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## **Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh (Osho) - The Matrix Dictionary**

There has been produced many books, articles and movies about the controversial Indian guru Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh (Osho). The newest one is *Wild Wild Country*, a Netflix documentary series about Rajneesh, his one-time personal assistant Ma Anand Sheela, and their community of followers in the Rajneeshpuram community located in Wasco County, Oregon. It was released on Netflix on March 16, 2018, after premiering at the Sundance Film Festival.

My article won't focus on the controversies. There are a lot of other sources to these. I will focus on an investigation of Rajneesh's philosophy, and the consequences of having a bad philosophy. Therefore it is necessary to give a brief introduction to the controversies. On Timothy Conway's website [EnlightenedSpirituality.org](http://EnlightenedSpirituality.org) Conway writes:

*About this man Rajneesh/Osho there was a lot of laughter, loquacity, occasional eloquence, some real insight, and an immensely potent and hypnotic energy. But sadly, there was also a lot of lunacy, immense dysfunction, and astonishing selfishness, pettiness, megalomania, callousness and corruption. He was/is remarkably interesting as a sensual ecstatic, intuitive mystic, unlicensed psychotherapist of en masse primal scream-cry-laugh "dynamic meditation" therapy, rebellious social-political-religious provocateur, successful self-promoter, cosmic joker, and relentless iconoclast who simultaneously lured his emotionally-dependent followers into making a big icon out of himself. Though numerous Rajneeshees will claim, using vague or dubious criteria, that their guru was "fully enlightened" (Rajneesh certainly claimed this for himself) and that he enlightened them, too, with his counsels and his "special energy," the bulk evidence indicates that Rajneesh/Osho left a mixed or even tragic legacy.*

*This legacy involved...*

*--very misleading or imbalanced teachings as well as quite helpful wisdom,*

*--some really bad advice along with genuinely good counsels,*

*--a slew of lies about himself and his movement,*

*--dozens of glaring errors in his discussions of world religions and other subjects,*

*--personal role-modeling of voracious materialist greed and conniving ambition for fame and power,*

*--narcissistic ego-inflation along with authoritarian power-plays and lack of empathy,*

*--intellectual dishonesty and petty oneupsmanship tactics,*

*--a hypocritical inability to live what he preached (e.g., telling everyone to "go beyond the mind" while talking for tens of thousands of hours from a heavily opinionated and error-prone mind; preaching that the enlightened one lives in tension-free ease viewing life as a play while he himself frequently used laughing gas/nitrous oxide and valium to the point of incoherence, said some of his closest people),*

*--a penchant by Rajneesh and his appointed leaders for deceitful spinning or rationalizing nearly every time they were confronted on anything of importance,*

*--heavy solicitations and numerous scams by his appointed leaders to fleece his followers and their families of as much of their money and possessions as possible (especially from 1980 onward),*

*--crushing work-loads for exploited disciples (routinely 15-18 hours, 7 days a week), at the Oregon ranch in USA from 1981-5,*

*--a commune at Poona, India and then one in Oregon often buzzing with ecstatic excitement and groovy sensuality but also debauched by wanton sex (and countless venereal diseases),*

*--a several-year period of violence at Poona and branch-communes worldwide (resulting in bruises, blood, even broken bones and rapes) until it was banned by the Rajneesh Foundation in 1979,*

*--and diverse criminal activity from the mid-1970s to mid-1980s in both India and Oregon.*

*The crimes, as recounted by former disciples, included drug running, swindling and prostitution by many ashramites to pay for their lengthy stays in India or funnel money to the commune; extensive immigration fraud and tax fraud conducted by Rajneesh and Foundation leaders in India and then the USA; currency and gold smuggling when they moved to the USA in 1981; a slew of frivolous lawsuits launched to harass and intimidate local Oregon citizens from 1982-1985; failing to pay many of their loans in the USA; arson (one incident in India to defraud an insurance company, another arson attack in USA to destroy county records), racketeering, burglary, assault, conspiracy and illegal electronic surveillance (the largest such wiretapping-bugging operation ever uncovered); criminal bioterrorism sickenings of some 750 Oregonians and attempted assassinations of select outsiders and insiders in 1984-1985 by some of Rajneesh's top circle of people, led by his authorized lieutenant, Ma Sheela; and intermittent poisonings of scores if not hundreds of Rajneesh sannyasins from the late 1970s until Sheela and her "Dr. Mengele" Ma Puja left in 1985. In all, just assessing the illegal activity in the USA from 1981-1985 (not to mention earlier crimes in India), 32 Rajneeshees were charged with crimes in Oregon; 23 pleaded guilty; 2 were convicted at trial; 4 still remain fugitives; 8 served prison time.*

*The Rajneesh legacy also includes...*

*--deliberately divided and broken families,*

*--serial noncommittal relationships,*

*--sham marriages to defy immigration laws,*

*--mass abortions and sterilizations of women (many suffering from surgical complications) and vasectomies for men all ordered by the guru,*

*--a few thousand very neglected children,*

*--and, for too many periods of time, neglect by Rajneesh of the spiritual welfare and bodily-emotional-financial welfare of tens of thousands of young adults and older disciples who had given to this mesmerizing little man so much of their lives—their souls, minds, energy, money and years of labor.*

*The majority of these disciples never or only rarely complained, having been brainwashed to regard all the manipulation, neglect and/or abuse as a "test," a "game," a "big joke" by the Bhagwan and his elites.*

*May his soul and all souls be in supreme peace and clarity in the One Divine Self!*

*I heartfully apologize in advance to those faithful followers of Rajneesh/Osho for spending so much time at this webpage focusing on the dark "shadow" aspect of the clearly "two-faced" Rajneesh, largely leaving out my appreciation for his brighter, lighter side. My heavy leaning onto the critical side is to balance out the gushing praise of Osho to be found all over the Internet and on the covers for his books, videos and other merchandise prominently on display in countless venues worldwide.*

Conway adds a very important thing, namely that of the difference between divine and demonical energy transformation, which is one of my own main topics. I have investigated this several places – see for example my article [The Philosophy of Karen Blixen](#) and in my book [Lucifer Morningstar – a Philosophical Love Story](#). In my new online book [Philosophical Counseling with Tolkien](#), I have shown that the One Ring is an example of a demonical use of energy transmission. Conway says:

*PLEASE NOTE: Taking off from Calder's remark, I would like to add a crucial observation.... Even more than the notable Mafia bosses, dictators and their ilk, who often exude a formidable, palpable animal magnetism, Rajneesh / Osho was known by his sannyasins to be surrounded by an extremely potent and influential energy field that could put people into temporary altered states of consciousness (ASCs) and even deep trances. But Rajneesh is certainly not alone in this. My M.A. thesis in graduate school back in 1983 focused on the cross-cultural, widespread set of phenomena associated with figures from religious history East and West, ancient and contemporary, who are felt to be the source of this unusual energy that gets variously called Shaktipat by the Hindu Tantrikas (bestowal of the Divine Shakti energy), the Charismata Power of the Spirit by Christians (from Jesus and early followers to medieval monasteries to modern-era Pentecostal and Charismatic circles), the Baraka or Berekah blessing force around many Muslim Sufi and Jewish mystics, the Wang empowerments around certain Tibetan Buddhist lamas, the Ch'i or Ki energy around meditation masters and martial artists of China and Japan, the Mana energy around Polynesian shamans and called by various names around other shamans and shamanesses in indigenous tribes found worldwide [I could add Karen Blixen].*

*What also became clear to me in my extensive research back then and over the years since then is that such potent, palpable energy or vital force can come through scoundrels as well as saints and sages.*

[...]

*It's well known to the true sages that powerful but ultimately confused, constricted discarnate entities regarded as "demons" or "titans" (Skt.: asura, rakshasa, etc.) can create such electric energies through human beings as a way of then "feeding" on the aroused emotions and psychic states of the hordes of people who surround the human channel. That's why many Zen masters often warned their students to simply regard all unusual states and energies as makyo, distracting "diabolical phenomena," and instead wake up to the Open, Infinite Awareness, the formless "Big Self" or pristine "Buddha-Nature."*

*In concluding this point: Just because a charismatic figure is felt to be a powerhouse of energy creating altered states of consciousness in people does NOT mean the figure should be viewed as a perfected spiritual master or venerated as "Divine," ...*

Conway's remark on Zen masters warning their students is something I have emphasized again and again. I have often said that the Wholeness can be in three states: sleep, dream and awake. This corresponds to the personal, collective and universal images in time. The collective images in time is a very dangerous intermediate area between the personal and the universal images. All spiritual practice is about avoiding this area. In spiritual practice it is the form of the consciousness which is important, not the content of the consciousness. Both the personal and collective images in time belong to the content of consciousness. So, it is about discriminating between the content and the form of consciousness. A meditation practice must develop into bidirectional consciousness; that is: a consciousness which both is directed into its own form, or source, and out towards the content. The training begins with the continuing discrimination between neutral observation and distraction; an increasing awareness of the difference between the states of neutral observation and the states of distraction. You can recognize true spiritual teachers from whether they make this discrimination.

Conway also demonstrates an interesting model of discrimination. He writes:

*Now, for an alternate, "bigger picture" context, in a hopefully-clarifying threefold model I have presented elsewhere (click [here](#) to read more extensively), we can say it is 1) Absolutely true that "nothing is really happening," that all manifestation is "dream-like" and ultimately "empty" because there is only God, only Absolute Being-Awareness-Bliss, the One Alone, the all-transcending and unmanifest Spirit. 2) A step down from this strictly nondual "Absolute-truth level" (paramarthika-satya) of the ONE Alone to the "blessed many" is what we might call the "psychic-soul" truth-level in which "whatever happens in the manifest worlds is perfect," because all souls are sooner or later coming Home to perfect virtue and Divine awakening from soul-hood into Spirit, so that there's fundamentally nothing "wrong" or*

*"problematic." 3) Finally, more pragmatically and usefully, there is the mundane, "conventional-truth level" (vyavaharika-satya) involving the play of opposites, crucially including justice-injustice, true-false, good-evil, appropriate-inappropriate, skillful-unskillful. All three of these levels (Absolute truth, psychic-soul truth, and mundane conventional truth) are simultaneously true within this overall Nondual (Advaita) Reality. One level is Absolutely True, the other two levels are "relatively true" or "experientially true" within the play of the many.*

*Losing the capacity to distinguish these three levels is a mark of great folly, not enlightened wisdom. And so, for instance, to excuse or overlook injustices occurring in the Rajneesh movement or elsewhere on this planet because "whatever happens is perfect" or because "this is all a dream, there's only God" is a tragic confusing of levels, and makes a mockery of the courageous work of all those who have ever endeavored to bring truth in place of lies, healing in place of harm, justice in place of injustice.*

Said in another way: the Wholeness (level 1) is undescrivable because it can't be put in opposition to anything. Only the parts can be described because you can put the parts in opposition to their negations. You can describe the good because you know what the evil is, etc. Yin and Yang. The polarity argument. The polarity argument is an impossible logic to get around. Confusing the Wholeness (level 1) and the parts (levels 2 and 3) ends in relativism, a theory which is completely anti-spiritual, even nihilistic. The advocacy of relativism is a fundamental mistake in Rajneesh's teachings.

Another example of a New Age guru who claims that everything is perfect, or good (and who therefore confuses the levels), is Byron Katie, a woman who, through moral relativism, is coming with horrendous statements such as Hitler was our loving guru, and that we can't know whether Hitler brought more people to realization than Jesus (see my article [A Critique of Byron Katie and Her Therapeutic Technique The Work](#), and my Matrix Dictionary entry on [Byron Katie](#)). Such statements expose that these people's understanding is based on a poor intellectual knowledge, and not some kind of mystical experience. If people try to work "non-dual" on the dual world, they end in moral relativism, eventually nihilism, and that is for example Friedrich Nietzsche's view. Moral relativism logically denies any absolute truth and therefore the concept of spirituality all together. To mix it with nondual wisdom is therefore a self-contradiction. Rajneesh's teachings is permeated with such self-contradictions.

It is commonly known that any person quite easily can deceive people to believe that he or she is an enlightened master. "Spiritual Placebo" is a concept coined by Film maker Vikram Gandhi. He is a young East Coast American from an Indian family.

He is astonished by the success of Eastern-style gurus in the wealthiest parts of the world. As an experiment, Gandhi learns the trick of the yoga trade, dresses himself as a guru, lets his beard grow, adopts a thick accent, and sets off under the name Kumaré to the desert city of Phoenix, Arizona. There, he quickly gathers a group of followers around him, whom he teaches to meditate to catchphrases such as “Be all that you can be.” The tone of Kumaré remains lighthearted throughout. Despite taking his disciples for a ride, much in the style of Sacha Baron Cohen’s character Borat, he always treats them with kindness and sympathy.

Gandhi/Kumaré stitches the narrative together with a matter-of-fact commentary recorded after the event, never disclosing to what extent he became wrapped up in his role as wise spiritual Indian leader. In a world Kumaré conceives as pure illusion and a product of our inner eye, the filmmaker raises the question of whether the part he plays means he has become illusion incarnate. And this triggers the question in the viewer’s mind of whether what is apparently a fake documentary actually hides a deeper truth.

Kumaré also refers to himself as “The Mirror.” His method is the so-called Mirror Yoga (The Kumaré Method). What is interesting in connection with this article is that he also performs Shaktipat, and his followers report having precisely the same experiences as the Oneness Blessing followers. Clairvoyants and channelers claim to see his pure aura and chakras, and how an archangel is standing behind him, etc. The disciples begin to build up incredible stories about him that he in fact not has produced himself. The disciples do the propaganda work for him.

Kumaré uses some common New Age phrases such as references to vibrations and energy, advices to avoid the negative, stop doubting, follow your intuitions and premonitions, flow with coincidences, believe in the purposiveness of everything, join thousands of others on the quest, turn into your feelings and evolve to a higher plane. Follow your intuitions and dreams as you go through your spiritual evolution. Fact or fiction, it doesn’t matter. Truth is what you make it. Life’s too short and too complicated to deal with reality. Make your own reality. Once you have made people believe that you are a master, and have got them into relativism, you can say and behave as you want to. Everything will be interpreted as being examples of perfect wisdom. You don’t even need to behave kindly anymore. Beginning to behave contradictory will be seen as “an intensified test.” (read more in my article [Spiritual Placebo](#). Furthermore: my book [A Dictionary of Thought Distortions](#) is meant as a guide to how to avoid getting caught up by pranksters).

But if we take it as true that Rajneesh in fact had this massive energy around him, let’s try to see what that means. There is no doubt that Rajneesh had an opening to

the collective time, but not to the universal time. He very likely had a so-called top-down awakening (see my article [The Conspiracy of the Third Eye](#)). In other words: he was not enlightened. This is quite obviously demonstrated in his contradictory behavior. Enlightenment, as traditionally understood, is a state where there precisely no contradictions are between teaching and life. An enlightened master is a person who is what he teaches. It is also a state which only can be attained through the opening of the heart, and is therefore a highly ethical state. No argument, who tries to excuse Rajneesh's unethical behavior as Crazy Wisdom, can be taken seriously as a philosophical argument. An enlightened master doesn't behave unethical, on the contrary. It is as simple as that, and if people try to convince you about anything else, well, then there is a very good argument for that it is best to become an agnostic and hard-bitten skeptic. Should unethical, contradictory behavior be a great goal to strive after?

A top-down awakening in simple terms means that your crown and third eye chakras are open and that you have quite a bit of energy surrounding your head and shoulders. Basically, you are receiving input from the heaven/sky but not the earth. This is figuratively speaking though. The heaven/sky is more akin to what I call the dangerous areas of the collective time. And the earth is the heart (love) and hara (existence). As I have said many times: heart and hara in this description must not be confused with psychic chakras, but rather with love and existence.

Many people end up with this type of awakening because they became interested in spiritual pursuits, started attending classes, doing drugs, reading literature, and finding gurus and other teachers who show them how to seek outside of themselves. Others begin life with a top-down awakening due to family history of psychic abilities or previous life abilities carried forward into this life.

The issue with this type of awakening is that it is not grounded in anything. It is not required to do much personal work or to open your first three chakras to have this type of awakening. The person experiencing this type of awakening begins to separate from this earth, this reality. They often will claim to not want to be here, or to originate from elsewhere. This very much may be true, but a recognition of the human body, the body that you are carrying this lifetime, and a desire to be grounded and do personal work which is often quite difficult is necessary for a full awakening or to come to a state of balance if you are experiencing this type of awakening. The energy is stuck in the upper body- leading to a bottleneck of energy, headaches, neck pain, disassociation, ego issues (these are some of the people who tell others how awakened they are or that they are enlightened but still are quite judgmental and lack focus on their own issues), and significant mental health issues including mania and depression can develop.

The person undergoing a top-down awakening will have immense energy circulating into their crown, third eye, and around their head and shoulders. Unfortunately for the experiencer of this, the energy is not able to move much further down because the throat chakra and heart chakra require the lower chakras to be open to open themselves. The lower chakras are the chakras which have to do with the material world and relationships, and the reason why spirituality always have advised the simple life is because of that this makes the work with the lower chakras easier. Rajneesh's material greed and problematic treatment of other people, witnesses his lack of work with the lower chakras.

Other symptoms include: being open to spiritual guidance, psychic abilities, mediumship and channeling capabilities, understanding of patterns and concepts from a different vantage point (which is due to many of these individuals being halfway out of their body so they really do have a different perspective), headaches, sinus pain, closed off feelings in the throat, thyroid issues, cravings for meat, chocolate, carbohydrates, or other grounding foods, delusions, paranoia, and feelings of heaviness or stuckness in the shoulders, upper back, heart, neck, and head. This explains Rajneesh's craving for material goods, his focus on sex, his drug addiction and eventually paranoia.

This is a significant energetic imbalance, and the energetic field of the experiencer often appears to look like an inverted cone. Often the experiencer is partially or fully out of their bodies/disassociated, and they prefer to remain this way (especially when they are euphorical inflated). They feel different and separate from everyone else, and some remain in elaborately set up illusions of their own creation. This is because the ego-inflated awakened has awakened enough to be able to create in reality, but for this group it is rarely on a conscious level- so the creation of significant blocks, illusions, and other issues of a spiritual and physical nature is quite common due a relay of unprocessed personal and emotional material creating reality for them.

A top-down awakening is BY FAR the most common spiritual awakening to get stuck in. It also can be the most dangerous because it creates an environment energetically where you are not quite a part of any reality. With the ability to easily shift through dimensions, times, perspectives, and being fully or partially out of your body, it creates opportunity for other energies to attach, and for you to lose a sense of identity or purpose. Without the support that earth and grounding offer (heart and Hara, love and existence), it is difficult to filter the intense energies that are coming through. The more the lower chakras are blocked the worse the imbalance is.

With this type of awakening it is common to see people keep their spiritual lives and their physical lives quite separate. By this, I mean that they may be all about love, light, angels, and awakening in workshops or online, but in their daily lives they are often quite miserable and do not want to participate in life. There are incredible many people in the New Age area struggling with depression and anxiety who put on an outward appearance, a mask of being spiritual and enlightened but in their daily lives they are struggling to function, to engage with others, or to want to be on Earth. This is an incredible common symptom in New Age circles due to the immensity of spiritual misguiding; spiritual misguiding which precisely are caused by the top-down awakened (here Karen Blixen is a paradoxical exception). It is all about role-playing: through courses and spiritual educations you buy yourself new levels and titles, just like in a role-playing game. It is not good to be on the low level where most people are. Rajneesh himself admitted this. He maintained for many years that he was the "fully enlightened One" (and, for a limited time, "the only enlightened One"), before he himself said it was all a role, an act, a "big joke." But of course, even when he directly tells people the truth, they will interpret it in another way.

It is therefore so important that people have a good philosophy as a frame of reference. And Rajneesh certainly didn't have a good philosophy. In this article I will therefore focus on his philosophy, and show how this philosophy not only brought him success, but also that it is the philosophy behind my concept of The Matrix Conspiracy. Admirers of Rajneesh often say that he led them into the spiritual path, but forget that his philosophy isn't a good guide on that path. Rajneesh was a living example of Doublethink, which lead numerous people on the wrong spiritual path (Doublethink comes from George Orwell's novel 1984, where it was a part of the mind controlling language Newspeak. It is the act of simultaneously accepting two mutually contradictory beliefs as correct, often in distinct social contexts. – see the Matrix Dictionary entry [Doublethink](#)).

The Matrix Conspiracy is a mix of postmodern intellectualism, management theory, self-help and New Age, which together constitute a global spreading ideology. This ideology is created by The Mythology of Authenticity – a mythology where everything is about becoming and not being. This mythology has two world images: humanistic psychology and constructivism. And these two world images again have two methods: psychotherapy and coaching.

The mythology is characterized by magical thinking (you can create yourself and the world as it fit you) – and is sought supported by subjectivism and relativism: the pseudoscience of reductionism, especially psychologism and biologism. Quantum mysticism is also a central theory.

With this we see the emergence of a totalitarian New Age system with direct fascistic tendencies, and where Western Consumer Capitalism and Chinese Communism in all probability will melt together in a New World Order: the world of alternative history, alternative physics, alternative medicine and, ultimately, alternative reality.

The winners in this Brave New World are therefore not receiving their talents from being and reality, but from becoming masks and roles, from their ability to tell stories. It is a meritocracy of people wearing The Emperor's New Clothes.

Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh is probably one of the clearest personifications of this flying circus.

There are widely divergent assessments of Rajneesh's qualities as a thinker and speaker. Khushwant Singh, an eminent author, historian, and former editor of the Hindustan Times, has described Rajneesh as "the most original thinker that India has produced: the most erudite, the most clearheaded and the most innovative". Singh believes that Rajneesh was a "free-thinking agnostic" who had the ability to explain the most abstract concepts in simple language, illustrated with witty anecdotes, who mocked gods, prophets, scriptures, and religious practices, and gave a totally new dimension to religion.

There is some truth in that, but in my view the German philosopher Peter Sloterdijk has a more precise definition of Rajneesh's philosophy. He has called Rajneesh a "Wittgenstein of religions", ranking him as one of the greatest figures of the 20th century; in his view, Rajneesh had performed a radical deconstruction of the word games played by the world's religions.

Rajneesh is namely an excellent example of what I call "postmodern spirituality" (a term which implies doublethink).

It is therefore no surprise that the online magazine OshoNews wasn't happy with the Netflix series Wild, Wild Country. In an article called [Wild, Wild Country Depicts an American Construct of Osho – incomplete and superficial](#) (07 April 2018), it is written:

*Despite all the amazing qualities that make 'Wild Wild Country' an interesting watch, the creators of the show, Chapman Way and Maclain Way, fail miserably in doing justice to the person Osho was, writes Simantini Dey on CNN News 18, India, on April 6, 2018.*

What is more interesting about the article is that it reveals a central part of Rajneesh's philosophy, namely that there isn't any God. It says:

*The image of Osho that the documentary paints for us also happens to be the same perception that the western media propagated back in the 80s which made the guru really unpopular among many US citizens. It is not to say that Rajneesh wasn't all of the things that the Way brothers have depicted him to be. He was. However, he was a whole lot more.*

*It has rarely happened in human history that a man who lambasted every religion across the world and denounced god himself, found such a massive following. Often mistakenly referred to as a godman, Osho was, in fact, anti-god and against all religions.*

*Osho said that the most fundamental error of all religions is that they pretend to know it all. Every religion pretends to be omniscient while they are nothing but old clubs who have religious jargons around them. Osho's only religion was to rebel against all religions. Once, when asked if he considered himself a god, he said, "There is no god, then how can I consider myself a god? God is the greatest lie invented by man."*

This says it as clear as it can be said: the whole concept of spirituality is a lie, hereunder enlightenment as this traditionally is understood. This means that Rajneesh's philosophy and concept of spirituality and enlightenment is something completely different from what the religions and their spiritual traditions, have taught. True spirituality and enlightenment are in Rajneesh's world about a deconstruction of the old, and a construction of yourself into a Nietzschean Superman. And here comes my main point with this article: Friedrich Nietzsche is simply Rajneesh's favorite philosopher! What Rajneesh's followers misunderstand is when they try to describe him as an enlightened master giving his disciples enlightenment, as this traditionally is understood. This is not so. Rajneesh, in complete New Age style, and inspired by Nietzsche, tried to redefine all traditional values. God, religion, spirituality and enlightenment are all lies in Rajneesh's world. They don't exist. Anyone who has just a little knowledge about Nietzsche and postmodernism can see that this is an ongoing theme in all his lectures and books. It is not something he tried to hide. And this was what both Singh and Sloterdijk saw. But the vast amount of followers don't seem to understand this, and continue to view him as an enlightened master in traditional sense. According to the philosopher Kevin Sheperd he even, reputedly, was a declared atheist in his youth.

Sheperd says on his website on [Rajneesh](#):

*Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh was born to Jain parents in the village of Kuchwada, Madhya Pradesh (in Central India). The son of a cloth merchant, he was named Chandra Mohan Jain. He gained the nickname of Rajneesh, which he subsequently*

*favoured above his name of birth. His family were Jains of the Taranpanthi sect, but young Rajneesh transpired to be a freethinker, rebelling at religious concepts and taboos. He reputedly became an atheist, investigated socialism, and even dabbled in hypnosis. In 1957, Rajneesh gained an M. A. degree in philosophy at Saugor University. In later years, he claimed to have experienced an "enlightenment" in 1953. Some critics regard this in terms of a hindsight attribution serving to enhance his career as a guru.*

[...]

*"Rajneesh invented [at Poona] a programme of 'dehypnotherapy' intended to free his followers of all prior constraints of their native culture, a process which involved acute exposure to his relativistic philosophy which endorsed opposites as being simultaneously true" (Shepherd, 2004, p. 61).*

This is precisely *Doublethink*, the propaganda tool known from George Orwell's novel 1984. It is a technique of gaslighting (thought control, or brain wash). In his lectures you will constantly hear alternating descriptions of masters as saints, and in other contexts as liars. He for example spoke about Buddha as the cause of all the poverty in India. You can hear him speak about Hitler in a bad way when this is suitable, and in another context praise him. It leaves students completely confused, and that is the goal.

Sheperd continues:

*The Rajneesh books are useless for the history of various mystical traditions referred to, e.g., Zen, Sufism, Taoism. The format often resembles a "new age" commentary, including such favoured slogans as "Love yourself." The ability of people to love themselves is not in dispute, but the exhortation is not praiseworthy. The deceptions that can arise from self-love are so extensive that no proficient psychologist or conscientious citizen is exempt from cautionary scruple in this respect.*

[...]

*Rajneesh tended to present Zen as the most advanced of the meditation traditions, though he chose to overlook the rigorously monastic aspect of both Chinese and Japanese Zen (chan). He was not concerned with history, and ignored the self-discipline involved. "Be loving towards yourself" was preferred. His followers considered him to be a Zen expert, a Zen master of the ultimate degree.*

[...]

*Ex-devotee Christopher Calder was early involved in the output of Rajneesh books. He says that most of the guru's best material came from other authors. Plagiarism was only part of the problem. Rajneesh "often pretended to have a first-hand knowledge of facts he obtained second-hand, and he taught many things that he knew were false just to gain attention and expand his guru business" (Calder, [Ridiculous Teachings](#)).*

[....]

*Rajneesh teachings frequently appear in a beguilingly simple format. "You don't need to learn anything. It is a simple unlearning process." Such maxims can all too easily facilitate misinformation and worse.*

But this is all a part of his Nietzschean inspired postmodernism. So Peter Sloterdijk is in my view completely right. Rajneesh's teachings, delivered through his discourses, were not presented in an academic setting, but interspersed with jokes and delivered with a rhetoric that many found spellbinding. The emphasis was not static but changed over time: Rajneesh revelled in paradox and contradiction, making his work difficult to summarise. He delighted in engaging in behaviour that seemed entirely at odds with traditional images of enlightened individuals; his early lectures in particular were famous for their humor and their refusal to take anything seriously. All such behaviour, however capricious and difficult to accept, was explained as "a technique for transformation" to push people "beyond the mind". Supported by Nietzsche's moral subjectivism.

Ultimately though, as an explicitly "self-parodying" guru, Rajneesh even deconstructed his own authority, declaring his teaching to be nothing more than a "game" or a joke. He emphasised that anything and everything could become an opportunity for meditation.

All this is again typically New Age. In my booklet [The Scientology Game – and The Matrix Player's Handbook](#), I have investigated the concept of spiritual life seen as real world role playing game.

Other New Age tricks used by Rajneesh was the so-called Crazy Wisdom fallacy. It comes when he had confused (deconstructed, gaslighted) your mind totally and then spoke about his own presence as a master: "A Master shares his being with you, not his philosophy. ... He never does anything to the disciple." The initiation he offered was another such device: "... if your being can communicate with me, it becomes a

communion. ... It is the highest form of communication possible: a transmission without words. Our beings merge. This is possible only if you become a disciple."

Sheperd says:

*The supporters of Rajneesh proved ingenious in their apologism for his collecting traits. One proposition has been that, via his Rolls Royce acquisitions, he intended "to make a joke out of American consumerism." This theory derives from an American novelist, but was championed by an academic who thinks Rajneesh "was challenging our conditioning about spirituality and materialism." An alternative is to accept the guru's discernible conditioning to assets; he wanted to own the largest fleet of luxury cars in the world.*

In my article [Why I Don't Teach Tibetan Dream Yoga](#) I have explained the Crazy Wisdom fallacy. The fallacy is often supported by moral subjectivism, and is about that no matter what a master does to his students, no matter how hypocritical and immoral he behaves, then this behavior must be seen as lectures of wisdom. It is utterly wrong. We have already explained why. The Tibetan meditation teacher Sogyal Rinpoche was disgraced by Dalai Lama after his sexual assaults and violent rages were exposed. Sogyal Rinpoche precisely tried to excuse his behavior as an example of Crazy Wisdom.

The Dalai Lama has frequently condemned unethical behaviour among Buddhist teachers, and urged students to speak out against it - 'through the newspaper, through the radio. Make public' - while never specifically commenting on Sogyal by name. But last month, speaking in Ladakh, he talked of the need to reform the 'influence of the feudal system' in Tibetan institutions. Followers, he said, 'must not say, "this is my guru, whatever my guru says I must follow."' That's totally wrong.' If a teacher is behaving unethically there was a duty to make their behaviour public.

Rajneesh's Crazy Wisdom teachings might have been influenced by Gurdjieff, but as we shall see, also from different types of New Age therapies, especially in their early development in the counterculture of the 1960s.

Rajneesh drew on a wide range of Western ideas. His belief in the unity of opposites recalls Heraclitus, while his description of man as a machine, condemned to the helpless acting out of unconscious, neurotic patterns, has much in common with Freud and Gurdjieff. His vision of the "new man" transcending constraints of convention is reminiscent of Nietzsche's Beyond Good and Evil; his promotion of sexual liberation bears comparison to D. H. Lawrence; and his "dynamic"

meditations owe a debt to Wilhelm Reich. In my view Nietzsche was the court philosopher.

Sheperd says:

*One of the influences upon Rajneesh was the philosopher Friedrich Nietzsche, whose fictional work Thus Spoke Zarathustra was popular amongst his Western followers. The Nietzschean idea of the "superman," ascending by his selfish will to power, was surely demonstrated by Rajneesh.*

[...]

*"Some of his extant discourses exhibit a preoccupation with the philosophy of Nietzsche and the sexual liberation expressed by D. H. Lawrence, with a fashionable assimilation of Gurdjieff and humanistic psychology also in evidence. This hybrid fare reflected his opportunistic policy of tailoring teachings to market demands" (Shepherd, 2004, p. 62).*

So, now we have a good short summary of Rajneesh's philosophy. In my pop culture files I use the concept of the Sophist as a name for the "villains." I also frequently describe Nietzsche as the Sophist King. Rajneesh is a philosopher with direct inspirational background in Nietzsche, and from all the other elements of the Matrix Conspiracy: postmodernism, management theory, New Age and the -help industry. He was in other words an ultimate Matrix Sophist.

After centuries of successful trading, the local gods and festivals could no longer satisfy the religious needs of the ancient Athenians. Their spiritual hunger was exacerbated by the stress of city life, by the constant threat of destruction, and by the grim vision of totalitarian Sparta: the vision of Greeks living without light or grace or humour, as though the gods had withdrawn from their world.

Into the crowded space of Periclean Athens came the wandering teachers, selling their "wisdom" to the bewildered populace. Any charlatan could make a killing, if enough people believed in him. Men like Gorgias and Protagoras, who wandered from house to house demanding fees for their instruction, preyed on the gullibility of a people made anxious by war.

To the young Plato, who observed their antics with outrage, these "Sophists" were a threat to the very soul of Athens. One alone among them seemed worthy of attention, and that one, the great Socrates whom Plato immortalised in his dialogues, was not a Sophist, but a true philosopher.

The philosopher, in Plato's characterisation, awakens the spirit of inquiry. He helps his listeners to discover the truth, and it is they who bring forth, under his catalysing influence, the answer to life's riddles. The philosopher is the midwife, and his duty is to help us to what we are – free and rational beings, who lack nothing that is required to understand our condition. The Sophist, by contrast, misleads us with cunning fallacies, takes advantage of our weakness, and offers himself as the solution to problems of which he himself is the cause.

There are many signs of the Sophists, but principal among these is that they are subjectivists and relativists. Their teachings are about how to get on in the world, and not about how to find the truth. Anything goes: not facts, but the best story wins. And the result is mumbo-jumbo, condescension and the taking of fees. The philosopher uses plain language, does not talk down to his audience, and never asks for payment. Such was Socrates, and in proposing him as an ideal, Plato defined the social status of the philosopher for centuries to come.

No one should doubt that sophistry is alive and well. My concept of *The Matrix Conspiracy* is permeated with it. We see it in the mix of postmodern intellectualism (constructivism), management culture, self-help and New Age – and in the two main methods of this mix: psychotherapy and coaching.

The Sophists are back with a vengeance, and are all the more to be feared, in that they come disguised as philosophers and scientists. For, in this time of helpless relativism and subjectivity, philosophy and science alone have stood against the tide, reminding us that those crucial distinctions on which life depends – between true and false, good and evil, right and wrong – are objective and binding. Philosophy and science have until now spoken with the accents of the academy and laboratory, and not with the voice of the fortune teller.

When Plato founded the first academy, and placed philosophy at the heart of it, he did so in order to protect the precious store of wisdom from the assaults of charlatans, to create a kind of temple to truth in the midst of falsehood, and to marginalise the Sophists who preyed on human confusion.

The Sophists were teachers of rhetoric, who against a fee, taught people how to persuade other people about their "truths". Rhetoric, or sophistry, is the art of persuasion. Rather than giving reasons and presenting arguments to support conclusions, as Socrates did, then those who use sophistry are employing a battery of techniques, such as emphatic assertion, persuader words and emotive language, to convince the listener, or reader, that what they say or imply is true.

The Sophists taught their pupils how to win arguments by any means available; they were supposedly more interested in teaching ways of getting on in the world than ways of finding the truth, as Socrates did. Therefore any charlatan is welcome. And the use of thought distortions is seen as the best tool, when practising the mantra of the management culture: "It is not facts, but the best story, that wins!"

Rajneesh said that he was "the rich man's guru" and that material poverty was not a genuine spiritual value. He had himself photographed wearing sumptuous clothing and hand-made watches and, while in Oregon, drove a different Rolls-Royce each day – his followers reportedly wanted to buy him 365 of them, one for each day of the year. Publicity shots of the Rolls-Royces were sent to the press. They may have reflected both his advocacy of wealth and his desire to provoke American sensibilities, much as he had enjoyed offending Indian sensibilities earlier.

Sheperd writes:

*Rajneesh catered for wealthy Indians and affluent middle class Westerners. Donations were a priority. "Bhagwan said on many occasions that he hated and despised poverty." He preferred Mercedes cars. One of the wealthy Indian devotees was Ma Anand Sheela, who gained fame in America. Milne records how a mere cleaner at the Oregon commune was caught playing a music cassette in Sheela's expensive Mercedes car. Sheela was annoyed and shouted at the underling. The next day, she angrily reported this incident to Rajneesh. The guru said that he would explain a few things about "the art of manipulating people," as Milne expressed the matter. "Never deal with such things yourself, Sheela. Delegate and isolate" (p. 201). This potentially questionable advice assisted the notorious "inner circle" of Sheela at Rajneeshpuram, a place where the art of manipulation was exercised to the detriment of victims.*

[...]

*Conway accuses Rajneesh of telling "insidious lies about himself and his movement." For example, the guru repeatedly boasted to the press, from 1985 onwards, that one million neo-sannyasins were devoted to him. According to his secretary Ma Anand Sheela, the real number worldwide of those initiated followers was no more than thirty thousand.*

[...]

*A drawback evident in some of Rajneesh books was the incorporation of lewd or "dirty" jokes in the guru's discourses, and including both the scatological and rapist*

*variety. These jokes he evidently considered to be suitable fare for his promiscuous Western devotees. It is on record that he found some of those jokes in Playboymagazine, which is not the best guide to healthy living.*

[...]

*A stimulus to disease came in the form of lewd jokes frequently expressed by Rajneesh. Rapist episodes were considered very funny, and the audience were expected to laugh. Many distasteful jokes of this kind appeared in the discourse books of Rajneesh, which supposedly proved his knowledge and ability in traditions like Hinduism, Sufism, Zen, and Taoism. The reaction of critics was to deem his sordid idiom an index to debauchery and indulgence.*

Rajneesh's parents Babulal and Saraswati Jain, who were Taranpanthi Jains, let him live with his maternal grandparents until he was seven years old. By Rajneesh's own account, this was a major influence on his development because his grandmother gave him the utmost freedom, leaving him carefree without an imposed education or restrictions.

In his school years he was a rebellious, but gifted student, and gained a reputation as a formidable debater. Rajneesh became an anti-theist, took an interest in hypnosis and briefly associated with socialism and two Indian nationalist organisations: the Indian National Army and the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh. However, his membership in the organisations was short-lived as he could not submit to any external discipline, ideology or system.

Some scholars have suggested that Rajneesh, like other charismatic leaders, may have had a narcissistic personality. In his paper *The Narcissistic Guru: A Profile of Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh*, Ronald O. Clarke, Emeritus Professor of Religious Studies at Oregon State University, argued that Rajneesh exhibited all the typical features of narcissistic personality disorder, such as a grandiose sense of self-importance and uniqueness; a preoccupation with fantasies of unlimited success; a need for constant attention and admiration; a set of characteristic responses to threats to self-esteem; disturbances in interpersonal relationships; a preoccupation with personal grooming combined with frequent resorting to prevarication or outright lying; and a lack of empathy. Drawing on Rajneesh's reminiscences of his childhood in his book *Glimpses of a Golden Childhood*, he suggested that Rajneesh suffered from a fundamental lack of parental discipline, due to his growing up in the care of overindulgent grandparents. Rajneesh's self-avowed Buddha status, he concluded, was part of a delusional system associated with his narcissistic personality disorder; a condition of ego-inflation rather than egolessness.

There might be something in this, but in my view Rajneesh was much more ingenious, completely conscious about creating the Nietzschean ideal.

Having completed his B.A. in philosophy at D. N. Jain College in 1955, he joined the University of Sagar, where in 1957 he earned his M.A. in philosophy (with distinction). He immediately secured a teaching position at Raipur Sanskrit College, but the Vice-Chancellor soon asked him to seek a transfer as he considered him a danger to his students' morality, character and religion. From 1958, he taught philosophy as a lecturer at Jabalpur University, being promoted to professor in 1960. A popular lecturer, he was acknowledged by his peers as an exceptionally intelligent man who had been able to overcome the deficiencies of his early small-town education.

Rajneesh is supporting what I call individual constructivism, which later developed into social constructivism (a part of postmodernism), which is the latest craze in reductionism (read more about reductionism in my article [The Pseudoscience of Reductionism and the Problem of Mind](#)). Actually we ought to speak about a sociologism, but the dance was opened in 1967 with Berger and Luckmann's work *The Social Construction of Reality. A Treatise in the Sociology of Knowledge*. And the term "social constructivism" has been stuck and is used with much pleasure by the followers of the movement.

In today's literature social constructivism occurs in a weak and in a strong version. The weak version is about, that a line of institutions in society have been produced, and have to be explained, only from social/sociological causes. Examples on such institutions are legislation, for instance about traffic, monetary matters with everything that this include of banks, credit institutions, stock markets etc., standards of behaviour, ethical systems, religion and much more, but not scientific results such as the explanation of the periodic system of the elements, of the chemical connections, or of the laws of gestalt psychology, for just to mention some examples.

The strong version - which among others are framed by the Edinburgh sociologists David Bloor, Barry Barnes and Steven Shapin, and since followed up by a long line of others, among these Bruno Latour and Steve Woolgar - is about, that not just the mentioned institutions, but also all scientific results and discoveries, are social constructions. In short: the very physical world is also a social construction. Here the weirdness begins.

With the words of Favrholt, then we here speak about a reductionism, which conclusions are so rabid and stark raving stupid, that we hardly can give an account

of them without immediately becoming accused of having distorted them – what Favrhøldt at that time also was by colleagues on the philosophical institute on University of Southern Denmark. But this is what the extreme social constructivists claims. If there weren't any social constructions made by humans the universe wouldn't exist. The only explanation of why people can believe this, is ideology, hard-bitten political ideology.

The individual constructivism isn't better. According to the Sophist king, Nietzsche, the will to power is the basic power of all life. He therefore thought about a special meaning of the word will. Normally the will is understood as Man's ability to bring a more or less reasonable decision out in life. And ahead of the will's effort goes the consideration. But Nietzsche's will to power is neither connected to reasonable considerations, nor consciousness. On the contrary it describes life's fundamental character of striving towards increase.

Will is normally a psychological concept. It describes an ability, or an aspect, of the human consciousness. In contrast to this Nietzsche is seeing it as an ontological, or even metaphysical, concept. The fundamental idea is, that if we shall understand the multifold expressions of all life, then we must interpret them as outcome of will to power. This idea led to Nietzsche's revaluation of all values. The eternal values are only a slavemoral without reality and truth. They are illusions or fictions. Therefore he dethroned reason as the ability to insight in the eternal values. Body, desires, and nature, are the central in Man, not reason. God is dead and the world is chaotic, empty, absurd; something, which Man himself must control. Man must himself create his values: a master moral created by the so-called superman.

Now, if we take Nietzsche, then his idea about the will to power has to do with the outgoing movement of time, the future; but as an ontological principle. What he is talking about is the becoming of everything, becoming and not being; that is: a state of non-being, nothingness, which only you yourself can fill with meaning. So - though Nietzsche is talking about the will to power as a creative force - this is not something positive connected with life itself. Nietzsche's view of life itself, the eternal recurrence of the same, is a view of life devoid of values. God is dead.

According to Nietzsche there neither exists a sensuous, a material, or a spiritual world given in advance. Everything is created by being interpreted. Nietzsche believed that the will - that is to say: the defeating, the remodeling, the striving - is something creative. The will to power, according to Nietzsche, is a creating power. That this power is the basic power in Man means, according to Nietzsche, that all expressions of the human life must be understood as forms of will to power; intake of food, arrangement of the everyday life with home and clothes, cultivation of nature, as well

as sensation, feelings, thinking and will in usual sense - are expressions of the will to power.

In other words: Nietzsche is thinking about the will to power in the image of art. All human unfolding is actually a creative process where a content, or a material, is formed. Life is seen as a work of art. This is *precisely* Rajneesh's view. He sees a human being as an artist. Personally, I share the view of seeing human nature in the image of an artist, but this is inspired by Karen Blixen, and is a very different view (see my blog post [What is a Life Artist](#), and my Ebook [Karen Blixen – The Devil's Mistress](#)).

Rajneesh aimed to create a "new man" combining the spirituality of Gautama Buddha with the zest for life embodied by Nikos Kazantzakis' Zorba the Greek: "He should be as accurate and objective as a scientist ... as sensitive, as full of heart, as a poet ... [and as] rooted deep down in his being as the mystic." His term the "new man" applied to men and women equally, whose roles he saw as complementary; indeed, most of his movement's leadership positions were held by women. This new man, "Zorba the Buddha", should reject neither science nor spirituality but embrace both.

A reality-creating artist. Actually, a kind of God able to create new realities in his own image. A similar thought exists in the so-called self-production thesis, which is the thought about, that Man is the being, who creates himself through his history, and thereby controls his own freedom. The thought exists in the German idealism, for instance in Fichte, Schelling, Hegel. Both Existentialism, as well as Marxism, also builds on the understanding of the freedom of Man to form his own life, and that this is an unconditional value. Freedom is a good thing, a demand and a responsibility. What it is about, is the freedom to be the creative power in your own history. In the Existentialists it is the life-story of the individual, in the Marxists it is the world-history of the community.

The self-production thesis builds on the thought, that Man is in a continual state of becoming. The concept formation also often becomes used in connection with the concept of becoming. In my book *A Portrait of a Lifeartist* I have examined this in details in the section *The Lifeartist as a Desirous Being*.

With this Nietzsche introduced a quite central concept: perspectivism. Through our interpretations (language) we directly construct the world. And you must therefore have the will and power to create new values, and you must have the power to give them name in a new way, because namegiving is the same as an unfolding of power. Or else you end up as a slave.

To live is to will, to will is to create values. The will to power is becoming through us, and in that way we gain control over the things through a perspective.

It is now easy to see how much the modern management theory and coaching industry is inspired by Nietzsche: the relativistic and subjectivistic ideas about that it only is the individual himself who, through his interpretations, or stories, can supply the world with values – or rather, not supply, but directly create it like a God; the denial of the past, and the orientation towards future; the superman idea about being a winner, a success, a person standing on the top of the mountain; the preaching about that it is not facts, but the best story, which wins.

Also existentialism can be used to justify these thoughts. The act-oriented ideas of existentialism match as hand in glove with a capitalistic-liberalistic ideology about being the architect of your own fortune, the right for each individual person to seek his own idea of happiness – the philosophical point of view, that there isn't any objective value-goals for the human life, only individual subjective choices. That is: value-subjectivism.

Heidegger and Sartre both think from Kierkegaard's philosophy of existence, but without his Christianity and humanism, and therefore they end in subjectivism and irrationalism. They both show, in different ways, what the danger is in subjectivism and its belonging irrationalism. Irrationalism led Heidegger to Nazism, though only for a shorter period, and Sartre had difficulties explaining why you not as well could choose an anti-humanistic project of life such as Leninism or Nazism. This is *precisely* also the case with Rajneesh.

According to court testimony by Ma Ava (Ava Avalos), the prominent disciple, Sheela played associates a tape recording of a meeting she had had with Rajneesh about the "need to kill people" in order to strengthen wavering sannyasins' resolve in participating in her murderous plots: "She came back to the meeting and [...] began to play the tape. It was a little hard to hear what he was saying. [...] And the gist of Bhagwan's response, yes, it was going to be necessary to kill people to stay in Oregon. And that actually killing people wasn't such a bad thing. And actually Hitler was a great man, although he could not say that publicly because nobody would understand that. Hitler had great vision."

Rajneesh believed humanity was threatened with extinction due to over-population, impending nuclear holocaust and diseases such as AIDS, and thought many of society's ills could be remedied by scientific means. The new man would no longer be trapped in institutions such as family, marriage, political ideologies and religions. In

this respect Rajneesh is similar to other counter-culture gurus, and perhaps even certain postmodern and deconstructional thinkers.

Rajneesh spoke many times of the dangers of overpopulation, and advocated universal legalisation of contraception and abortion. He described the religious prohibitions thereof as criminal, and argued that the United Nations' declaration of the human "right to life" played into the hands of religious campaigners.

According to Rajneesh, one has no right to knowingly inflict a lifetime of suffering: life should begin only at birth, and even then, "If a child is born deaf, dumb, and we cannot do anything, and the parents are willing, the child should be put to eternal sleep" rather than "take the risk of burdening the earth with a crippled, blind child." He argued that this simply freed the soul to inhabit a healthy body instead: "Only the body goes back into its basic elements; the soul will fly into another womb. Nothing is destroyed. If you really love the child, you will not want him to live a seventy-year-long life in misery, suffering, sickness, old age. So even if a child is born, if he is not medically capable of enjoying life fully with all the senses, healthy, then it is better that he goes to eternal sleep and is born somewhere else with a better body."

He stated that the decision to have a child should be a medical matter, and that oversight of population and genetics must be kept in the realm of science, outside of politicians' control: "If genetics is in the hands of Joseph Stalin, Adolf Hitler, Benito Mussolini, what will be the fate of the world?" He believed that in the right hands, these measures could be used for good: "Once we know how to change the program, thousands of possibilities open up. We can give every man and woman the best of everything. There is no need for anyone to suffer unnecessarily. Being retarded, crippled, blind, ugly – all these will be possible to change." Very fascistic thoughts without insight in original karma philosophy.

As we know, Nietzsche was Hitler's favorite philosopher, so it is no surprise that Rajneesh had the views he had. Sheperd writes:

*Shortly after his return to Poona, Rajneesh gave a series of lectures on Nietzsche's Thus Spake Zarathustra. He now claimed that, of all the Western thinkers, Nietzsche was the closest to Gautama Buddha. "The basic point common to both was their attack on slave religion" (Sam, 1997, p. 210). This equation was aligning Nietzsche's attack on Christianity with Buddha's critique of the Vedic priesthood. The argument took no account of the fact that Nietzsche was a very non-democratic thinker who elevated the "superman" in a questionable context divorced from ethical considerations. It is more pressing to conclude that Rajneesh was similar to*

*Nietzsche in a number of respects. Neither of these rebels resemble what is known of the ancient Gautama.*

The talks were given to the Rajneesh International University of Mysticism, April 8, 1987 - April 19, 1987. In this Commentary on Friedrich Nietzsche's Thus Spake Zarathustra, Osho unravels the mystery of man's three metamorphoses from camel to lion to child, and in setting the record straight about the meaning of Nietzsche's concept of the superman shows us how we ourselves can become the New Man. Zarathustra, through Osho's eyes, is first and shed tears just like the rest of us. He speaks to us as a friend, sorting methodically through to ins and out on the path of truth, giving each aspect a thorough and single-pointed attention. Each of Osho's talks thus becomes a lesson on a very specific theme, and each theme is a step deeper into the journey toward becoming "a god that can dance" a person who dares to shed all the bondages of false virtues and values and dance in innocence and joy with each moment of life.

You can download a free PDF version [here](#).

The comparison of Buddha and Nietzsche is probably the most extreme example of Doublethink Rajneesh has managed. The intention is obviously manipulation. Nietzsche's moral relativism and Buddha's moral absolutism can't be mixed. It is opposites.

Bhikkhu Bodhi, an American Buddhist monk, has written: "By assigning value and spiritual ideals to private subjectivity, the materialistic world view ... threatens to undermine any secure objective foundation for morality. The result is the widespread moral degeneration that we witness today. To counter this tendency, mere moral exhortation is insufficient. If morality is to function as an efficient guide to conduct, it cannot be propounded as a self-justifying scheme but must be embedded in a more comprehensive spiritual system which grounds morality in a transpersonal order. Religion must affirm, in the clearest terms, that morality and ethical values are not mere decorative frills of personal opinion, not subjective superstructure, but intrinsic laws of the cosmos built into the heart of reality."

The latter should confirm that Buddhism, nor any other spiritual tradition is in for moral relativism, or subjectivism. Moral relativism contradicts the concept of spirituality all together. It is always bordering to nihilism. It also shows that I'm right when claiming that idealism (subjectivism) goes hand in hand with materialism (atheist fundamentalism), as the two main metaphysical theories today. In my Matrix Dictionary entry on the [Simulation Theory](#) I directly demonstrate this. Also see my entry on [Atheist fundamentalism](#).

Moral relativism has absurd consequences. If you for example preach relativism and believe that everything is relative and for that reason equally true, you have thereby accepted that nazism, fascism, dictatorship, popular murder, terror and violence, are as equally great blessings for mankind as democracy, negotiation and dialogue. Then you have no basis in order to criticize, because you haven't got any rational frame to start from. You can't criticize anyone for argumentation bungling, or to replace arguments with machine guns, because this presupposes, that there is a rational foundation in your arguments (read more about moral subjectivism in my online book [Philosophical Counseling with Tolkien](#), Chapter 10, Ethics, Part 2: *The Nature of Evil*).

Sheperd continues:

*His new age extremism may be discerned in his antipathy for Mahatma Gandhi, whom he placed on the level of Adolf Hitler in a relativistic scenario of torture. Rajneesh described Gandhi as a self-torturer, and Hitler as a torturer of others. He stated that "Gandhi had the Jaina [ascetic] characteristic very much developed in him." Hitler was equated with Islam. Both were described by Rajneesh as great saints. These idiosyncratic musings were included in a book on Zen published in 1980, part of the Rajneesh corpus which confused many thousands of readers (those books were not writings, but comprised edited discourses).*

[...]

*Rajneesh was still gaining many young recruits from Germany. According to Calder, this was partly because of his pro-Hitler comments as relayed in the influential magazine Der Spiegel. A mood of fascist nationalism is here detected. "The ashram was literally like a loud convention of German Brownshirts (storm troopers) by that point." Moreover, "Rajneesh said that he wanted his [neo]sannyasins 'to take over the world' and that he had studied Hitler to gain insight into how to accomplish the task.... Such remarks were proof to me that his drug use had destroyed the quality of his mind" (Calder, Lost Truth).*

The New Thought movement, or New Thought, is a spiritual movement, which developed in the United States during the late 19th century and emphasizes metaphysical beliefs. It consists of a loosely allied group of religious denominations, secular membership organizations, authors, philosophers, and individuals who share a set of metaphysical beliefs concerning the effects of positive thinking, the law of attraction, healing, life force, creative visualization, and personal power. New

Thought is a central inspiration for modern management theory, which also Rajneesh was inspired by.

The three major religious denominations within the New Thought movement are Religious Science, Unity Church and the Church of Divine Science (so it is important to know, that there is a special religious movement behind the management theories and the self-help industry, which everyone today, through education and work, is forced to accept).

The main theory is also here the subjectivist belief, that your thoughts create reality. By focusing on positive thinking, and by avoiding everything you find negative, you can create your life in accordance with your needs, feelings and wishes. The “positive” is identified as success, money, sex, material glory, etc. Examples of book-titles are: “Prosperity Through Thought Force”, “The Science of Getting Rich”, “Think and Grow Rich”.

Rajneesh doesn't care about specific goals. He is utterly subjectivistic and says: “just create your own reality.” He obviously doesn't bother to ask about what kind of reality that might be.

All the above theories is today seen in a whole tendency of time within school, folk high school and continuing education, where you focus on so-called ”personal development” and ”Personality-developing courses” in connection with demands about lifelong learning, continuing education, readiness for change and flexibility; precisely what management theory and coaching are all about.

For instance they use Sartre's scriptures as a request for uninhibited and egoistic self-expression, where the individual person is letting his choices decide everything. The existentialists say that Man has the freedom, through his choices, to be the creative power in his own history. As management theorists and coaches say: ”It is not facts, but the best story, which wins!”

In the existentialists the choice gives reasons for all meaning, but can't in itself be given reasons for. The viewpoint is called decisionism, because values at base are founded on a choice, or a decision. Nietzsche called it perspectivism, Rajneesh calls it spiritual practice. It doesn't matter, it is all expressions of the same philosophical idealism.

The ideology is in that way extremely ingenious, because it precisely is based on an assertion about, that you have the freedom to create your happiness.

In a broad perspective beliefs such as Rajneesh's are today rooted in what I call the mythology of authenticity. This mythology is the main mythology of popular culture.

The mythology of authenticity is characterized by two specific methods: psychotherapy and coaching. Psychotherapy and coaching are by no means methods, which only exist within a defined theory. The mythology is characterized by that people constantly are inventing new forms of therapeutic interventions, but the basic mythology is the same.

The two world-images can in other words be seen as two versions of the same superior psychologizing understanding of life, which I call the mythology of authenticity. This mythology is so to speak a compilation of the two world-images into one.

So, psychotherapy (with root in humanistic psychology) and coaching (with root in constructivism) can be seen as new, large, meaning-carrying world-images in a psychologized and therapized age. Even though they, in their sources of inspiration, at first specify two quite different views of Man and his possibilities and purposes in the world, they are common in explaining humans from a conception about, that humans have lost (or all the time are in risk of losing) himself and therefore constantly have to work with personal development in order to find himself (psychotherapy and the dream of a lost past) or to become himself (coaching and the hope of a richer future). You can say that the two world-images both are based on the claim, that a human being not is himself, before he becomes himself, and that both world-images see lifelong therapeutic self-improvement as a presumption for, that a human being can become and live authentic.

So the mythology of authenticity defines Man as a being, who continuously need to cultivate himself therapeutic. The mythology does so by making Man into a problem to himself. It is indoctrinating people to see the Now as a problem by comparing with earlier, and hoping, desiring or fearing something else. This is precisely what traditional spiritual practice seeks to avoid.

A central part of the problem is that the mythology of authenticity only is dealing with the content of mind, the personal content. Religion and philosophy have been reduced to psychotherapy (or coaching). The wholeness (and the metaphysical and ontological realms) has been reduced to psychological realms. Humanity, in its relation to nature and universe, has been reduced to person and ego.

I hear protest, because the mythology is also working with the now. They also use mindfulness, which has become a buzzword in the mythology of authenticity. But

when meditation, as in the mindfulness movement, are combined with the mythology of authenticity, mindfulness works as a hypnotic means of inducing the mythology into the mind. There will be created a conflict between the now (mindfulness) and the mythology of a lost past and a richer future.

Rajneesh belongs to the coaching oriented version which has its roots in individual constructivism.

The difference between mindfulness and traditional spiritual practice is that where authenticity in the mindfulness movement is the same as becoming another (authenticity is a dream, a mythology), then authenticity in spirituality is the same as being what you are (authenticity is reality); or said shortly: the difference between becoming and being.

Similarly with respect to Rajneesh's embracing of Western counter-culture and the human potential movement, though Rajneesh's range and imagination were second to none, and many of his statements were quite insightful and moving, perhaps even profound at times, he perceived "a potpourri of counter-culturalist and post-counter-culturalist ideas" focusing on love and freedom, the need to live for the moment, the importance of self, the feeling of "being okay", the mysteriousness of life, the fun ethic, the individual's responsibility for their own destiny, and the need to drop the ego, along with fear and guilt.

To Mehta Rajneesh's appeal to his Western disciples was based on his social experiments, which established a philosophical connection between the Eastern guru tradition and the Western growth movement. He saw this as a marketing strategy to meet the desires of his audience, Urban, too, viewed Rajneesh as negating a dichotomy between spiritual and material desires, reflecting the preoccupation with the body and sexuality characteristic of late capitalist consumer culture in tune with the socio-economic conditions of his time.

Peter B. Clarke confirmed that most participators felt they had made progress in self-actualization as defined by American psychologist Abraham Maslow and the human potential movement. He stated that the style of therapy Rajneesh devised, with its liberal attitude towards sexuality as a sacred part of life, had proved influential among other therapy practitioners and new age groups. Yet Clarke believes that the main motivation of seekers joining the movement was "neither therapy nor sex, but the prospect of becoming enlightened, in the classical Buddhist sense". But, as mentioned, then they misunderstand Rajneesh's teachings.

Moral subjectivism also justifies Rajneesh's use of extreme Western psychotherapy and the counterculture's notion of free sex.

Sheperd writes:

*During the 1970s, many thousands of Americans, Germans, and other foreigners became neo-sannyasin clients for Dynamic Meditation, neo-Reichian therapy, and free love. Hindus generally disowned the Neo-Sannyas activity as a promiscuous aberration.*

[...]

*His career and orgone box aroused extensive new age fantasies. Reich's orgasm doctrine gained converts like Norman Mailer, Allen Ginsberg, and Jack Kerouac. The sexual revolution became big business. Counterculture of the 1960s produced the ubiquitous belief that "sex will save you," disproven too many times to be credited. Part of this ongoing deceit was achieved by alternative therapy, a commercial affliction assimilable to drugs and existentialism. Janov's "primal scream therapy" was one extravagant resort of an impoverished clientele with more money than insight or commonsense.*

[...]

*The Poona ashram of Rajneesh was an insult to traditional Hindu ideals of discipline and self-control. A favoured activity was group sex. Some neo-sannyasins are reported to have contracted more than ninety different sexual contacts every month. The prevalent habits caused sexually transmitted diseases. Over eighty per cent of the commune residents are reported to have contracted such diseases by the 1980s.*

[...]

*The excessive emphases upon non-restraint passed to the children of commune members. Sexual intercourse amongst children was reported, and there were instances like that of a six year old girl who offered her abilities in oral sex to adult males (Franklin, 1992, p. 108). The account of neo-sannyasin Jane Stork reports that her children were sexually abused while she lived at the commune (she became a resident in 1978; see Stork, *Breaking the Spell*, 2009).*

[...]

*This was a situation in which adult males could copulate with girls only ten years old. The permissive Rajneesh often declared that the family was a repressive factor, and accordingly had to go. He apparently did everything he could to break up families, a trend which assisted the commune focus upon himself as the dominant priority.*

[...]

*The sex guru became well known for his advocacy of Tantra. Ex-devotee Calder says that in a lecture, Rajneesh defended the legendary "Tantric practice of parents having sex with their own children." A strong accusation is that the guru "used the myths of Tantra to rationalise all of his dishonest and illegal behaviour, as well as his own exorbitant drug use" (Calder, [Ridiculous Teachings](#)). Rajneesh employed the well known phrase "lefthanded Tantra," which can elsewhere signify deviation, though today the distinction is lost in the craze for sex tantra. At Poona, "one of the groups Rajneesh sold to students was the 'Tantra' group, which was basically just male and female disciples having sex with each other" (Calder, [Lost Truth](#)).*

[...]

*The more recent "tantric workshop" practitioner Margot Anand has claimed an affiliation with Rajneesh; she reputedly visited the Poona ashram and there learned/taught Tantra, before moving on to America and Europe. The popular sex tantra became evident in her books like *Sexual Ecstasy: The Art of Orgasm* (2000). This trend has received some criticism, and extending to a [Findhorn Foundation](#) episode.*

All this is completely in harmony with postmodernism, where some of the greatest "thinkers" was all in for pedophilia in that they took Wilhelm Reich at face value: Michel Foucault, Gilles Deleuze, etc., etc. Foucault, whose genius I never has been able to see, thought that it was a violation to deny the "child's right to have sex with adults". (I will investigate Wilhelm Reich and his postmodern disciples in a coming Matrix Dictionary article).

Attack therapy is an outgrowth of ventilation theory, and is a form of psychotherapy Rajneesh became notorious for using. This is also in perfect harmony with Nietzsche. Here the patient becomes the subject of verbal abuse, denunciation, and humiliation. This assault may come either from the therapist in individual sessions or from peers in a group context. Sometimes both methods are used. This negative and destructive development in therapy was encouraged by two major influences. First came the growth of unmonitored group therapies, which took hold in the late 1950s and

continue to this day. Second was the widespread popularity of some form of therapeutic encounter. The actual therapeutic value of much of this type of work with clients is highly questionable.

In the 1960s and 1970s the world witnessed a kind of free-for-all approach to psychotherapy (due to the spread of postmodern intellectualism – subjectivism and relativism – the same approach to science, treatment, philosophy, spirituality, etc., etc., is today seen in the New Age environment). As life became faster paced, so did the quest for a quick and radical cure for all problems, including psychological and emotional ones. Groups, which until that time were quite sedate and conventional, suddenly turned into “marathon” encounter sessions that went on for hours, days, or entire weekends. Therapy – whether one-on-one or in a group setting – took on a confrontational and piercing quality. In many cases there was no history taking at all, simply an almost coercive thrust to deal in the “here and now,” often with a stress on nonverbal techniques. As one critic put it, “Tact is ‘out’ and brutal frankness is ‘in.’ Any phony, defensive or evasive behavior...is fair game for...critique and verbal attack.”

It seems that with the acceptance of this pressing immediacy, all sense of propriety and ethics was thrown out the window. There were no rules, no standards, no guidelines in this milieu where the overarching goal was to express and experience feelings. It’s not surprising then that more violent and active psychotherapy techniques would arise in this out-of-control climate, and that the abreactionist school of thought would be adopted by so many – mental health practitioners and purveyors of self-improvement programs alike.

Theories of screaming, pounding, fighting, sitting on the hot seat, and group confrontation were put into place in a number of therapy centers. The popular therapies emerged out of Esalen and other “human potential” centers, growing out of groups like the Living Theater and the Theater of All Possibilities and evolving into myriad innovations like Bio-Energetics, Gestalt Therapy, and Psychosynthesis. Model confrontational programs, such as Synanon and its clones, were being praised left and right.

Another variant of the confrontation therapies appeared in the commercially sold large group awareness training programs such as Mind Dynamics, Direct Centering (aka Bayard Hora Associates, aka The Course, aka Naexus), Arica Institute, Insight Seminars, and Lifespring. These programs were sold to hundreds of thousands of customers over two decades, and some still exist in old, revised, and new forms. Marketed to individuals, organizations, and business and industry as experiential education, they typically use powerful psychological and social influence techniques,

not always bringing about the advertised claims of success and profit to the buyer, and sometimes bringing psychological distress to the clients.

Varieties of these confrontation therapies and self-awareness programs are still with us two and three decades later; in fact, they're going strong. And in the best reductionist way, they are being made into a way of life.

Sheperd writes:

*One of those attracted to the Poona ashram was Richard Price (1930-85), an alternative therapist and the co-founder of Esalen. He was accustomed to a gamut of alternative salesmanship ranging from Gurdjieff workshops to shamanism and Gestalt therapy. Like other therapies, the emerging NeoReichian Gestalt promised self-development and wholeness, vanquishing the feared repressions. The Esalen version of "encounters" was generally mild. In contrast, Price found that Rajneesh "therapy" was extremely dangerous. "He discovered that the Rajneesh version of the encounter group encouraged clients to be very violent, to the extent that old women were hit in the face by young men. Price himself is said to have suffered a broken arm while being locked up for an hour in a room with eight people armed with wooden weapons.... Price reported seeing eighteen fights in the therapy sessions within only two days, and that was before he stopped counting them" (Shepherd, 2004, pp. 60-1).*

[...]

*A German camera crew filmed the violence and nudity of the late 1970s Rajneesh encounter groups. The footage was preserved in the documentary called Ashram (1980). This movie confirmed the reports of "therapy" excess. In 1979, and because of Indian disapproval, Rajneesh curtailed some of the excesses, including fighting.*

[...]

*Rajneesh therapy failed to heal. Sheela's attacking verbal style [an example of that the therapy is made into a reductionist way of life] resulted in many lawsuits filed for defamation. The commune security force are reported to have harassed local resident outsiders, causing stress-related disorders. Sheela's militancy resulted in arson; three of her emissaries set fire to the county planning office. The therapist front even considered flying a bomb-laden aeroplane into the county courthouse. That plan fortunately did not materialise, unlike the situation in which a Rajneeshi terrorist placed a large quantity of haldol into drinking water at the State Library in Salem.*

*This action numbed victims who attended a conference disliked by the commune management.*

[...]

*Sheela and her associates had their own private laboratory, the means by which they mounted a bioterrorist attack at ten salad bars in The Dalles, a town in Wasco County. They deployed salmonella bacteria. Over seven hundred people became ill. This event (September 1984) caused a widespread wave of shock. The objective was to reduce opposition voting strength in The Dalles by making people sick. The commune terrorists also experimented with a typhoid virus for use against nearby towns. They had learned from Rajneesh a relativistic code that did not recognise any ethical right and wrong. Rajneeshism had to be the winner, no matter what method was used.*

Relativism also justifies drug use. During his residence in Rajneeshpuram, Rajneesh dictated three books under the influence of nitrous oxide administered to him by his private dentist: Glimpses of a Golden Childhood, Notes of a Madman and Books I Have Loved. Sheela later stated that Rajneesh took sixty milligrams of valium each day and was addicted to nitrous oxide. Rajneesh denied these charges when questioned about them by journalists.

One of the very earliest neo-sannyasins was Christopher Calder, who first met Rajneesh in 1970. He was given the new name of Swami Krishna Christ by the guru. Such exotic names conferred a sense of special identity. Calder became disillusioned after several years. Much later, he contributed two online articles that are radically informative and very critical of his former guru.

Calder poses the question: "What did Rajneesh want and get?" He adds: "The answer is millions of dollars, absolute power, a harem of women, and a daily supply of drugs." Rajneesh is reported to have experienced a brief experimentation with LSD, though in the long term he was "inhaling enough nitrous oxide to inflate a dirigible" (Calder, Ridiculous Teachings).

*Sheperd writes:*

*Many of the neo-sannyasins were drug-users, and several of them were arrested while attempting to smuggle drugs into Europe (McCormack, 2010, p. 11). MDMA (Ecstasy) and cannabis were favoured commodities. In 1979, a group of neo-sannyasins packed 50 kilograms of marijuana into the frame and fittings of a bus bound for Europe. [Not only drugs, but also gold and money, were smuggled.](#)*

*Rajneesh is reported to have expressed approval of his "sannyasins" financing their Indian sojourns (and Poona ashram expenses) via drug dealing and prostitution. The ongoing traffic in drugs was attended by overpowering justifications. A Rajneeshi arrested for drug smuggling asserted that:*

[...]

*Several witnesses are said to have reported that Rajneesh used nitrous oxide ("laughing gas") for recreational purposes to "get high" (and not merely to relieve his asthma). This pain-relieving gas is used in dental surgery; it can also induce euphoria and mild hallucinations. Continued use can amount to drug addiction. Rajneesh inhaled nitrous oxide (N2O) mixed with pure oxygen. His inhalation (through combined tubes) occurred twice daily according to a credible testimony (of Ma Anand Sheela). Rajneesh had also become dependent upon the anxiety drug valium (diazepam). Even on the lowest estimate of 60 milligrams daily intake, he exceeded the maximum recommended dosage by 50 per cent.*

Calder informs: "A number of disciples have claimed that Rajneesh was so intoxicated at his Oregon ranch that he sometimes urinated in the halls of his own home." The reference is to nitrous oxide, not alcohol. Another accusation is that "his massive intake of valium caused paranoia and greatly reduced reasoning skills" (Calder, Lost Truth).

The same writer suggested that Rajneesh was earlier taking large doses of valium at Poona. Calder describes the guru as a drug addict. Yet neo-sannyasins customarily referred to "dental sessions." In this modified scenario, Rajneesh only inhaled nitrous oxide in sessions of clinical dentistry. This "orthodox" version is strongly associated with the guru's dentist, an English devotee known by the neo-sannyasin name of Swami Devageet. In 2007, Calder informed:

"Devageet is a crazy person. Years ago he denied to me emphatically that Rajneesh used N2O except for dental surgery, and then a few months later he publicly admitted on a Osho web forum that he gave Rajneesh N2O for months on end, and that Rajneesh used the drug because it 'increased his activity.' No one dictates books while having dental surgery, and no dental surgery lasts for months.... Osho's drug use was documented by the FBI.... The debate about Osho's drug use is over, except for the most insane followers. Rajneesh was a drug addict, and I have received letters from dozens of [neo]sannyasins who were at the [Oregon] ranch and in Poona who confirm this proven fact.... Many people at Poona [phase two, late 1980s] saw the nitrous oxide canisters piled up at Rajneesh's bungalow, and they knew what it was for. He was not having dentistry done every day. Osho admitted his N2O use and talked about

it openly. The FBI had records of how much N2O was delivered to the [Oregon] ranch. The valium was smuggled in from Mexico.... All of Rajneesh's drug use was exposed by the FBI, local Oregon law enforcement, and published in newspapers around the country. People clearly saw the nitrous oxide spigots installed by his bedside [at the Oregon ranch]. When you get to the point that you have nitrous oxide spigots custom installed by your bed, you are a very serious nitrous oxide addict, not just a casual user" (cited in Conway, [Enigmatic Bhagwan](#)). (12)

Sheperd writes:

*The lengthy published account of Ma Anand Sheela, for long obscured until 2012, confirms the drug problem. She says that, in Oregon, the commune doctor (Devaraj) had created "fifteen fictitious medical files" for the purpose of prescribing, ordering, and storing the drugs for Rajneesh. Additional patients were being invoked to satisfy his demands. The maverick medic and neo-sannyasin Swami Devaraj (George Meredith) had apparently set a very high daily dosage of 240 mg of valium (a sedative). This contrasts with the earlier report that Rajneesh daily ingested 60 mg (Storr, 1996, p. 59). By these standards, "living in the moment" was a substantial complication.*

*The situation was even more incongruous in that the guru (as reported by commune manager Sheela) routinely received a combination of two drugs. In addition to valium, the spurious medical files enabled him to ingest large quantities of meprobamate (a sedative that became a general medical issue in view of serious side effects). The guru's extensive drug problem was highlighted by his resort to nitrous oxide, "for two hours every morning and afternoon" according to Sheela.*

*Milne watched as Rajneesh started to talk under the influence of the gas. His speech became "increasingly slurred and slow." There is also such a problem as gas poisoning.*

*The photos taken by Milne were apparently intended for inclusion in a Rajneesh book later published as *Notes of a Madman* (1985). This document consists solely of his talks at nitrous oxide sessions. The psychedelic context is obvious enough. The guru is said to have validated psychedelic drugs in such statements as: "Using chemistry I want to see if it is possible to see the heights seen by Buddha, Jesus, Lao Tzu... I think that it is." This reveals a great deal about the missing dimensions to his supposed "enlightenment." In the same book, Rajneesh also indulged in pro-psychedelic patter about the repression of drugs being an evil, and how "people can come to know themselves" through drugs.*

Rajneesh slowly began to reach his Nietzschean ideal. On 3 January 1889, Nietzsche suffered a mental breakdown. Two policemen approached him after he caused a public disturbance in the streets of Turin. What happened remains unknown, but an often-repeated tale from shortly after his death states that Nietzsche witnessed the flogging of a horse at the other end of the Piazza Carlo Alberto, ran to the horse, threw his arms up around its neck to protect it, and then collapsed to the ground.

In the following few days, Nietzsche sent short writings—known as the *Wahnzettel* ("Madness Letters")—to a number of friends including Cosima Wagner and Jacob Burckhardt. Most of them were signed "Dionysos", though some were also signed "der Gekreuzigte" meaning "the crucified one". To his former colleague Burckhardt, Nietzsche wrote: "I have had Caiaphas put in fetters. Also, last year I was crucified by the German doctors in a very drawn-out manner. Wilhelm, Bismarck, and all anti-Semites abolished." Additionally, he commanded the German emperor to go to Rome to be shot and summoned the European powers to take military action against Germany, that the pope should be put in jail and that he, Nietzsche, created the world and was in progress of having all anti-Semites shot dead.

On 6 January 1889, Burckhardt showed the letter he had received from Nietzsche to Overbeck. The following day, Overbeck received a similar letter and decided that Nietzsche's friends had to bring him back to Basel. Overbeck travelled to Turin and brought Nietzsche to a psychiatric clinic in Basel. By that time Nietzsche appeared fully in the grip of a serious mental illness. He died from pneumonia in 1900. The family history includes a possible vascular-related mental illness in his father who died from stroke at 36. Friedrich Nietzsche's disease consisted of migraine, psychiatric disturbances, cognitive decline with dementia, and stroke.

Sheperd writes:

*Sheela's book informs that the guru's long-term partner and caretaker Vivek (Christine Wolff) now used morphine and a strong narcotic (sodium pentothal). This victim of depression also resorted to MDMA (Ecstasy), which Rajneesh approved, despite the dangers. Vivek had formerly attempted suicide many times via sleeping pills. Close contact with Rajneesh had not worked to her advantage.*

[...]

*Osho exhibited his drug tendency in other ways also. During one of the Zen discourses, he digressed to a markedly psychedelic topic, namely "LSD number two." Osho Rajneesh here declared:*

*"I am against all prohibition. My own understanding is that if LSD can give some glimpse of samadhi, then all its bad after-effects should be removed, because it is a chemical and it is in our hands.... Rather than prohibiting the drugs, what is needed is to produce drugs which lead people to samadhi, which give an indication: if a chemical drug can be such a blessing, what will the real thing be? It [the chemical drug] is just a dew drop in comparison with the real oceanic feeling, the oceanic ecstasy" (The Language of Existence, 1988, pp. 27ff.).*

[...]

*The well known aversion of Rajneesh to Christianity became pronounced at this time. One of his new lectures was entitled Christianity: The Deadliest Poison. Whereas Zen Buddhism was presented by the guru in terms of being the antidote to all poisons. The preoccupation with poison emerged in another theme requiring attention here.*

[...]

*In November 1987, Rajneesh proffered a new explanation for his poor health. His physical condition exhibited fatigue, sickness, pains, and low resistance to infection. Rajneesh now came to believe that Christians in the American government had poisoned him in 1985, while he was in jail. This belief was precipitated by a theory of his doctors that he had been afflicted with thallium poisoning and exposed to radiation during his brief phase spent in American jails. No evidence could be presented.*

[...]

*An American lawyer (Charles Hunter) described the allegation of poisoning by the US government as a complete fiction. Partisans of Rajneesh have treated the poison theory as evidence of Christian wrongdoing. Other commentators suggested that the guru's poor health was caused by stress, diabetes, or even HIV infection.*

[...]

*Shortly before Osho's death, his long-term living partner Ma Yoga Vivek (Christine Wolff) is said to have committed suicide with an overdose of sleeping tablets. Her despair was apparently created by the guru's "mental decline and collapse" (Calder, Lost Truth). Calder indicates that Rajneesh was by now insane. The failing health of Rajneesh caused him to stop giving discourses in April 1989. He died in January 1990. The official cause of death was heart failure. His followers continued to spread the misleading belief that he was poisoned by the US government in 1985.*

In that way Rajneesh finally reached his Nietzschean ideal, and he will probably be one of the leading role models for coming Matrix Sophists. He might even be raised to a Matrix Saint.

*Main sources:*

[Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh \(Osho\)](#), by Kevin Sheperd

[The Enigmatic "Bhagwan," Osho Rajneesh](#), by Timothy Conway and other contributors

*Related articles:*

[The Matrix Conspiracy](#)

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[The Matrix Conspiracy Fascism](#)

[A Critique of the Indian Oneness Movement and its use of Western Success Coaching](#) (here you can find many similarities with Rajneesh and his self-production; also about the so-called Deeksha, or Shaktipat phenomenon).

[Playing the Enlightenment Card](#)

[Spiritual Placebo](#)

[Humanistic Psychology, Self-help and the Danger of Reducing Religion to Psychology](#)

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