

A REVOLUTIONARY OSHO

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The word *Oshō* is the Japanese reading of the Chinese *he shang* meaning a high-ranking Buddhist monk or highly virtuous Buddhist monk. It is also a respectful designation for Buddhist monks in general and may be used with the suffix *-san*. According to the Kōjien Japanese dictionary and the Kanjigen dictionary of Chinese, the word osho is originally derived from the Sanskrit *upadhyaya*, meaning "master" in the sense of "teacher". The Japanese word *Zen* is derived from the Chinese word *Chán*, which in turn is derived from the Sanskrit word *dhyāna*, which means "meditation" or "meditative state". *Zen* emphasizes experiential Wisdom in the attainment of enlightenment. As such, it de-emphasizes theoretical knowledge in favor of direct realization through meditation and dharma practice.

This paper is an attempt to throw some light on the revolutionary aspects of Osho. He wants to transform the world through his revolutionary ideas. The first step is for each individual to transform himself. When all the individuals are transformed to enlightened beings, the whole world will be transformed to an entirely new place and life will be really worth living.

Osho was born in India in 1931 as Rajneesh Chandra Mohan Jain. In the 1960s he was known as Acharya Rajneesh. Throughout the 1970s and 1980s he became known as Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh, and finally in 1989 he took the name Osho. Osho established Rajneeshpuram, an "intentional community" located in Oregon, where he attracted considerable media attention for his Rolls Royce collection. The community collapsed in 1985 due to a variety of pressures and problems, and Osho returned to India where he died in 1990.

Osho was a rebel right from his childhood. In his book *New Man for the New Millennium* published posthumously, we come across several incidents of his life showing his rebellious attitude. His house used to be frequented by an elderly relative and his father wanted him to touch the old man's feet. Rajneesh did not like the idea. He kept on refusing to touch the old man's feet, but his father was very adamant and every time he used to catch hold of his head and bend it in front of the old man. At last one day Rajneesh kept a pointed tool and the moment his father bent his head towards the old man's feet secretly he pricked his foot with the pointed tool. After this incident his father never forced him to touch anybody's feet.

Another incident is that of his university years. In the same book (*New Man for the New Millennium*) he writes about an incident when he behaved in a revolutionary manner towards his professor. He attributes his rebellious behavior to the generation gap: In the past there was no generation gap. One generation followed another generation in continuity, with no gap between them. By the time the father died the son would have replaced him in every field of life. In the past the only way of learning was to participate with the older generation. Work with them – that was the only way to learn. And of course older generation was always respected, because they were the teachers. They knew and you were ignorant, the ignorant necessarily respected the knowledgeable. But now that is not the case. The new generation is a by-product of many things.

The only connection between the parents and children is financial. By the time the child comes from the university he is twenty five years old. In these twenty five years knowledge has taken quantum leaps. To come back to the incident – Osho was very much puzzled when he was in the university because his professor of Psychology was quoting names and books which had been out of date for almost three decades. Osho was continuously in the library, he was interested in knowing everything. So he scanned through the library register and found that the particular professor's name was nowhere since the previous two decades. He also went to the house of the professor to find out how many books he had in his possession. Finding no book on recent Psychology he asked his wife whether he read anything. His wife's reply was that "That idiot, all he reads is the news paper". (233).¹ Osho says: "And it is impossible to respect a professor who knows less than you know, who is outmoded. He should be ashamed to remain in the seat of the professor." (232) that's what he told his professor of Psychology: "It is simply undignified for you to remain in that seat, because you don't know what is happening in the field of psychology today. You know what was happening thirty years before. Since the day you left your university you have not touched a single book". (232)

OSHO'S RADICAL IDEAS ABOUT LOVE AND MARRIAGE

Men and women should not be in a contract, like marriage. They should be in love — but they should retain their freedom. They don't owe anything to each other.

Osho's book *Being in Love* contains wildly radical ideas about love, marriage and sex. The ideas expressed by Osho were revolutionary when he first said them more than 20 years ago. Even today these ideas continue to be radical and revolutionary. Certain quotations from the book are given below.

"...never say to anybody that love is a duty. It is not. Duty is a false substitute for love."

"You have been given the idea of a permanent love which is going to destroy your whole life. ...Love becomes secondary, permanence becomes primary."

"...it is also possible that you may have to change your lovers many times in life. There is no harm in it."

"A marriage is almost finished by the time the honeymoon is over; then you go on pretending. But behind those pretensions a deep boredom accumulates."

"Marriage is a way to avoid intimacy...Marriage is a sort of prostitution..."

"In the new world, there should be no marriage, only lovers...and the moment they feel that they have been together too long, a little change will be good."

(All these extracts from *Being in Love* have been obtained from Internet)²

OSHO'S VIEWS ABOUT FAMILY

Osho's views about marriage and family are ultramodern and essentially futuristic. The tribal man was the most primitive man, the most un-evolved. He lived in the tribe as a number not as a member. But he got security. One cannot go against the conventions of the tribe. The moment the chief found out the person who went against the conventions he was sacrificed to the gods. As a result family developed because not only it made you part of a similar unit as a tribe that

gave you protection but it also gave you a little more freedom. Marriage was an invention against nature. In the beginning all the stronger people collected all beautiful women. But then the weaker men got together and said ‘one man, one wife’. Thus the family came into existence. It was successful because now the weaker men also got partners. Now the family is also disappearing, because something which is protective at one point is bound to become prohibitive at another point. Thus family has been good and bad. It was a necessary evil. Osho agrees that there are families on earth – very rare, not more than one percent – which are really beautiful, which are really beneficial, in which growth happens; ... in which children are not destroyed; in which wife is not trying to destroy the husband and the husband is not trying to destroy the wife; where love is and freedom is ... where there is no politics. For these people there is no need to change. In the future they can continue to be families.

According to him, “The family is disappearing, marriage is disappearing, friendship is disappearing... so far so good, because it leaves you alone to be yourself”.(134) Only a person who knows the beauty of being alone is capable of being together. He is capable of coming as close as possible, because he is unafraid, He knows that he is, he has an integrated being in him. And with this ‘crystallization’ he will be able to live alone. When a person is not capable of being alone, he is always dependent on the other. He clings, he exploits the other, he creates all kinds of bondage around the other. And whenever you make the other your possession, you become the possession of the other. When you are afraid of the other’s leaving you, you are ready to compromise. They compromise for the single reason because they cannot live alone. And compromising leads to all sorts of mental diseases. Says Osho “You can ask the psychoanalysts and they will say all kinds of mental diseases arise out of family...The family creates a very ill human being.” (134)

The mother cannot live without the child; of course the child cannot be without the mother. Thus family members are dependent on each other. Then the family depends on other families. People depend on church, on clubs and thus on societies. It is a great world of dependent people, childish grown ups who will be suffering from all sorts of mental diseases

According to Osho, “We’re all stuck in a very angry place with the people we choose to spend our lives with, particularly spouses and significant others. Most of this anger is due to conditioning that’s been handed down for generations... Lying is an important aspect of our conditioning. Our societies program us to pretend rather than to be authentic... Osho reminds us that marriage is an institution, and most people aren’t too thrilled about being institutionalized. Love is impossible in this kind of environment. What’s needed is the basic goal of friendliness and the reminder that love is not a business”³

Osho says “It is good that family is disappearing. And with it nations will disappear because the family is the unit of the nation” (140).

OSHO’S VIEWS ON COMMUNES

But “The family is no more protective; it is prohibitive. It was a great step out of the tribe. Now another step has to be taken: from the family to the commune.” (136) “A commune, in my vision, (says Osho) is a totally different world. It is not a society. A commune is a gathering of people who are capable of being alone, and they would like to be together to create a good orchestra of being. A commune is not a dependent phenomenon, it is independence.” (131) In a commune there is no society. Here everybody is enjoying his being, and nobody interferes in anybody’s life. There is no interference. There will be couples, but there will not be husbands and wives. There will be *friends* in a commune. People can live together in a commune if they

enjoy being together, but only for that joy of being together – it is not a need. If at any moment a person decides to get out of a relationship, he can get out of it without any trouble, without any turmoil, without crying weeping, without any nagging or prolonging. Says Osho: “My commune will create individuals who are capable of living alone and who are also capable of living together – who can play solo music and who can become part of a chorus.” (133)

According to Osho family causes a lot of psychological problems in children. The boy loves the mother because he is a man and she is a woman – and the first woman in his life. He loves the mother and hates the father. He is also jealous of the father because the father and mother are in love. The girl will hate her mother her whole life; And strangely enough, she will behave exactly like her mother, so she will hate herself too. She will see her face in the mirror and she will remember her mother. And the same thing is going to happen to the boy. This mess is creating almost fifty percent of the psychological diseases in men and women around the world.

A commune will have a totally fresh psychological health. This is possible only in a commune, because the child (of course will be born from a mother and he will have a father, but that father will not be the only boundary around him) will be moving in the whole commune and all men of the age of his father will be his uncles – and an uncle is a nice person. The father is always a little nasty; he has to discipline the boy. And the same thing is about mother. And when there are so many uncles and so many aunts, one great phenomenon comes into existence: you are not carrying a single person’s image in your mind.

“The commune has future. A commune means many independent individuals, not belonging to each other in the old ways of family, tribe, religion, nation, race – no. Only in one way they are related to each other: that is they are all independent. They respect your independence. The other’s way of life, his style of life is absolutely is absolutely accepted, respected. The only condition is nobody is allowed to interfere with anybody else in any sense. So it is good that all this dead past is disappearing, and freeing us to create a New Man, a new humanity, a new world.” (141)

OSHO’S VIEWS ON BELIEF AND SELF TRUST

Belief is theoretical. Trust is existential. One can change one’s belief without any trouble. From Hindu one can become Christian, from Christian one can become a Mohammedan, and you can become a communist, because belief is only in the mind, belief is like plastic flowers, that have no roots. But trust is real rose, it has roots and roots go deep into one’s heart. Trust is possible only if one trusts oneself. “If you trust in yourself you can trust in existence.” (15) The inquiry into truth begins only when you drop all believing. “If you drop believing, immediately your energy will take a new turn: it will start inquiring, your life becomes a pilgrimage to truth and in that very pilgrimage you grow” (27). Society tries to destroy self-trust at the very roots because a man who trusts in himself is dangerous to the society. Society teaches all other kinds of other trust – trust in parents, trust in the church, trust in state, trust in God and infinitum, but basic self-trust is destroyed by society. But a man who trusts in himself is an independent man. One cannot force him into any kind of believing. He is confident; he will assert himself. To change trust is almost impossible. The real man grows till the end. Even while he is dying he is growing. He will still be inquiring - now inquiring into death. He will be fascinated: death is such an unknown phenomenon.

Jesus says, ‘Truth liberates.’ But how to attain truth? Osho gives answer_ “It is not a question of belief, but a question of meditative ness. And what is meditation? Meditation is emptying your mind, completely of all belief, ideology, concept, thought. Only in an empty mind, when there is no dust left on the mirror, truth reflects. The reflection is a benediction.” (32)

Meditation is a science – it is the science of discovering and exploring the inner world of consciousness. But Osho’s techniques are also revolutionary. Osho says meditation is nothing short of a revolution – a revolution against all the ideas we have about ourselves and the world we live in, a revolution against all the ideas fed to us by society, a revolution against everything that is borrowed from others, that is not our own personal experience. For such a major revolution we need absolute totality – we need to bring all our energy and awareness to whichever technique we are practising.

To help us do this, Osho created ‘active’ meditation techniques. He was well aware that the ancient techniques of sitting silently watching the grass grow are quite irrelevant to our lifestyle of today, where our busy minds, stressed out bodies and repressed emotions make it almost impossible to sit still in peace. So he created techniques that are scientifically designed to help us let go of our accumulated tensions, to consciously express and experience repressed feelings and emotions, and learn the knack of watching our habitual patterns in a new way.

Conclusion

What Osho wants to do is transformation of the humanity not reformation. But this transformation depends on each individual. When each individual is transformed into an enlightened being all the abstract ideas such as society, government, nations will disappear. Osho’s books cover every topic known to man, and some that weren’t known, and he has been called one of the intellectual giants of the 21st century. But regardless of which subject he is discussing, his basic insistence, his main message, is that every person has the potential to rise above the constraints of their mind to experience a higher consciousness, or if you like, to have an awareness of their authentic reality, rather than the identity they have been given by society. And he says that the way to do so is meditation. However revolutionary may be his ideas, we cannot call him a revolutionary, he is a rebel. We may conclude in the words of Osho:

I value the rebel more than the revolutionary. The revolutionary is the political person. He is more concerned in changing the structure of the society. The rebel simply says ‘I am here only for a few days, I will not be here forever so who bothers about the structure? I am here to live my life as truly as possible, as freely as possible. So I will live my life and I will not allow anybody to interfere in my life, and I will not interfere in anybody’s life. A rebel is an individualist. A revolutionary is again trying to control the society, To be rebellious is to be against power. To be revolutionary is to be against those who are in power

A rebellious person is one who says that power is not life.⁴

REFERENCES

¹ *Osho- New Man for New Millennium*, Ed.Ma Deva Sarito, Penguin Books, New Delhi, 2000, (All the extracts are taken from this book. Page numbers are given in parenthesis)

^{2,3,4} <http://www.Google.co.in/>