

Sw. Deva Ojas, Ph.D;Ed.M.A.
(Theo C.C. de Ronde)
Sadhana Rajneesh Ashram
Havenstraat 6
1075 PR Amsterdam
Holland

Amsterdam, July 18th, 1983

To whom it may concern,

1.

For more than 15 years I have been able to work in the field of Religion and Adult Education in the Netherlands. First as a monk and priest in the Catholic Church, later as secretary of different christian churches. And since 1971 as governamental secretary of a national Council of Adult Education.

As far as my degrees are concerned: in 1970 I received, finishing my theological studies, a Ph.D. at the University of Nijmegen. And in 1973 I received a Ed.M.A. in Amsterdam at the Department of Advanced Studies Adult Education.

Since 1971 I worked as a governamental secretary for the Ministry of Culture and the Ministry of Education. When I found Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh as my Master in 1977 I lived with Him for a few years in Poona. In 1981 I was invited by the Dutch Television to come back to Holland for a programme on 'Churches and Sects'. I did this and stayed from then on in Holland, working in Rajneesh Meditation Centers. I gave groups for personal growth and started publishing articles on cultural change, health, ecology and religion. At this moment I am preparing a handbook for highschoools on 'Health and Environment'.

2.

How did I find Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh as my Master? What does He mean for me and others? With joy and without the slightest hesitation I can say: He is a living Master, as Jesus Christ or Buddha Gautama or Lao Tzu were in the old days. He gives us the taste of Buduhahood or Christ-consciousness as no one else.

EXHIBIT "A-34"

This statement has to be explained. I know it is very difficult to do this, because it is an experience, and not a theory or belief. The situation reminds me of another situation in my theological studies. We were doing historical research on the fact that, around Jesus, some people said immediately 'yes', others were hesitating and a few only could say 'no'. Did it have anything to do with Jesus? No, He seemed to be the same in different situations, always full of love, compassion and with high awareness. But people reacted differently. When a human being meets somebody who has attained the Ultimate State of Consciousness, then, immediately, before any argument or reasoning, he or she opens and says 'yes'. Or just closes in fear and says 'no'. Arguments and reasoning follow this inside felt experience.

In those days, when I did this historical research, we just discovered this fact and tried to explain it. We didn't have the experience of it. We were living in the belief of the church. But we could see that, in the beginning, something special has happened that was not happening anymore. During the period that Jesus was living and immediately after His death a special energy was touching people. What was it? We tried to describe the Gestalt of it, but must admit that we were outsiders, not able to experience or explain.

Now at least I can say: what we described then is happening now around Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh. And I have experienced it. I will try to tell about it and explain what is possible.

3.

This can only be understood if you see me as a man who once was a catholic monk, a priest and a scientist. So first I have to tell you about this period in my life. What happened in that period and how brought it me nearly inevitable to Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh?

Not because I didn't give my whole heart to the church and Jesus. On the contrary, when I was young I gave my whole energy in it. Though always doubting and questioning, since my childhood I always tried to be the best in the church and to live as near to Jesus as possible. When I was told that for that reason I had to drop contact with non-catholic friends, I did it - though my heart was bleeding. When, later on, I heard you could

take a short-cut by dropping marriage, wealth and security in this world, I did it too, though it again turned my stomach. But, as I remember clearly, at the moment I became a franciscan monk, I did it with my whole heart and experienced deep joy and peace. I was a 'good monk' for at least ten years and was chosen as a priest. When I was 25 years old I was ready to die for Jesus.

But still I was dying for Him, because I couldn't find Him nor in the monastery nor in the churches. I felt more thirsty than ever before, more lonely than anybody on this earth. A lot of monks, nuns and priests have this feeling, but they suppress it, working hard, doing what they can do to console and encourage other people. I could not suppress this feeling and the question was hammering me: how to tell people about Jesus, give them His blessing, when I myself didn't find Him? What empty gestures was I making? Was I more than a hypocrite, admired by the christians who liked what I was doing, but inside unhealthy? These questions became a quest. I deep longing came in me to know who I really was, to come in touch with my deepest being. From there only I could decide if I should go on working in the church, or go another path.

In the beginning I hardly dared to ask myself any questions about this deep longing - so much investment I had already in the churches I was working in. But I changed my mind at the moment that I felt that the old christian mystics really could nourish me. The question came why the official churches always were so hostile to them? There must be something wrong with the churches, was the only answer I could give.

That answer became clear by a thorough study of the texts of the New Testament: it could not be proved that the historical Jesus ever had the intention to start an institution, to build a church. Jesus seemed to be more a man who enjoyed life, music, dancing and singing, wine and celebrations. We couldn't find any anti-life statement that could be proved as an authentic saying of Him, though His churches were full of those statements. On the contrary, Jesus seemed to be as in touch with a happy life outside as inside. He enjoyed life in its totality, intense and with great awareness, living in the moment.

So, the historical Jesus didn't seem to have any idea to be the Messiah who was supposed to liberate the Jewish nation. Nor did

He bring new moral rules. He brought a total new consciousness. A lot of authentic sayings, well known inside and especially outside the canon of the traditional churches, prove it. That consciousness transformed Him totally and made Him a Son of God. Risking everything He tried to share with a few disciples the new energy He was in, saying that God was so near that you could call Him 'daddy', 'abba'.

This was too much for the official religious leaders, so they killed Him. From the record of His death you can discover that, at that moment, He attained the Ultimate State, dissolving totally into God. Then there was a short breakthrough of love and energy in a few thousand people who started living in communes around the Mediterranean.

But, and that was shocking when we studied the newly discovered Dead Sea Scrolls and the texts of Nag Hammadi, shortly afterwards the new leaders of those communes started cutting Jesus' message. They surely loved Jesus, but didn't have His experience. They didn't know what to do with His new consciousness, so they started giving more easily-to-understand moral rules. And because He seemed to be too human, they cut nearly his humanity to make Him the only begotten Son of God. So they adapted Jesus to mass psychology. This saved the newborn church as an institution, but killed the flame of a living Master in His true disciples. From the beginning the church was no more than a sect (from Lat. 'sectare' = 'to cut'), though a sect with a lot of power, masculine and well organised.

The conclusion of our research in the old texts was: since Jesus' death the world was different, but His church soon became His grave. The church couldn't catch hold of His consciousness, His spirit anymore. It is useless to try to find Him there.

4.

What was surprising was that all my colleagues were talking about it and making scientific research into this topic, but hardly anybody accepted the consequences of it. Most of my colleagues were working hard to get a good job in the church of which they were shaking the foundations. Hardly anybody could see the humor of it, perhaps it was too painful to see the truth.

For me at least these sober facts of scientists - I even went to Israel in 1971 to study the new discovered texts more deeply - were as explosive dynamite. My heart broke because I felt I couldn't work in the churches anymore. I still felt a deep longing to live with a Master as Jesus, but I couldn't live with a Master who lived and died so long time ago. So, when I look back, I see that my theological studies unburdened me from the church and her rules and rites. And surely they prepared me for a meeting with Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh, the living Master who was able to bring Christ-consciousness again in our hearts. But that is what I only can say now, looking backwards.

Then, in 1970, it felt totally different. I felt naked on earth and became sick for a few months. In those months I looked back over my life and made a decision. Up to now it seemed that I had lived 'spiritually', going inside according to the teachings of the church. But it had brought me in a cul-de-sac, it had come to a dead end. And that though I had given my whole heart and energy in it, living as a monk, a scientist and a priest.

From now on I had to drop it and try the other side, living as an atheistic materialist, enjoying my body, wealth, material security and whatever life could give.

My whole energy changed in those months and, surprisingly, new things happened in the flow of this energy. Soon I got a good job from the government in the field of Adult Education and in my free time I started studying this work, went to the Advanced Studies and received a M.A. in Education in 1973. New colleagues gave me prestige and power to change things and I started feeling good. I fell in love with an american woman, bought a house and enjoyed, for the first time, life on earth.

Then again the question came in my heart: is this all there is? I was rich on the outside, but felt inside still poor. And I wanted to grow and to be rich inside too. Why not? If it was happening on the outside, why not on the inside? But, where to find some nourishment?

I knew that the West could not nourish me enough, so I turned East. I started reading books on Hinduism, Buddhism, Taoism, but felt soon that books were not enough. I had to go into new experiences. So, already in 1973, during a long holiday, I went to India and lived a while in the ashram of Shree Ramana (Tiruvannamalai). And I went to Sri Lanka to meet Buddhist monks.

But my spiritual crisis continued, because I understood that none of the traditional religions could help me anymore. I needed a spiritual teacher or Master. So I went to Pondicherry, to the ashram 'Auroville', to find Shree Aurobindo or The Mother. She was still alive and gave me the message: 'Go beyond and witness.' Beyond what? Beyond the traditions, I understood. And 'witness', what is that? For the first time I had glimpses of awareness, seeing without judging. This was the key, I understood, and went back to my house, my friends and work in the West.

After that new guides crossed my path. Karlfried Graf von Durekheim, a German zen-teacher who brought me back in my body. And Pir Vilayat Inayat Khan, a Sufi-teacher who taught me to sing and dance and open my heart for the unknown again. And when I travelled with my American girlfriend in U.S.A. (1975) I came into contact with teachers of the centers of Humanistic Psychology who impressed me deeply.

But still there was that thirst. So suddenly Pir Vilayat told me that I had to look for another guide, a Master. He didn't know Him, he only saw that my American girlfriend first should meet Him and then bring me there.

5.

That happened in 1977. My girlfriend took sannyas and went to India. I followed and met Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh in Poona, May 1977.

Actually I met Him before in Holland, because His meditations - especially the 'dynamic meditation' - gave me all the nourishment I needed. My whole energy-system changed, gave me back joy, happiness, silence. From the moment I experienced this I knew: in Poona lives my Master.

The moment I saw Him physically my whole body started shivering for joy and from deep in my heart a song arose: 'The Bridegroom

there, the Bridegroom.' And I was laughing. I saw a western monk meets an eastern Master and there is deep communion. My whole life seemed to have been a preparation for this moment. I felt immensely rich inside, the whole 'pleroma' was there, east and west were meeting in a human being.

What was surprising for my friends and colleagues didn't give me any problem: I said good-bye to my friends, quit my job and left the West to stay in Poona with this beautiful Master. There I lived happily and worked in the ashram. And when, a few years later, the Dutch Television invited me to come back to the West, I hardly could break away from Him. But, back in the West I stayed there, saw how I was changed and started doing the things I was talking about in the beginning of this letter.

6.

Now I like to say again: for me there is no doubt, Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh is a living Master, as Jesus Christ must have been in the old days, or Buddha Gautama or Lao Tzu. Happy the country that can say: 'He is our guest now.' He is a precious treasure that is worth all reverence, care and love.

He is gathering His commune now, like Buddha once was gathering His sannyasins and Jesus choosing His disciples. He is sharing His message, in silence now, after a long period of singing His song in public discourses.

As the famous theologian Harvey Cox once said in his book 'Turning East', every true religion needs a Master, a Commune and a Truth that is newly discovered, these are the three pillars of every religion. Now we can proudly say: there is a beautiful Master, Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh. He gathers His commune, the Sangha of the rajneeshees. And He spreads the Truth, the Dhamma. This is 'rajneeshism'.

When we look at this treasure we can find at least five points who are very specific for this religion. I like to show them. First: the core, the Enlightened Master Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh in deep communion with His disciples. A love-affair as never seen before. An immense energy-field in which 350.000 disciples are involved and in which Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh is the

magnetic force, the pulsating heart. Compared with other Masters in the history, here we find the greatest Buddhafield ever created on earth.

And in the center a unique Master who gives His message now in silence for those who understand. As He once said: 'Buddha gave Mahakashyap his flower and said: 'I am giving you that which I could not give to others. I am giving you that which only can be given in silence! I would like thousands of Mahakashyaps to receive that flower. One is not enough!

(From: The Sound of Running Water, 1980).

Second: His vision - printed in more than 340 books - is of immense depth and vastness. He embraces western science and eastern mysticism. Out of His own experience for twenty years He talked on yoga, zen, sufism, taoism, chassidism and all kind of known and unknown Masters. He once said: 'My whole effort is to make you fall in love with Lao Tzu, Chuang Tzu, Lieh Tzu, Buddha, Krishna, Christ, Krishnamurti, Raman, Ramakrishna - a thousand and one. I am not jealous. I am vast, I can contain all your loves.' (From: A Space where God can Descend, 1979) Everybody who reads His books now or listens to His tapes must fall in love with those Masters. Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh is able to let this happen. He opens the treasures of mysticism of the whole past and brings us so back to the sources of all religions. That is unique, because none of the Masters before Him was able to do this. Bhagwan - living in the twentieth century - had this opportunity and took it.

And He could do this in confrontation with all the western science, valid up to now. He is familiar with the discoveries of psychology, psycho-analysis as well with those of physics and modern technology. That is why the gift that His sannyasins give Him in Rajneeshpuram looks so up-to-date and modern. This matches His vision of being rich inside and outside, a unique vision for a spiritual Master.

Third: He starts organising His religion now with ministers and rituals. Jesus couldn't do it, which is why all those falsifications so soon disturbed His church. Neither could Buddha do this. That's why immediately after His death all kind of different Buddhistic schools started quarreling.

It seems to be inevitable that, after the death of beloved Master, everybody interprets Him in his or her own way. Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh must have seen this happening in history and that must have brought Him to His unique decision: to organize His religion while He is still alive, so that He can give His guidance. At least at this moment 'rajneeshism' is in accordance with His teachings and guidance. This is unique in history. The depth of 'rajneeshism' at this moment is that it exists in the presence of a living Master. This gives a new quality to this religion. Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh once explained this in Poona, at the moment that I was leaving Him for a television-debate in Holland on 'Churches and Sects'. He then said: 'Remember, religion exists only in the presence of a living Master. The moment the Master leaves, the religion disappears. It is just like the fragrance of a rose flower. The moment the rose flower disappears, its petals start falling back to the soil, the fragrance also disappears. Religion is the fragrance of the person who has become awakened. It cannot be caught into churches. You cannot catch hold of the fragrance.' (The Wild Geese and the Water, Poona, February 28th, 1981).

Fourth: His meditations are unique, especially the major ones: 'dynamic meditation', 'kundalini', 'nadabrahma' and 'nataraj'. They provide a new opening, especially for western people who live an unhealthy life and whose bodies and emotions are blocked. Lots of other meditations are described in 'The Orange Book' (Poona, 1980)

Fifth: Though, to describe the teachings of Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh at least 340 books are needed, for the day-to-day life His motto stays very simple and practical: see your work as a worship and a learning-process. So, the sannyassins who just work with their whole heart and full awareness have found the key and don't miss Him at all. The devices for the daily life, who are visible for everybody (red clothes, a mala with His picture and a new name), are a beautiful support for this way of life. And the celebrations of the key-events of life? The praxis of the rituals of birth, marriage and death are so joyful and human that everybody who participates in them is affected.

They have the atmosphere of a Master who once said: 'I have to tell jokes because I am afraid you are all religious people. You tend to be serious!' (From: A Space where God can Descend, Poona, 1979).

7.

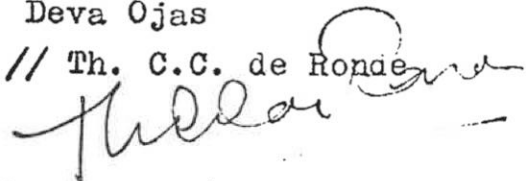
Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh has transformed my life deeply, showed me the way home, back to the Source, to my Self, to God. He is, as one of the rare Masters on this earth, this global village now, able to open the hearts and the being of thousands of people. At the moment it happens, no argumentation is needed, it is self-evident, clear and brings immense joy and happiness. Tasting, experiencing Him a process of transformation starts. Living near a living Master is a continuous surprise. You feel, you are near the Source of Life, like a flower you are opening in the morning sun, your heart and being is touched. How? You cannot explain it, but it happens and it happens continuously. You are growing, taking one barrier after the other. Spiritual growth is happening, alive religion breaks through.

I feel immensely happy seeing what is happening around this beautiful Master. Let us enjoy Him.

Sincerely yours,

Sw. Deva Ojas

// Th. C.C. de Ronde



Seen for legalization of the signature of Theodorus Cornelis Clemens de Ronde, residing at Amsterdam, by me, Anna Catharina Maria Aloysia Arts-Verbist, notary public, practising at Amsterdam, Netherlands.
July 21st 1983.

