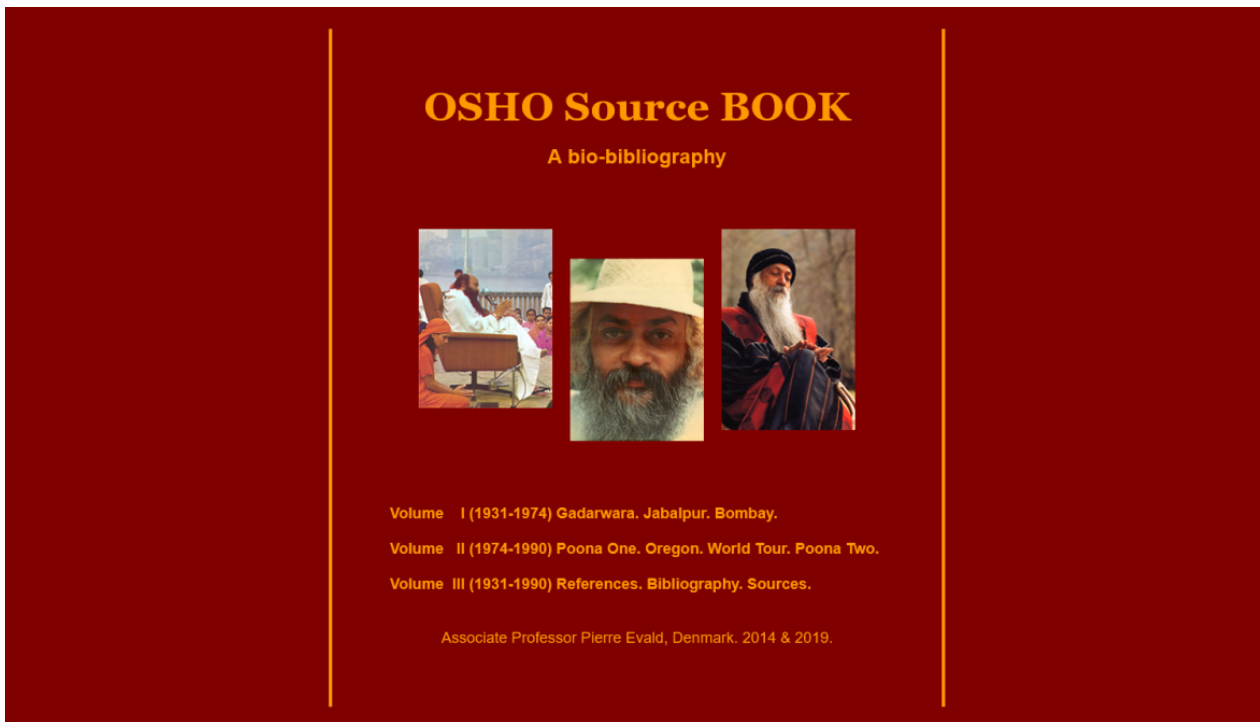


The OSHO Source BOOK: A Bio-Bibliography

BOOKS

JUNE 6, 2024

A review of Neeten's online book by Scott Lowe, University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire, published in the magazine Nova Religio



< **The OSHO Source BOOK**

A Bio-Bibliography

by Pierre Evald

Self-Published, 2014, 2019, with Supplement and Update 2024

oshosourcebook.com

'te a few articles on Osho have in recent years appeared in Nova Religio. Journal for Alternative and Emergent Religions, an academic journal published in California

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(pennpress.org). Among them are articles by Liselotte Frisk, a fine Swedish researcher, who writes on *Sheela* and *The Satsang Network*, and by Susan J. Palmer on *Ma Yoga Vivek* and *Wild Wild Rajneeshpuram*.

Therefore, Neeten found it appropriate to suggest to them to write a review of the digital OSO Source BOOK – and now it has happened. “To be honest, I’m happy to read the outcome, an unbiased and balanced review far from the conditioned reflexes we’ve witnessed when Osho was discussed among academics and in the media over the years. Looks like the times are a-changin’...” writes Neeten.

“In my brief feedback to the reviewer I didn’t mention his navigating skills but wrote how beautiful it was to read his perspectives in the concluding remarks that ‘A free public collection like this could not be made for most new and alternative religions’, and that we may indeed ‘wonder what our global civilization would be like if we had access to such exhaustive information on the founders of the world’s other religions.’”

Review by Scott Lowe

Bhagwan Rajneesh (Chandra Mohan Jain, 1931–1990) used many names and titles throughout his controversial career. Osho was the final name the guru adopted after fleeing Rajneeshpuram, his Oregon city/ashram, in 1985 and being deported from the United States. While Rajneesh wrote very little, he loved to speak, giving a huge number of talks to his many followers. It seems that every word of every lecture was recorded, transcribed, and eventually published, collected in more than 500 pamphlets and books, in both English and Hindi. Thousands of audio and video recordings have been preserved by his neo-sannyasins (initiated followers) as well.

< The OSO Source BOOK (capitalization by its author / compiler / curator) is a sprawling internet archive of all things Rajneesh, organized into three ‘volumes’, each with many subdivisions. Its creator, Pierre Evald, is a long-term neo-sannyasin as well as a retired faculty member from the Royal School of Library Science in Skagen, Denmark.

Consequently, this massive online collection seems to be both a work of devotion and an ongoing academic undertaking.

ho as “a bookman” is the overarching theme – the books he read, the books he dictated, ...e process of editing his works, the translations of his works, and so on. Rather than stop

with a description, the *Source BOOK* contains hundreds of quoted passages from the many devotees who worked on these transcriptions, translations, and collations, each passage providing a different perspective on the complex process. Readers are given an unusually detailed glimpse into the practices of the ashram. Unfortunately for researchers, the actual texts of his books are usually just summarized or excerpted, not reproduced in full.

In addition to the focus on books by, about, and read by Osho, the *Source BOOK* includes biography, hagiography, annotated bibliographies of Rajneesh's works, commentaries, book reviews (of Rajneesh's books as well as of books about him), inventories of audio and video recordings, jacket blurbs, accounts of sannyasins' personal experiences, Rajneesh's school library book checkout lists, information on Rajneesh's childhood playmates – you name it. Anything readers might wish to know, as well as many things they would not, can be found somewhere in this collection. While ostensibly structured by the principles of library science, readers may find the organization opaque. It's a mess, in my opinion. The *Source BOOK*'s cyber dimensions are difficult to judge, but it is clearly immense. I was lost in it for days.

In keeping with Osho's rejection of consistency and conventions, Evald doesn't appear to sanitize his materials or shy away from the attacks of Rajneesh's critics. He includes everything published by or about Rajneesh that he has found. While many new religious movements have extensive archives (the Transcendental Meditation Organization and Scientology, for example), they are often hidden from followers and academics. A free public collection like this could not be made for most new and alternative religions.

The OSHO Source BOOK will serve as an outstanding, if frustrating, research tool for scholars and students. One cannot help but wonder what our global civilization would be like if we had access to such exhaustive information on the founders of the world's other religions.

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Scott Lowe, University of Wisconsin–Eau Claire

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As published in the academic journal *Nova Religio* (muse.jhu.edu)

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ANAND NEETEN (AKA PROF. PIERRE EVALD)

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