa, non si tratta solo di un fenomeno mentale, è anche fisico, perché in realtà non siamo divisi: tu non sei corpo e mente, sei corpomente, sei psicosomatico. Sei entrambi, uniti insieme; quindi, qualunque cosa si faccia con il corpo influisce sulla mente e ogni cosa che si fa con la mente influisce sul corpo. Corpo e mente sono due aspetti della medesima entità. Sono uniti: il corpo e la mente sono un tutt'uno. La mente è la parte più sottile del corpo e il corpo è la parte più grossolana della mente.

In altre parole, non sono due cose diverse; ecco perché tutto ciò che accade nel corpo risuona nella mente e tutto ciò che accade nella mente ha un effetto nel corpo. Se la mente è malata, il corpo non sarà sano a lungo; e se il corpo è malato, la mente non sarà sana a lungo. Il messaggio intercorre tra i due ed ha effetto su entrambi.»¹⁴

India, because of its geographic and historical reality, has managed to lend a logic, “natural” order to existence. Indians have searched, experimented, persevered in their self-care, always keeping in mind the non-duality of their existence, which is “formed” of body and soul, but preferring the spiritual entity. They have given the “primogeniture” to the latter, and referred to it the material, concrete part that takes place in everyday life.

So everyday life depends on spiritual growth.

¹⁴ Osho Times n° 201, settembre 2013.

Chapter 4 – Osho’s thought – three stages

Why Osho?!

Because he places at the centre the person and not the context in which the person lives: the religious context (relationship with God); the social rules; the family; the moral references: contexts that do not help the individual’s real nature.

« Io voglio essere il testimone, non il profeta (o Guru). Testimone che ha una forte spiritualità che sta nel pensiero e nel rispetto del valore della persona. »

Osho has always pursued and requested, for each individual, freedom of thought, freedom of action, capability of deciding for one’s wellbeing and for one’s physical and spiritual life.

So a person (this is the mediation point) must know who he is, consequently what he wants, and must decide how to deal with his context: i.e. whether to accept the social and religious rules. But this decision must be based on the belief of knowing what his essence is.

The consequence of this is that it is man’s duty to sow, that is to promote his own freedom and simultaneously, by contagion, that of other people, thus increasing everyone’s room for manoeuvre.

Hence the need for *meditation*, in order to live in one’s context without losing sight of one’s individuality.

4.1 From “I” to “We”

Many people together form a “We”, in which the values of individuality are pooled.

Individuality is the natural datum, so it is the starting point; but it usually is not regarded as such.

Enhancing the value of individuality is taking sides with oneself, giving a voice to one’s thought, one’s soul.

Individuality can be experienced jointly: this is the We of philosophers, who tend to interpret life and improve its qualities.

Being together, in Osho's opinion, means that each individual must play his own part: for instance, the sower's task is to sow and not to harvest, so there is a complementary help, in which support is mutual but each person preserves his individuality.

It is a matter of believing in being, not in doing. If you believe in being, doing comes by itself.

It is a matter of believing you are fullness, infinity... doing will express what you believe you are.

*« La fiducia (in se stessi) appartiene all'essere e l'essere è sempre lo stesso, è parte dell'eternità e la fiducia, per questo motivo, non è mutevole come l'amore. »*¹⁵

Osho worked on the person starting from himself. We can identify three stages.¹⁶

First stage: his spiritual journey began when, still a child, he was transferred to the house of his grandmother, who respected his timing and his need for knowledge, independence and thought.

So he devoted the first part of his life to finding out what he needed, by experiencing rebellion, that is the disquiet due to the discrepancy between his thought and his experience. He realised that the most important part, for which he did not find satisfactory replies in his surroundings, was spirituality. It was precisely what he cared for most: so he decided to devote all his time and energy to his existential quest.

Second stage: Osho concluded that the need for spirituality is shared by everybody, and realised that, in order to experience spirituality and find it in oneself, an exchange between individuals is required. So he began to conceive of a community where he could share his research, his knowledge and his life, and recognised that all this would be wasted if he continued being alone. On the contrary, like a drop, he had to remain united to the other drops in order to form the ocean of humanity.

So he imagined a community that made it possible for its members to experience their own inward life in the best possible way and to enjoy the "blending" of people like drops in the sea, or like grapes in a bunch where energy passes from a grape to

¹⁵ OSHO, *L'eco dell'infinito*, Oshoba Libri, 2009.

¹⁶ OSHO, *Mai nato mai morto*, Monografie Osho Times, CDA & Vivalda Editori, 2008.

another. There would be, in other words, a mutual support.

First of all, access to the community would have to be characterised by very few limits: Osho did not ask from where someone came or why he came, because the community was not at all predefined. It was simply a community of emotions and feelings, and it was understood that the purpose of those who joined it was only to fulfil their own spirituality, regardless of their religious creed.

With the commune and its thoughts, Osho aimed to transmit and indicate the path for the search of one's God, in the absolute conviction that there exists a personal, individual God.

He conceived of his communities as meeting places where people might gather in order to look, by themselves, for their own Ego and essence. A place where nobody would feel "out of place", therefore each man would feel free to search for himself and find himself. No questions and no answers. The only certainty would be that of staying on and being free.

After this, he eliminated authority, with the intention of preventing impositions and rivalries.

Third stage: Osho believed that people, when they dealt with spirituality, would shed the need for possessions, because man is mean if he experiences everyday life and experiences possession. He is evil if he must defend his belongings, such as his car, his money, the honour of his relatives, etc... If, on the contrary, he talks about his spirit, his need to be God, he has no rivals. Osho believed that the community could free individuals from primary needs, such as eating, sleeping and other certainties, so that they could devote themselves to their spiritual needs.

When, however, he realised that the community was more engrossed in everyday life, in survival, than in spirituality... When, above all, the members of the community began to regard him as a holy man and to entrust him with their needs, he felt that for many people it was not easy to prefer spiritual values... For these reasons, he revised the values of the community in India and established a new one in the United States, because there can be a disadvantage in talking about spirituality in India, where there is such a contrast created by the lack of material things. So he chose the United States, regarding it as a central point not of spirituality but of

consumerism and human enjoyment, in order to propose spirituality, which is lacking in that country. But Americans, too, turned to him in order to rid themselves from material, everyday burdens, and not to search for themselves, because their physical needs were stronger than their spiritual ones.

Chapter 5 – The foundations of Osho’s teaching

«... Non voglio che nessuno sia attaccato a me in alcun modo. Il mio lavoro è quello di darti libertà totale e metodi tali che, qualsiasi cosa tu voglia, potrai cercarla all’interno di te stesso. Non serve nemmeno dio, non serve nulla, basti tu. [...]

Voglio lasciarti da solo, completamente da solo, senza l’aiuto di nessuno, in modo che tu non possa attaccarti ad alcun profeta, in modo che tu non possa pensare che un Gautama il Buddha ti salverà. Quando sarai da solo, assolutamente solo, dovrai per forza scoprire la tua essenza più profonda.»¹⁷

The essential core of Osho’s teaching is: no creed, no dogma, no faith, no religion, nothing borrowed. One can rely only on what one has experienced personally: one must be doubtful about everything else. While other religions are based on faith, Osho finds his foundation in doubt.¹⁸

His fundamental principle is the same on which science rests: one must doubt, until one finds something in one’s experience that it is impossible to doubt. Science, however, moves outwards, while Osho moves towards inwardness. He calls this movement *meditation*. His intention is to practically turn meditation into a science, so as to ensure that it has nothing to do with religion. This way, it can be practised by anybody, whether they be Hindus, Christians, Jews or Muslims. No matter what a person’s religion is, in any case he can meditate. He may even not believe in any religion or be an atheist: in this case, too, he can meditate.¹⁹

« La meditazione è uno stato dell’essere. Tu sei semplicemente silenzioso – nessun pensiero su cui concentrarsi, nessun oggetto da contemplare, nessun oggetto su cui meditare. La mente e la meditazione non possono coesistere. Non è possibile

¹⁷ Ibidem.

¹⁸ Ibidem.

¹⁹ OSHO RAJNEESH, *La grande sfida*, Bompiani, 1990.

possedere entrambe le cose, in quanto la mente è pensiero e la meditazione è silenzio. La mente pensa, la meditazione conosce.»²⁰

5.1 Meditation according to Osho: three steps

Meditation is the science that removes an increasingly vast awareness from darkness.²¹

« Significa cioè entrare nell'inconscio: immergersi in profondità e starci. Significa essere caotici nel caos, essere privi di forma all'interno dell'informe. Significa lasciarsi andare, fluire nelle nuvole ignote, illimitate; lasciarsi andare e muoversi in territori e mari inesplorati. Non entrarci con una mente disciplinata altrimenti non procederai di un passo!

Nella mente conscia non si fa altro che muoversi in cerchio: si continua a ripetersi. Se si resta legati a livello conscio, tutto diventa un'abitudine. E tu sei fortemente sintonizzato con la mente conscia; ma una mente disciplinata è sempre povera, perché non accoglierà mai il caos. Non uscirà mai dai suoi limiti angusti, non trascenderà mai la sfera cosciente, non si interesserà mai all'infinito.

Un uomo con una mente disciplinata potrà essere grande, come Gandhi per esempio, ma avrà una mente ristretta, perché il suo unico interesse si ridurrà alla sfera cosciente e alla disciplina. Non si addentrerà mai in ciò che è caotico: non lo sfiorerà neppure.

La mente conscia è simile al giardino di fronte a casa tua, non assomiglierà mai ad una foresta. E l'inconscio è simile ad una fitta foresta senza confini. Non potrai mai conoscere i confini dell'inconscio, per cui è facilissimo perdersi. Restare confinati alla mente conscia è sicuro, non si corre alcun rischio. Addentrarsi nell'inconscio è rischioso, occorre coraggio.»²²

In order to be able to follow this path in meditation, you must take three steps: the fourth will happen by itself.²³

20 OSHO, *India, un amore. Un viaggio spirituale nella terra dei Buddha*, cit

21 OSHO, *L'eco dell'infinito*, cit.

22 OSHO, *Tecniche di liberazione*. News Service Corporation, 2001.

23 OSHO, *Mai nato mai morto*, cit.

The first step is to *observe* all your activities: this is your body and these are its actions: walking, chopping wood, drawing water from the spring... You are simply a *witness*, you do not act like a robot.

Then, when you have become capable of observing your own body and therefore of being a witness of its actions, you can take the second step: that of observing the activities of your mind, such as thoughts, dreams, reveries. Here, too, you are only a witness: you are not a part of it, but simply a mirror that reflects without any judgements such as “this is good, this is bad”. A mirror does nothing but reflect whatever appears in front of it. If you manage to do this, according to Osho a strange experience takes place: when your capability of observing increases, thoughts decrease, in the same proportion. When you have a hundred-per-cent capability of observation, your thoughts will total zero: this is the state of “*no-mind*”.

« Non potrai andare al di là della mente se continuerai ad usarla. Devi fare un salto e meditazione significa questo: fare un salto. Ecco perché la meditazione è illogica ed irrazionale. Non può essere logica, non può essere ridotta alla ragione. Devi sperimentarla e se ne fai esperienza la conosci.»²⁴

This leads us to the third step.

Now you must observe your most subtle emotions, your moods: a shade of sadness, a certain joy...

The first step refers to your *body*, the second to your *mind*, the third to your *heart*. When you have completed the three steps, according to Osho the fourth one takes place by itself: a sudden quantum leap, and you find yourself right at the centre of your being, where there is nothing to be aware of. *Awareness* is aware of itself, conscience is conscious of itself. This is the moment of supreme ecstasy, of *samadhi*, enlightenment. A supreme moment: nothing is higher than it.

There is no way of moving further on, because wherever you go, beyond, you will in any case be a witness. If you start observing the *observer*, you have not climbed higher up: you are always a witness. So observation is the end of your journey: you have got home!

²⁴ OSHO, *Che cos'è la meditazione*, Edizione Mondadori 1999-2009.

«Il mio insegnamento è tutto qui. È assolutamente scientifico. Non ha bisogno di fede, ciò che serve è sperimentare. Non chiedo a nessuno di aver fede in me. Chiedo solo di provare a sperimentare» – says Osho²⁵.

Meditation, as Osho understands it, is necessary to attain our divinity, which is hidden under a thousand conditioning elements, and to overcome the latter. The conditioning elements derive from our lack of knowledge or of awareness of being God.

So we might paraphrase Socrates's saying "*I know that I do not know*", stating, with Osho, "*I do not know that I know...*"

“La meditazione è uno stato naturale dell'essere, uno stato che abbiamo perduto. E ritrovarlo è la gioia più grande della vita.

La meditazione è la tua natura intrinseca – sei tu, è la tua essenza, non ha niente a che fare con le tue azioni. Non puoi averla e non puoi non averla. Non può essere posseduta, non è una cosa.

Sei tu, è la tua essenza!”²⁶

So Osho's outlook on meditation²⁷ is innovative and revolutionary from many points of view. To begin with, while in other meditation traditions of the past only a single technique was proposed, and people had to adapt to it, Osho developed many different techniques – some devised from scratch, others drawn from Sufi, Buddhist, Tibetan, Tantric, etc., traditions, in order to make it possible for each individual to experiment and find the technique that is best for him. Osho attached a great importance to the body and the release of repressed energies and emotions when he devised the *Active Meditations*, which are more suitable to the situation of contemporary man. Above all he reversed the approach of the religious schools of the past, asserting that meditation is joy, play and celebration, and reminding people that at each step, if they take themselves too seriously, they are undoubtedly... on the wrong track.

25 OSHO, *Mai nato mai morto*, cit.

26 OSHO, *Che cos'è la meditazione*, cit.

27 Osho Times n° 181, settembre 2011.

5.2 The progress of meditation

Meditation²⁸ is not something one does for an hour and then forgets. Indeed! The whole of our lives must be meditation. This is the only way to achieve some results. When I say that the whole of our lives must be meditation, I am not asking you to sit with your eyes closed meditating 24 hours a day: no! In any situation you can be alert, receptive, aware; and this will yield some results. Only this capability of remaining aware of all the things that are happening around you will allow you to develop the capability of realising what is happening inside you. A subtle state of contentment will be present all the time. No matter what you are doing, you will feel that within you there is a deep state of peaceful satisfaction.

5.3 My experience with meditation

My attitude to meditation springs from the need to find solutions in the various problem areas of my existence.

Early on, during my youth, my reference for meditation was the Gospel; but, as I proceeded in my “existential adventure”, it gradually lost its meaningfulness and its status as a guide.

So it was natural for me to take advantage of the occasions in which I found a greater broadmindedness than that of the teachings of the Gospel – or of the ways in which they were explained.

I found in other paths, in other Masters, the philosophy that made me feel well and allowed me to hope I might overcome my difficulties: this philosophy was the Indian one.

In Osho’s active meditations I learnt how to pay attention, and attach importance, to my physicality, my reactions, in a global outlook: i.e. I learned how to pay attention to what was happening while I moved freely, listening, within myself, to what was the desire and pleasure of my “bodymind” in its movements, and observing the reflex that sprang from it into my Ego: a certain confirmation of myself, of my being a body, and sensations that were at once psychological and emotional. I needed this overall outlook, while I developed a keen interest in the “interference” between physical movements and emotions that I was discovering in my being.

28 Osho Times n° 181, settembre 2011 – da: OSHO, *The Ultimate Alchemy*, Vol.2 #18.

Osho's active meditations and his self-examining activity groups were my introduction to meditating on his speeches, which clearly fitted in my day-to-day living experience.

All the meditations devised by Osho constitute a strategy for "being with oneself". The ultimate goal is precisely "*being with oneself*". For me, this increasingly meant finding within myself the replies and a clear understanding of the spiritual path to be followed in concrete life.

Being with myself meant trying to understand how to apply Osho's philosophy in the difficulties of everyday life, in order first to solve the problems of survival, then to trace back to the meaning of existence through my own existence. So it meant finding in my soul the responses to, and interpretation of, life, being stimulated, obviously, by the quest for the solution of the problem of "passing through" what had seemed to me, at first sight, incomprehensible and illogical.

For me this was, and is, a compulsory choice: there is no other way to live my time, in my best possible condition, but to look for my truth. Yes, because each of us has his own truth. However, it does not appear as clearly as one might believe or suppose. Because it has been hidden, submerged by those who claimed to possess absolute truth. Or by those who did not take the trouble to find out what their own truth was. Yes, because truth is individual. And each of us must look for it inside himself, in his own soul.

Chapter 6 – Biography of Osho Rajneesh²⁹

Osho was born in Kuchwada, in Madhya Pradesh, Central India, on 11 December 1931. Since his earliest childhood, he showed an attitude towards the world that was that of a free spirit: he was intolerant of rules and enforced regulations, and always defied established power and its representatives.

His quest for truth reached its climax when he was 21, on 21 March 1953. On that day, Osho experienced in his own being the highest peak of awareness possible to man: enlightenment. From that moment onwards, he devoted his life to inviting other human beings to share this experience: he travelled all over India, took part in conventions and debates, and even held speeches in front of thousands, sometimes hundreds of thousands of people. Meanwhile he was going on with his philosophy study at the University of Sagar, where he took his degree in 1956. Two years later he was assigned the chair of philosophy at the University of Jabalpur.

In 1964 Osho began to organise Meditation Camps and to develop some innovative techniques: his famous “Active Meditations”.

In 1966 he completely gave up his university career in order to devote himself entirely to teaching the art of meditation, and in 1968 he settled in Bombay, where, two years later, he was joined by the first Western researchers.

In 1974 he moved to Pune, to what became, with time, a unique “spiritual growth laboratory”.

In 1981 his American adventure began, in Oregon, where “Rajneeshpuram”, an experiment of “global-ecology city”, took shape.

The Reagan Administration plotted to destroy him, going so far as to arrest and extradite him. As a result of this, Osho was forced to perform a “round-the-world tour”, during which twenty-one states, under the pressure of the United States, denied him entry and deported him. He returned to India in July 1986; in January of the following year he settled again in the old commune at Pune – transforming it into what now is a Meditation Resort – and there he went on developing his vision. Osho left his body on 19 January 1990.

²⁹ OSHO, *Di fronte all'oceano. Incontri a tu per tu con il Maestro*, Oshoba Libri 2011.

6.1 The name Osho

Osho has explained that the name with which he wishes to be remembered derives from the word “oceanic”, which in English is pronounced “osheanic”. This word, which was coined by the American philosopher William James, is used to denote the experience of “dissolving in the ocean of existence” that is common in the various forms of religious experience. « *Ma oceanico – Osho specifies - describe l’esperienza. Come definire colui che fa quell’esperienza della vita? Per definirlo usiamo il termine OSHO.*»³⁰

He discovered later that, in the past, the term “Osho” had been used in the Far East, with the meaning “He who is blessed, the being on whom the sky lets fall a shower of flowers”.

So it is a sound that echoes strongly in our consciousness, rather than denote a historical figure... This is how Osho wished to be remembered by those who draw inspiration and nourishment from his vision, which was expressed in tens of thousands of speeches held by him in the course of the years and published in hundreds of books, as if to testify that the quest for Truth and the evolution of consciousness transcend the life of the individual and have belonged from time immemorial to the existence of man as such.³¹

6.2 Meaning of Sannyas

From this word there derives the name *sannyasin*, which denotes those who recognise Osho as their master. He explains: «*Il Sannyas*³² *non è mio. Non è vostro. Coloro che sono in cerca della verità, sono sempre esistiti. E’ sempre esistito il ‘popolo’ dei ricercatori della verità. Io lo chiamo sannyas. E’ eterno. Non ha niente a che fare con me. Sannyas significa coraggio più di ogni altra cosa, perché è un’affermazione della tua individualità, una dichiarazione di libertà. La dichiarazione che non farai più parte della follia collettiva, della psicologia di massa. E’ la dichiarazione che stai diventando universale; non apparterrai a nessun Paese, a nessuna chiesa, razza o religione!*»

30 OSHO, *Il ribelle. Il sale della terra*, cit.

31 *Ibidem*.

32 OSHO, *Mai nato mai morto*, cit.

6.3 The fifth interview (A conversation with a journalist of the Times of India³⁶)

OSHO, dove sei nato?

Sono nato a Gadarwara, nel Madhya Pradesh.

In che anno?

Nel 1931.

Quanti fratelli hai?

Ho sei fratelli.

Sei il maggiore?

Sì, sono il maggiore.

E quante sorelle?

Ho quattro sorelle.

Cosa fa tuo padre?

E' un mercante di stoffa.

Che studi hai fatto?

Sono laureato.

In quale università?

L'università di Sagar.

In cosa sei laureato?

Ho una laurea in filosofia.

Quando è sorta in te l'ispirazione interiore che ti ha avvicinato alla dimensione spirituale?

E' sempre stata presente, dentro di me. Non riesco a ricordare quando per la prima volta è affiorata. Mi ha accompagnato da sempre.

33 OSHO, *L'eterno nel tempo*, UNO Editori, 2012.

Dunque fino a quando ti sei laureato hai vissuto con la tua famiglia e poi hai deciso di rinunciare a questo mondo?

No. Non ho affatto rinunciato al mondo. Non sono favorevole alla rinuncia di alcunché.

Prendiamo Vinoba Bhave, come esempio. Lui ha rinunciato al mondo, non possiede neppure un pais. Oppure prendiamo Gandhi. Non sono forse dei sannyasin?

Io non credo nella rinuncia al mondo. È la mia visione, è un'affermazione della vita, una visione positiva della vita.

Cosa vuoi dire con un'affermazione della vita, con una visione positiva della vita?

La religione che è esistita finora ha negato la vita; ha invitato a rinunciare alla vita, a condannare la vita, ha detto che la vita non ha alcun significato e pertanto si deve cercare la realizzazione al di là di questa vita.

Esiste una meta oltre la vita?

No! La vita in sé è la meta. Non c'è nulla al di là. Dunque, vivere la vita nella sua totalità, nella sua globalità, per me è religiosità. La vita in sé è divina; e conoscere i misteri della vita è la via per conseguire quell'essenza divina.

Quale realizzazione? Se non esiste nulla oltre la vita, cosa si consegue?

Si consegue la vita nella sua totalità, nella sua interezza.

Cosa succede quando si muore?

Nessuno muore.

Non esiste la morte?

Non c'è morte alcuna! La morte è una finzione, qualcosa di falso.

Ma un uomo muore, oppure non muore?

La vita cambia semplicemente forma.

Credi che nella vita tutto arrivi a una fine?

Tutte le cose esistono. Non c'è alcun inizio e non c'è alcuna fine. Tutto *esiste*. Ma la vita cambia forma, appare in nuove forme. Questo cambiamento in quanto tale crea una falsa nozione rispetto alla morte.

Che sia o meno una finzione, noi arriviamo sempre a una fine della vita. Un albero dopo un certo lasso di tempo, muore; gli animali e gli uccelli muoiono, anche gli esseri umani muoiono. A livello fisico moriamo tutti.

Un albero muore, ma quella non è l'esperienza interiore dell'albero.

Ma anche l'albero ha vita.

Nell'albero esiste la vita. In lui tutto è vivo; ma solo qualcun altro lo percepisce come morto. Tu hai sempre visto morire gli altri, non hai mai visto morire te stesso. Nessuno ha mai visto la morte accadere dentro di sé, sono sempre gli altri che muoiono. La vita cambia forma, gli altri l'avvertono come una morte. Nulla muore mai. Tutto *esiste*.

Stai cercando di dire, in altre parole, che solo il corpo muore e ciò che è al suo interno non muore?

Cambia forma.

Ma il corpo muore, il corpo umano intendo! Sei d'accordo?

Cambia soltanto forma.

Come lo chiameresti? Noi lo chiamiamo anima.

Lo potresti definire l'anima.

Una volta che questo corpo muore, è possibile contattare di nuovo l'anima?

Quella possibilità non esiste, perché nulla si ripete. Tutto è sempre nuovo e fresco.

In un tuo saggio hai detto che occorre dare nuova vita alla spiritualità, dare nuova linfa alla religione. Cosa intendi per "dare nuova vita"? C'è qualcosa che non va nella religione dell'India?

Tutto è sbagliato.

Ma in India esiste un'infinità di religioni! Se parli di religione, si intende che io ne ho una, qualcun altro ne ha un'altra...

Quell'affermazione si applica a tutte le religioni così come le comprendiamo.

Dunque, è tutto sbagliato?

Il concetto di religione esistito finora è del tutto sbagliato.

In India?

Ovunque.

Non può essere, rispetto a ciò che accade in altri Paesi non possiamo dire nulla. Non si tratta della religione di questo Paese o di Paesi stranieri. Il tipo di religione esistito fino a oggi nel mondo intero... non si tratta del buddhismo, dell'induismo, del cristianesimo, dell'islam – il modo in cui la religione è esistita fino a oggi, in quanto organizzazione, come chiesa, come rituali – tutto ciò è sbagliato. Secondo me, la religione è qualcosa di assolutamente personale, non può esistere nulla come un'organizzazione della religione.

Dunque, non potrebbero esistere religioni organizzate nel mondo?

Non è possibile che ci siano religioni organizzate. Non appena la religiosità diventa qualcosa di organizzato, si altera; e con questo voglio dire che diventa “politica”. Pertanto questi nomi – islam, induismo, cristianesimo, giainismo, buddhismo – tutti questi nomi, queste organizzazioni, non sono realtà religiose; sono tutte entità politiche. Non possono esserci così tante religioni, così non possono esistere molte scienze.

Solo una?

Una sola! Perché la verità è una ed è universale.

In altre parole, ogni verità religiosa è una sola ed è la stessa, ma i modi per conseguire la verità sono differenti. Secondo il mio modo di comprendere, le religioni sono delle vie.

No! La verità non si può conseguire in modi diversi. Esiste una sola via, ovvero la *meditazione* – il che vuol dire conseguire la “nonmente” e la consapevolezza.

Ma non è vero che la religione non insegna la religione. Nella religione la meditazione è presente, come pure il digiuno e la negazione del sé. La religione e la spiritualità sono un tutto unico e sono la stessa cosa. Se non si annulla il proprio essere, se non ci si purifica dalle cattive azioni, com'è possibile tutto ciò?

Non ci si può ripulire dalle cattive azioni.

Ma un uomo commette azioni cattive...

Di certo un uomo commette cattive azioni.

E non lo si può rimproverare per quello, perché dio lo ha creato. Non è forse così: dio non ci ha forse creati? Oppure non esiste alcun dio?

Il creatore non è separato dalla creazione.

Questo lo so. Ma se non esiste differenza tra le due cose, allora noi siamo un tutto unico con il creato, con colui che ci ha creato.

No, no. Non esiste alcun creatore.

Nessuno ci ha creato?

No, nessuno ci ha creato. Non esiste alcun creatore al di là della creazione, che non sia la creazione stessa.

Ed eccoci arrivati al punto. Questa è la cosa essenziale che sto chiedendo: esiste qualcuno che ci ha creato? Esiste un dio?

No! No!

Non esiste un dio?

No. Non esiste alcun dio in quanto creatore.

Nessun altro può essere il creatore!

Questa intera energia di creatività – per come la vedo io, il significato di dio è questa intera creatività.

Non sto parlando di creatività, sto parlando di creazione.

Non esiste alcuna creazione e non esiste alcun creatore. Esiste solo la creatività, l'energia della creatività.

Ti ringrazio moltissimo.

Conclusions

What remains after the research on the history of a philosopher and of what led him to his conclusions on life?

All philosophers endeavour to interpret life starting from the occurrences and experiences of their own life, and from their need to find contentment and a conclusion to their philosophic research.

Osho offers his “knowledge” to those who are looking for replies to their “questions” about existence.

I am using the word “knowledge” with the intention of including man’s rationality and spirituality, which are not disconnected from “being” and “doing”.

And in this I find the continuation of Socrates’s work on earth. With the addition of the enrichment of the knowledge of the human psyche resulting from the knowledge acquired up to now.

Man has a tendency to trace back to the foundations of being, therefore of truth, therefore to the root. That is, to that point which is both a departure and an arrival – the highest point, which unifies existence and is its reason.

The reappraisal of the discoveries, concepts, truth, in any case of the achievements of man, is a part of life’s becoming, of its greatest development, which takes place through the discoveries (the development) of man.

Thus it is in philosophy. It is obvious, therefore, for one to proceed by investigating more deeply and developing (these are the two poles) what appeared to be “established”.

It is not a matter of denying anything. It is a matter of developing; and, in this sense, an opposition with the extant arises: in order to move forward, the foot that is behind opposes its own position and places itself in front. These are the two wings: the extant and its opposition.

I do not know whether this also means investigating more deeply; but it cannot be otherwise! Because investigating more deeply is done through a comparison: it cannot be otherwise!

The essence of Osho's thought/revelation is that man is God, since divinity (the divinity of God) lies in the soul of man, in his spiritual essence. Where else could it lie?

If God "works", he does it through his creatures, who are indissolubly united, like the drops in the ocean. Another question: is it possible to distinguish, in the substance, the wave from the sea? In the shape it is possible, in the substance it is not.

Likewise it is not possible to distinguish God from his creatures. And the creatures cannot distinguish themselves from God.

God's power, which belongs to the single individual, is strong, so strong that it can tackle and solve all problems. But it is also absolutely simple (otherwise it might be frightening), and this simplicity is represented by, and identical with, a drop of the water of the sea and ocean.

Spirituality, which is the soul's fuel, consists in believing in oneself and not in someone or something. It consists in being at ease with oneself, therefore in eliminating feelings of guilt or inadequacy.

Osho has been called "master of reality", and his purpose/goal was that of arousing, with his example and his strength, trust in the divinity of each person, so as to make it possible for each person to experience divinity in his own life. He did not want to be a master to whom people turned for protection: his "mastery" consisted in his own life, just as our "mastery" consists in our life. Because the only master is life, which is different for each of us.

Osho acknowledges in each drop the capability of developing thought, of experiencing emotions and feelings, in order to enter true knowledge, the "totality of knowledge".

And we experience a feeling of fullness, satisfaction, contentment, when we find out that we have achieved the highest level of worth for us – the level that is individual and makes us not wish for more.

This worth refers to our person in its entirety, even when it refers to a single aspect of our life (which may be a good mark for our knowledge, our beauty, our

balance...). But it is our entirety as a person, as an individual, that experiences fullness and unlimited satisfaction. Even if this experience is limited in time.

Why do people inordinately pursue success, appearance? Because success fulfils their need to be recognised as worthy, which is the fundamental need of human beings: worth corresponds to their divine nature, with unlimited capabilities. Since religions forbid man to recognise himself as worthy, he needs a substitute, that is other people's recognition. But the real part of life is to live in one's emotions, perceptions and feelings: each person is God on his own and cannot be compared to anyone else, in no way and for no reason. This holds for the great men of life and history, whose strength lies in their thoughts and emotions, that is in the reasons of the soul: this is why they are called "masters".

If the real point of people's entity is the essence of the soul, the rest is a superstructure that is useful, but not indispensable.

Monotheistic religions, too, for instance Christianity and Islam, followed and follow this principle, and Christ's testimony is precisely this: he was supposed to represent, for people, the "person shell" that acts in everyday life, but it is clear, as witnessed by the Gospels, that what guides him is only the soul.

This leads us to consider that people's essential values, the worth and dimension of the human God, remain dormant and hidden, and are underused, because individual awareness is lacking. The essence of life does not belong to us automatically; for this reason these values do remain within us as such, but they not used and not expressed.

In the dimension of emotions lies the true part of man. It is there that man experiences his natural dimension. It is there that his history, his present and his future lie. It is there that his life, the real one, is imprinted. And from there, from emotions, the desire and strength of life start. From there the live element starts: it is that of thought, because that is where his divinity is alive and dwells.

If the starting point is the divinity of man, i.e. the fact that he is God, everything that man has considered up to now takes on a connotation that is not merely different, but actually the opposite. Now it is like living in a dream, and, as such, in an unreal reality. So much so that it is possible to be regarded as insane.

But what remains of the reality of the extant is the beauty and harmony known so far, and all there can be in Paradise, and more... Because Paradise too, as we have imagined it up to now, is inadequate in comparison with what one experiences, sees, practises of oneself, of one's being God.

The practise of *meditation* is the logical consequence, in Osho's opinion, of his assertion that we are God.

Where can we look for answers to existential problems unless within ourselves? Meditation, according to Osho, is "being with oneself".

Meditation is not a theoretic fact, it is a practical one, because it makes it possible to work on oneself, to attempt to link emotions and feelings to action.

Meditation, however, is strong, because it directly reaches emotions and feelings, and lets sensations go, because they spring from a mind that is conditioned by the frustrations of earthly everyday life. Meditation helps us rise to the philosophic dimension, starting from the concrete, existential situation, in order to bring it into the overall vision of the coexistence of the sea-drops that mutually nourish each other while preserving their individuality.

It also helps us not give way to our own conditioning and to that of other people, but to "come into" our soul and live according to its needs, seeking them, understanding them, pursuing them, in order to find our true identity, which is in our soul.

Meditation is like a flight toward the liberation from the "difficulty/misery" of existing, from the difficulty of understanding oneself and everything else, and from the suffering that all this involves. But it also makes it possible to enjoy being God, experiencing it fully in human reality, which is so complex, often incomprehensible and full of difficulties.

With meditation we get in touch with our soul, where sentiments, emotions, thoughts are born. We come into that part of ourselves, divinity, that is unknown to us, though we can sense that it is there. But this insight is not enough: we must enter, in order to see both ourselves and that part of ourselves: these two achievements take place at the same time.

This is the moment in which we live between desire and dream. This is what is required by the transformation that takes place, if we accept it, as a result of our belief that that dimension exists and that our life lies in that dimension.

Emotion – thought – life

Emotion is the essence of our soul: it opens us to a world that is new but anchored to the present, and makes the new become present.

But how can we make it become present? By stopping it, describing it, transforming it into thought.

This is growth, this is development: as such it needs, like the seed does, to tackle and accept change, allowing itself ultimately to die in relation to what exists.

It is a transformation that involves a rebirth, starting from what we were. Because in the seed there is the whole tree. This takes place through a love contact, an exchange of love, from which there arises the assurance of dying for a better life.

The master, with an infinite trust in his disciple, with an inexhaustible, predetermined perseverance, tells him who he is potentially, brings him back to his seed, which is waiting for itself and for the others to be opened and thus be transformed.

But without the master's love, expressed through his teaching, his trust and his total, patient acceptance...without this love life does not exist!

It is a change that takes place in the being, in its total dimension... and expresses itself in the total dimension of being.

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