



## Editorial

Spirit manifests in human experience as *intentional consciousness* – the innate human capacity to be aware of objects, either sensory or mental. To be aware of objects is to bring objects into consciousness, metaphorically speaking, to place them in the field or space of consciousness. Therefore, the fundamental structural component of intentional consciousness is *attention*. Attention is the ability to direct consciousness toward objects, so to speak, to illuminate them, and thus to make them knowable. Attention and awareness are synonymous.

Intentional consciousness is also referred to as the *ego*. The term *ego* specifically relates to object-related consciousness, where consciousness is attached to an object through the mechanism of projecting attention onto it. This mechanism creates a subject-object duality with the subject, the *ego*, at its core. However, the subject is often immersed in an object to the extent that it loses itself in it. The immersion of the subject identified with the object describes the philosophical concept of *existence*. Existence literally means “to

be outside oneself”, as the etymology of the Latin word *existentia* suggests: *ex* – “out of, from”, *sta* – “to stand” – one “stands outside of oneself” lost in an object.

Insofar as human existence is an “alienation of being” or an alienation of consciousness as consciousness, i.e., Spirit, spirituality is an effort to transcend this self-alienation by overcoming the natural flow of attention to objects and its immersion in them caused by the *ego*.

The spring edition of the tenth volume of *Spirituality Studies* brings together several studies on this key theme of spirituality. These studies include the non-dual philosophy and practice of the Tamil *jñānī* Ramana Maharshi and perennial psychology, particularly in relation to the sacred practice of *entheogens*. Dear readers, please accept my invitation to delve into these topics and draw some inspiration from the insights of the authors featured in the Spring 2024 edition of *Spirituality Studies*.

Cordially  
**Martin Dojčár**