

## Witness Statement

in the proceeding of the OHIM No. 5064 C  
regarding the cancellation of Community trademark No. 1 224 831 "OSHO"

I, Robert Doetsch, also known as Sw. Ramateertha, of Lütticher Str. 5-7, 50672 Cologne  
make the following statement:

I am the chairman of the Osho Lotus Commune, a registered association which is the legal entity under which a lot of the activities in connection with the meditations, teachings and vision of Osho in Cologne, Germany, are initiated and coordinated. The Osho Lotus Commune e.V. is the owner of the companies Osho Verlags GmbH, Osho's Place Gaststätten GmbH, Meditation & More GmbH and Uta Cologne GmbH (which runs the Osho UTA Institute for Spiritual Therapy and Meditation and the UTA Academy).

I personally am a physician. I completed my medical studies and received the licence to practice after completing my medical education in 1978. I am currently working also as a therapist and a meditation teacher, not only in Cologne but all over Europe.

I came to know Osho's meditations in 1974 during my medical studies. In 1976, I went to Puna, India, to see Osho, then known as "Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh. On 30<sup>th</sup> March 1976, in a personal meeting, Osho suggested to me to open up a meditation center in Cologne and introduce Bhagwan and his methods to friends. There was no mention of any legal bond whatsoever and the meeting was published in a Darshan Diary, a book titled: "Be realistic, plan for a Miracle". No third party was involved in this exchange.

In 1980, I opened up the Anand Sagar Rajneesh Mediation Center. Meditations were offered on a regular basis. On weekends, meditation camps were offered as well as therapy groups and other growth programs that essentially were based on the methods of Humanistic Psychology. At the same time a registered association was established that is today called Osho Lotus Commune e.V. During the whole time of its existence for 30 years it has always been legally completely independent.

In 1982, we bought the Brabanter Gaststätten GmbH, which was running a discothek nearby. Osho suggested to call it "Zorba the Buddha Rajneesh Discotheque". Within months, this discotheque was the most successful one in town. It was a place where we shared our love for life, our love for our Master and our enthusiasm about our lifestyle. In 1983, we founded the **Rajneesh** Gastronomie and Dienstleistungs GmbH, a company that was running a second discotheque in Cologne. The discotheques were clearly an expression of our religious experience and understanding of Osho's teaching and approach to life.

In 1983, we also founded the Rajneesh Verlags GmbH. It was publishing the "Rajneesh Times" and started publishing books, in which Osho's discourses were published in German language.

As the name of the registered association by 1984 had been changed to "Wioska Rajneesh Neo-Sannyas Commune e.V.", a new company called "Rajneesh Institute for Spiritual Therapy and Meditation GmbH" was founded. Again, this name was suggested by Osho – at that time called Rajneesh - and we adopted that name, especially as he talked about the therapeutic approach in his lectures, emphasizing that meditation should be an integral part of any therapeutic work.

During all this time, the meditation center continued its work, offering regular mediations and therapy programs.

In September 1985, the commune in Oregon ended and the Cologne Commune was closed down in February 1986. All the different businesses were sold to individuals that started to take care of their own business.

It was in that period of time, that - after the ending of the Wioska Rajneesh Neo-Sannyas Commune - we asked Osho to give a new name for the meditation center and the Rajneesh Institute for Spiritual Therapy and Meditation. The name he then gave was: Rajneesh Uta Institute for Spiritual Therapy and Meditation. The word UTA is a Sankrit name and means: loved one. Again there was not any involvement of any company like RFI in this process. Also there were no conditions or legal requirements put forward by anybody.

In 1988, I stayed in Puna for a period of three months considering of ending my work in Cologne and stay with the Master in India. When I asked him in a letter he responded: "Go back there, keep coming and going (to Puna) and keep the center strong". So, I continued my work in Cologne and I want to make it clear that all the work I did, was based on my personal understanding of Osho's teaching. No other authority was there – especially no legal authority – to tell me how I should do things. I would listen to *suggestions* made and then decide in my own responsibility whether to implement them or not. Especially after the experience with the experiment in America, I was completely aware that Osho did not want any religious *organization*, that he wanted the individual to be completely independent and responsible for their own life and lifestyle. Yet, his teachings did and still do emphasize a religiousness that is intrinsic to every individual. Osho detested any religious organization as an attempt to dominate or control the individuals' religious freedom through rules and regulations. The same way Osho always emphasized that he wanted the centers to be independent from any organization and that, at the most, they should be 'spiritually affiliated'. I heard this from him at different occasions but especially from him personally on 12<sup>th</sup> December 1985 when I travelled to India to meet him. I travelled there to do an interview for the Osho Times.

In 1988, Osho changed his name from Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh to Osho. The word "Osho" itself is of Japanese origin; Zen monks used the word to address their Zen masters. It was natural to change the names of the businesses here in Cologne. The first business to change the name was the Osho Times starting with their edition in October 1988.

In 1990, we founded another company to operate the newly built self-service vegetarian restaurant right next to the meditation center: Osho's Place Gaststätten GmbH. In the same way, we started an educational program in the early 1990s to train therapists. The program was called: Osho Therapist Training.

Nobody ever objected to the use of the Osho's name and the use was not restricted in any way. In the same way, it was clear in my perception, that Osho never exercised any control over the center. He made suggestions and it was up to me whether I would implement them at all or in what way I would do so. There was a "center handbook", in which many ideas and suggestions were written down. But there was no legal bond that entitled anybody to exercise any legal pressure on center leaders. It was clear that Osho had never asked anybody else to control the centers. It came as a shock to me, that suddenly someone claimed in the name of a foundation to have control over the centers and the use of the word "Osho". It is the more shocking as the trust in friends and a spiritual connection has been used to manipulate and deceive people. Behind peoples' back the meaning of correspondence has been changed into legal jargon which never has been addressed and made clear.

Cologne, this

Jan 6<sup>th</sup>, 2012

**Below is the author's signature, which is hidden for protection of personal data.**

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Robert Doetsch