

Press Release, February 2007

Press Release of the Board of the Eranos Foundation, Ascona

With reference to recent articles in the press, in which various allegations were made, the Board of the Eranos Foundation wishes to comment as follows:

1. The Foundation's main objective is to hold annual conferences, as did its foundress, Olga Fröbe-Kapteyn, who since 1933 had organised such interdisciplinary "Eranos Tagungen" (Philosophy, Anthropology, Religious Studies, Analytical and In-depth Psychology, Ethnology, Mythology, Physics and Biology). She thus contributed to the cultural dialogue between East and West, and invited participants who were not only well-known in Europe, but had acquired worldwide fame and reputation in their own respective fields of study/scholarship.
2. These Tagungen, organised by the Foundation, ended in the year 1988, upon which followed a period of tension and separation – one group broke up with the set-up, wishing to adhere to the activities as outlined in the Statutes; others within the Foundation wanted to focus on a specific scientific area. Since then, the Foundation had been faced with financial problems, which finally – in 2004 – led to its being on the verge of bankruptcy, prosecuted by third parties and confronted with the threat that the entire property would be sold for the amount of its indebtedness of over CHF 4 million. The Foundation's President at the time asked the Canton and the Commune of Ascona to help find a solution in order to re-introduce its activities and to improve the situation.
3. In 2005 Dr. John VAN PRAAG submitted a relaunch project for the Foundation's activities. It provided for a re-introduction of the annual, interdisciplinary conferences, as outlined in the Statutes, but also envisaged to preserve and maintain the impressive cultural heritage of the Foundation (namely publications, the photo archive, correspondence, etc.). This project was accepted by the Cantonal and Communal authorities and was also submitted to the Federal Interior Department and its supervisory body for foundations. The first concrete result of these efforts was the relaunch Tagung of Eranos in June 2006, together with an exhibition of photographs and documents on the history of Eranos. The next Tagung is scheduled for June 2007.
4. The Board emphatically rejects the statement that Dr. VAN PRAAG had personally promised any financial contributions to the Foundation. What he had achieved, however, was winning over various cultural institutions, which were willing to co-operate and to engage themselves in helping to redevelop the Foundation in the future. Unfortunately local opposition groups intervened at the time and put an end to that opportunity. It is most likely that this opposition came from the same group of people that recently made untrue statements to the press, wanting to jeopardise the relaunch project of Eranos and put its President into a wrong light.
5. As far as the sale of Casa Shanti, which makes up 20% of the property, is concerned, this was indispensable for reducing the Foundation's debt and thus being able to concentrate fully on the goals of the Statutes (including improving its accommodation facilities). Olga Fröbe-Kapteyn herself, as the Foundress, had already initiated the sale of this villa in the 1960s, also for financial reasons, and Casa Shanti only again became part of the property of the Foundation in 1980. The decision not to sell to a third party, but rather to a person close to the Foundation, was taken by the Board, so as to be able to keep including the property in the Foundation's activities.
6. And as far as the transparency of the transaction is concerned, it must be pointed out that the sale had been submitted to the Surveillance authority in Bern, who considered it a matter for the Board to



decide on and belonging to the realm of the relaunch activities. It should also be noted that the Foundation has representatives both from the Canton and the Commune on its Board.

The Board trusts that the confusion that has been created will soon subside in view of the concrete results of the relaunch project and the enhancement of the cultural activities of Eranos.

Ascona, 7th February 2007

The Board of the Eranos Foundation, Ascona