

New Mysticism: A Survey and Criticism of Osho School

Mohsen Makarem

Department of Human Science, Payame Noor University, Iran

ABSTRACT Today, some new – emerged mysticisms are promoted in our world. It is necessary for the educated to neutralize these poisonous propaganda so that the real face of these sects is revealed and the youth generation to be saved from these fatal traps. One of these false sects is a school called Osho. In this article, first, it has been attempted to provide a brief biography of the leader of the sect. second, his ideas on social, political and religious beliefs are presented. Finally, we criticize his ideas on the basis of rational reasoning. It is hoped that this study, as a first step increases our intuition on these sects.

KEYWORDS: Osho, Mysticism, Hinduism, Buddhism, Commune, Pantheism.

Introduction

Today human beings, after a long period of dormancy have again returned to spirituality. Man tired of machine – lifeless routines, breakdown of emotional – family life, unethical behavior and social class differences intends to return to himself. He feels well that he is stuck in an animal and material whirlpool and his real essence – being has not been yet revealed. Thus, Man has turned again to mysticism, literature, arts, etc. As a result, there are some individuals to respond to this increasing demand who have invented and presented false schools of mysticism which has been very effective in satisfying their sense of heroism and popularity. One of these persons is known as Osho.

Osho Biography

According to himself in his book "Now an ancient Lake", we read he was born in Madhya Pradesh, India. His grandfather died when he was seven years old and this affected him deeply so that he searched for eternity in the rest of his life. He studied philosophy and taught at the Jabalpur University. He travelled through all of India to discuss with the leaders of religions and schools of thought. Then, he began to present his ideas on creativity, love, the truth of life, courage, meditation and sex for thirty-five years. In 1947, He established an institute called Osho international Meditation Resort in Puna. A large number of people went to India to visit him to learn his meditation instruction immediately. This is still the biggest meditation center in India. This place has been surrounded by trees and contains beautiful buildings so that it provides a calm atmosphere for the inner silence.

In 1981, he went to USA and welcomed by many people. They built him a small town called Rajeesh Pedram. He was deported from USA after four years and died suspiciously in 1990. His followers say, he was neither born nor died, but came to visit the Earth for fifty – nine years. In childhood he was called Raja which later he changed his name to Ranjeesh. In his later life he chose Osho which means a spiritual person or one who has dissolved in an ocean. Masters or individuals, who influenced him apart from Magababa, Pagalbaba and Mastababa, include Buddha and Sheikh Kabir whose influences on him were very much. The latter is the title for the Indian institute of "Ramallah" which was established in fifteen century in India. The word Allah is derived from Islam and Ram is the name of Vishnu God which is one of the three big sects in India subcontinent. Using this title, they mean that Ram is Allah and Vice – versa. This sect has some followers in Iran, too. Osho had about 1000 lectures which were printed as 650 books after his death. These were translated to more Than 30 languages including Farsi among which Love, path to perfection, from sex to awareness, and Tatoonism can be mentioned.

These translations amount to 85 volumes in Farsi.

Osho's Thoughts

He was under influence of the ideas in his environment India, especially Buddhism. He studied the divine religions such as Catholic Christianity and mixed them as it is evident in his dynamic Meditation to propose theories and instructions to release the present humanity from difficulties and suffering. This way he intends to create an educated and a saved – generation that he himself calls "Zorba – Buddha". This enjoys both the material views of the Greek Zorba and the peacefulness – introvert ideas of Buddha¹.

1. About God

Osho has suggested contradictory ideas about God in his works. We refer to some of his sentences and criticize his thoughts here. He says God is not separated from you, he is your soul. He is a hidden voice in your inner existence and like a dancer who is not separated from his dance ... and if you go toward him in a one – dimension aspect, your holy books will become your chain which enslaves you¹. Satan will not have the power to misguide you and God also does not have the power to lead youⁱⁱ. He

¹ Osho, Courage, Translated by Taghipoor, Page 212

considers God the whole existence not a certain existence. He says, the word God is only a tool for the expression of our emotion to the whole. In fact, the whole existence is, when you are filled with divinity, you will be united with the whole existenceⁱⁱⁱ. Sometime, he completely rejects God and says don't talk to me about this. Every speech about the search of God is useless. There is no sense and meaning in it^{iv}. He explicitly says believing in God is the result of fear and weakness of man from his environment, that's why horses, elephants and the youth are not in search of God^v.

2. about Resurrection and Soul

He strongly rejects resurrection, instead he defends reincarnation on the basis of his personal experiences which is a common belief in Hindu that is, Genism and Buddhism. For example, He says " Don't worry about the Judgement Day. He knows you, he is responsible for you, if you go astray, and he is in charge not you^{vi}. However, it is interesting that, two pages later, he says the opposite, and this is my experience. Whatever happens to you he is responsible for it. Hindus believe that life after death does not exist, but the soul enters another body depending on whether it is material, plants, animals or humans, it is called Raskh, Fish, metamorphosis and Naskh. The quality of this transformation is explained through the "Karamah" principles.

Believing in reincarnation is obviously observed in Osho's speech. He says humans are reborn forever. I have mediated and reached the point so that I can see my previous lives. This is my belief and it is not related to Indian's beliefs^{vii}.

3. On Prophecy

He humiliated all prophets except Zoroaster. He degraded them to a Sophie and named them poets and insane. Some of his confessions are, I am a mystic, and so were Jesus, Mohammad, Krishna and Buddha, Animals do not choose. They accept their fate, mystics do too. Mohammad was in a cave for 3 days in 610 (A.D). He was shivering for 3 days. This experience led to his fountain of mysticism to boil. Being a poet and insanity are together. He was both a poet and an insane. I am sorry for the poor Christ. He deserved to be crucified. He was insane and needed medical treatment. He should release the idea that he is the son of God, because this doesn't make him a savior, but makes you a clown which proves you are nuts^{viii}.

4. On Politics and Government

Like other new emerged mysticisms, Osho invites people to individualism, subjectivism and isolation from society. He does not tolerate politics and government. He opposes revolution against social deviancy. We review some of his statements. In this world, being an individual is the most courageous. Fearlessness is in individuality Those who follow others ideas need support. No one can return in groups, the person can do this by himself^{ix}. Politicians are dull. This quality has made them go to politics; otherwise, they did not choose power when they have poetry and intellect as their choices. This shows their weaknesses. Thus, they are dangerous for a humane and calm life. ^x

5. On Law and Order

Osho opposes to every aspect of lawfulness, whether the laws are man – made or holy messengers have brought them. He says, Oh, what secrecy and expansion life has. He does not obey any laws Knowing the golden law is very important and that law is: there is no golden law. Real life is considered anarchy; life has the most basic principle in this nature. It is needless of any external law.^{xi}

Osho regards juries and consults as deceivers, such that they deceive even themselves. To explain this, he has to recourse to a story by Buddha. ²

6. On Mind, Intellect and Science

Osho rejects mind due to the assumption that it shares everything and it is holistic. He says the mind is sick and it never brings peacefulness.... It is a mediator between the body and soul, but the soul is awareness. Mind is the greatest criminal because it attaches humans to their bodies.³ Since the mind has a negative position in Osho School, he attacks the intellect, logic and philosophy. Instead, he insists on following and obeying the master. He says if the follower wants to reach the truth, he will be like a dog which bites its own tail. Therefore, he resembles the tasks of philosophers to a dog.⁴ Osho proudly says he does not follow any philosophical system. I even do not know what I said yesterday. I do not think about this at all. I only respond to this moment. There is neither a yesterday nor a tomorrow. This moment is the truth.⁵ He continues and announces that philosophy is dead. He believes that the Earth is a big insane asylum and this is the consequences of civilization and technology. He considers a baby clean at birth, but considers schools and universities places where they teach him to practice deceit.⁶

7. On Family and sexual Instinct

Osho considers himself an expert in all areas such as history, sociology, religion,, philosophy, health and even birth control, but in psychology and psychoanalysis he calls himself a theorist. In his Golden Future, he has designed his utopia in which he believes communes should replace all of the countries, big cities and families in his view, communes in green woods, mountains and islands. The acceptable population for a commune is from 5000 to 50000 people. If the communes more populated, they are

² Osho, Big Secret, Translated by Kahrize, Page 147

³ Same Page 169

⁴ Same Page 251

⁵ Same Page 135

⁶ Osho, , Courage , Translated Taghipoor, Pages 201-207

uncontrollable in which again there will be a need for laws, police and courts. All kinds of crimes will again be committed. He states that there should be new forms of group life which he calls a commune, where people can connect. Family is the building block of the nations, ethnic group and religious organization, which have taken away the happiness from the human beings. The basis of family is ownership, that is, the husband is the owner of the wife and these two are the owners of the children and this is like handcuffs on the hands of the man. Family tries to separate you from the society and as soon as this is removed, all of political deceases will be removed. Therefore, there are not family and marriage in a commune.⁷ He is strongly against family and population increase. He is for elite generation, thus, he has taken genetic engineering and to achieve this goal, he says he should donate his sperms to be examined to which ovum to be fertilized. This is not necessary that it is your wife. The purpose is to reproduce such persons as Anishtain, Nietzsche and Dostoevsky as well as great dancers such as Nijensky. Artificial insemination is the only scientific way to have best children. This way, relationship between the two is merely enjoyment and reduces the anxiety of unwanted child. He mentions contraceptive pills which are a revolution to prevent pregnancy.⁸ Osho sees Mrs. Shila Brinston in the USA. He makes her his personal secretary and executive of his camp. He had relationship with her. He is in favor of free and unlimited sexual relationship. In this camp, all members of this sect have had collective life and sexual relationship, but nobody got pregnant.⁹ Osho in his book *Courage* rejects all kinds of fear. Including fear of parents, of sins, of the Judgment Day, of death and of sexual relationship. He speaks of courage extensively. He considers fear as an obstacle to reach truth and love. He regards love to have four stages. He invites persons to all of these stages which mean from sex to organization.¹⁰ A complete sexual ejaculation removes all bodily fears. Osho is in favor of the absolute love, he says you should love all without any expectation. You should not hate anybody because this is a sign of an illness, hatred is an unnatural phenomena.¹¹ Then, he prescribes a meditation for his followers to leave fear and not to be the slave of anything or anyone.

A criticism on Osho's thoughts

In the following, there is a brief survey of what Osho says.

1. On the Existence of the Omnipotent God.

He is in favor of pantheism. He regards all creatures God. That is, there is no border between the creator and the creatures. He considers God as the whole existence. It is obvious that the God which Quran and Nahjolbalaghe introduce to us is not as such. He is an eternal creature that has existed before and after the world and its creatures. He is no means to express our emotions. He has a creator and holy relationship with everything, but is not the same as objects. In the honorable Nahjolbalaghe we read God is an existence who has not come from nothingness, he is with every object but not beside it and he is separate from every object but not far from it.¹² God is not responsible for our voluntary actions. Everyone is responsible for his.¹³ Muslims have logical, experimental and innate reasons for proving God existence and his unity. Thus, there needs no mental explanation such as fear to mention to individuals to believe in God. If in the Quran, it is talked about the God virtues, this does not mean fear, but it is modesty and avoidance of sins. Second, God's virtue and modesty is the result of believing in God, not its cause as what Osho has written, that is, first we believe then our heart is submissive to God and his signs, not vice – versa. If some religions are led to duality or trinity, what's the fault with Islam? For this reason God has sent a new religion to remove the distortions.

2. The Subject of Resurrection

Revelation schools believe that the soul remains dead and the body remains in earth. Finally, with the end of life of the world, all simultaneously and together enter the eternity and there is no return to this world anymore. Reincarnation in this world is completely false and philosophers and Islamic preachers have invalidated it. As Molasadra says; according to material motion, if reincarnation is true, it is necessary that the first soul for entering a new body gradually goes from potentiality to movement, and from movement to potentiality which the latter is impossible, that is, conscience does turn into absence. It is worth mentioning that there are over 1500 Quran verses on the doomsday but not even one verse on reincarnation.

3. Prophecy

Prophets were polite and ... people who were elected by God's revelation. They showed the necessary documents for their relationship with God and challenged their miracles against people's intellects. They spent their lives and peace for the guidance of human, they concern the society, and they have never been a Sufi ... and indifferent to the fate of people, that is, saying anything that happens is good. That was the behavior of weak and irresponsible people to call them poet, fool, or magician, these were the titles the enemies gave them, without having any reasons. If Osho cannot elevate his position to that of Prophets, it is rude to lower their dignity in front of God. He went even further and found himself more open minded and wiser than prophets!

4. Government and Law

There were times when humans were cavemen and lived sporadic, but since civilization and urbanization formed, any wise adult understood that society needs law, law needs executive, and the outlaw should be punished in a way, thus, the legislative, Judicial, and Executive are required and the government would be inevitable. Statesmanship like other skills needs education,

⁷ Same Page 127

⁸ Osho, *Now An Ancient lake*, Translated by Sdvndyan Page 46

⁹ Osho, *Song of Silence* pages 2 ,10 and *Conspiracy in the name of God*, first chapter

¹⁰ Osho, , *Courage* ,Translated by Taghipoor, Page122

¹¹ Osho, *Roots and wings*, Translated by Barzegar, Page 105

¹² Osho, *Sun shade*, Translated by Barati, Pages 244 , 42

¹³ Osho, *Big Secret*, Page 49

experience and proficiency which are called policy. A wise man would not talk about chaos and outlawry, especially in the twentieth century. Some of the great prophets reached the position of verdict and governance. If the righteous and scholars do take the leadership of the society, the hegemonic power and exploiters would do that, which is the concern of Osho. With his secular ideas.... And prepare the situation for the dominance of libertines over the weak and the believers. Wish he had seen this verse of Quran which implies the jurisprudential rule of "nafye sabii"..... God set no way for the dominance of unbelievers over the believers. Wish he called his followers to be in societies and advising to good deeds and preventing from bad deeds, and saying sentences such as Wish they study the behavior of Hossein Ibn Ali and his devoted companions and deliver them to Americans and Hindus. In this case, there would be no need to publish the book of Shahamat and Golden Future and its fantasy ideas. The spiritual life claimed by Osho, is not possible without providing a practical model, but he disagrees with providing a model or any headship or Imamat.

5. Mind, Intellect, and Science

With anti – mind, anti –intellect and also opposing to science and technology and university, Osho directs himself to the Medieval ages and before that. It is obvious that human has four instruments for recognition of the world around himself: sense, experience, intellect, and intuition, each is effective in a certain domain. God gives us guiding light of revelation by the prophets. In Islam, intellect is introduced along with revelation, false messenger along with ...the messenger and made the human in need of these two Hojjats. In the history, mankind was always experiencing extremes. Sometimes, he was just rational, for a while he considered the rationales ... and there were times that the only way of proof was sense and experience. We should ... God also called Muslims the moderate community. For example, the respectful Nahjolbalaghe teaches us the efficiency of the intellect in the recognition of God and his characteristics and names: intellects cannot understand the characteristics of God and they are unable to understand the necessary amount of God's knowledge. The Hadith which should be studied in related books.

6. Family and Sexual Instinct

Opposed to Osho's opinion, most delinquencies and crimes are due to lack of marriage and family formation, a center where man and woman reach peace, the child gets his identity and find his emotional, economic and social support. Today, we can see what emotional and psychological damages are made by the problems to the families: wives and husbands distrusted each other and lack of love, their sexual needs are not satisfied, and they bring dogs to fill the gap of a child and The solution for unsuccessful families is not the prescription of destroying the family, the pathologists should find out. Why was it rare in the past? Sexual instinct is the animal need of human. It means both of them have this need, same as eating and sleeping, it is unlikely that all problems would be due to that need. Man's perfection lies in the growth of his human dimension. Those dimensions that are not common with animals, rather it is their difference. Such as: tendency to truth, humanism, and optimal ethics. Osho rejects almost everything, with his theory, austerity and meditation programs. Rejection of mind, science, religion, law, pray, family, and social identity ... after all these rejections, he just asserts one thing and that is "Love". ... Love, that ladder of which is sex. He sees sex as a sky bridge and knows it as ... Nirvana, if it lasts for a long time.

Conclusion

If we do not consider him as an agent of cultural colonialism, in the most optimistic condition, we should say that Osho was born in a backward and populated Asian society, called India that has been under cultural and extreme economical poverty, a society with a number of schools and religions and most of these schools drums the monastic life and denial of this world and halal pleasures. These backwardness made him made clarifications, to prescribe a presumption as a fact for the people of the country and generalize it to the world population. Since colonizers ... divisive and principled politics, they spread these thoughts. Establishment and spreading of a sect is a step in increasing controversy in international community.

Footnotes

1. Osho, Courage, Translated by Taghipoor, Page 212
2. Osho, Big Secret, Translated by Kahriz, Page 147
3. Same Page 169
4. Same Page 251
5. Same Page 135
6. Osho, , Courage ,Translated Taghipoor, Pages 201-207
7. Same Page 127
8. Osho, Now An Ancient lake, translated by Sdvndyan Page 46
9. Osho, Song of Silence pages 2 ,10 and Conspiracy in the name of God, first chapter
10. Osho, , Courage ,Translated by Taghipoor, Page122
11. Osho, Roots and wings, translated by Barzegar, Page 105
12. Osho, Sun shade, Translated by Barati, Pages 244, 42
13. Osho, Big Secret, Page 49
14. Osho, Big Secret, Page 3.9
15. Osho, Song of Silence, Translated by Hosseini, Page 206
16. Osho, Roots and wings, Page 175
17. Osho, Meditation passion and drunkenness, translated by Asghari, Page 44

18. Osho, the Golden Future, Translated by Faraji, Page 97
19. Same Page 83
20. Faali, Outlook on the ideas and thoughts of Osho, Page 52
21. Bookkeeping, Yoga and spiritual appeal stemmed
22. Osho, Courage, Translated by Taghipoor, Pages 81 And 111
23. Nahjolbalaghe, Sermon 1
24. Sura Modaser, 38
25. Sura Nesa, 141
26. Sheikh Tusi, Refinement, G 6, Page 178
27. Nahjolbalaghe, Sermon 49
28. Nahjolbalaghe, Sermon 50