

german news

RS 1

THE MAGAZINE ON INDO-GERMAN RELATIONS

NUMBER 2 /// 09



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EDITORIAL

/ JENS URBAN



What a year! 2009 was full of celebrations. For Germany, certainly one of the most important ones was the 20th Anniversary of the Fall of the Berlin Wall. Twenty years ago, barriers all over Europe were torn down, which in the end paved the way for the enlargement of the European Union. The Iron Curtain had fallen – but what were the implications for India? Jochen Buchsteiner of the German daily ›Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung‹ (FAZ) reflects on how the ›peaceful German Revolution‹ of 1989 triggered a historic change in Delhi's politics and economics. Today India is on its way to take its rightful position as a global power.

The new German Ambassador to India, Thomas Matussek, draws the same conclusion on India's new role. After an absence of almost 25 years – he served as Press Counsellor in Delhi – he states that the former ›sleeping giant‹ has woken up. On November 11 the Ambassador presented his credentials to the President of India. In our portrait he speaks about his long relationship with India and his vision of the strategic partnership between India and Germany. Economic cooperation, the fight against international terrorism and climate change will figure high on his agenda.

2009 was also a politically decisive year for India and Germany. People in the biggest democracy of the world and in Europe's biggest democracy both elected a new parliament and government. GERMAN NEWS offers you reflections by Friedbert Pflüger and Philipp Ackermann on the outcome of the elections and the challenges up ahead. Despite all the differences between the two countries, there are common trends: People in India and Germany voted for the incumbent candidates. In times of economic uncertainty people stuck to the well known. Given the good relations between Prime Minister Singh and Chancellor Merkel, Pramit Pal Chaudhuri from the ›Hindustan Times‹ thinks that there are many possibilities to open new chapters of the ›Indian-German story‹. This is notwithstanding India being a ›modernist‹ and Germany a ›postmodernist state‹, as he points out in his article. Norbert Walter, Head of ›Deutsche Bank Research‹, gives a politico-economic outlook on what the future could bring.

It is certainly true that many countries around the globe are still struggling with the economic downturn. However, it seems that quite a few economies have bottomed out and are sighting light. GERMAN NEWS focuses in its economic section on positive investment trends despite the global crisis. The business journalist Volker Müller paints a colourful portrait of Pune, India's new German hub. Stefan Mentschel gives an insight on future plans of Volkswagen in India by talking to VW's Global Head of Production, Prof. Dr. Heizmann. The carmaker's CEO emphasises that they have the right product for the Indian market. Nadine Bös, also from the ›Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung‹ (FAZ) takes a look at new trends in capital flow, underlining that more and more Indian companies are heading for the German market.

In our newly introduced science corner, Christian Schwägerl of the German weekly magazine ›Der Spiegel‹ writes on recent trends in the Indo-German Science cooperation. ›Mission Max-Planck‹ introduces you to the world of the highly reputed Max Planck Society and its top-end scientific projects.

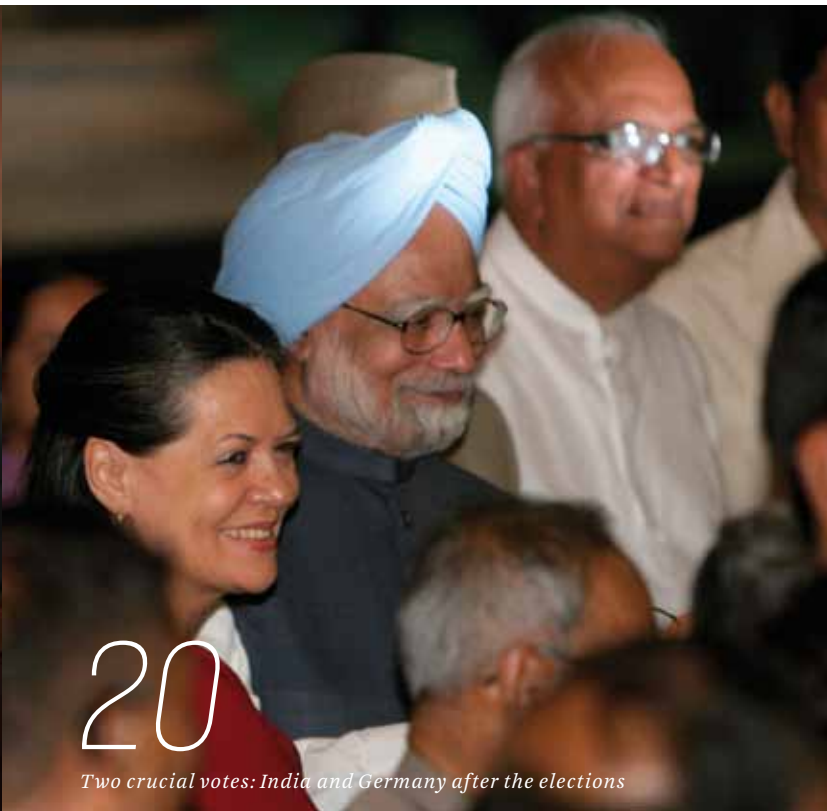
Our culture section is buzzing, as always: Meera Menezes reveals that the Mumbai terror attacks have found their way into the works of celebrated artist M.F. Husain and painter Norbert Bisky. Furthermore, read how ›Slumdog Millionaire‹ and ›White Tiger‹ stirred a lively debate about modern India in Germany and how Germany's most famous art school for classic modernism, the ›Bauhaus‹, left its imprint on India. Last but not least, Sascha Lehnartz from ›Die Welt‹ portrays the German winner of this year's Nobel Prize in Literature.

It is a great pleasure for me to introduce myself as the new Head of Press and Public Relations of the Germany Embassy and the Editor of GERMAN NEWS. In its 50th year of publication, I am very happy to present to you this relaunched magazine, featuring highly distinguished journalists, experts and politicians from India and Germany.

Enjoy your read!



Arrived: Ambassador Matussek and Ulla Matussek



Two crucial votes: India and Germany after the elections



The new hub: Growing Pune



One year after the attack: Mumbai paintings

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Cover Illustration: Number of seats in Parliament of the different parties graphically illustrated for both Germany (north) and India (south). Illustration by Groupe Dejour	

20 YEARS AGO

There was jubilation all around when the Berlin Wall that divided the city of Berlin for 28 years broke down on November 9 in 1989 with a peaceful revolution for a unified Germany

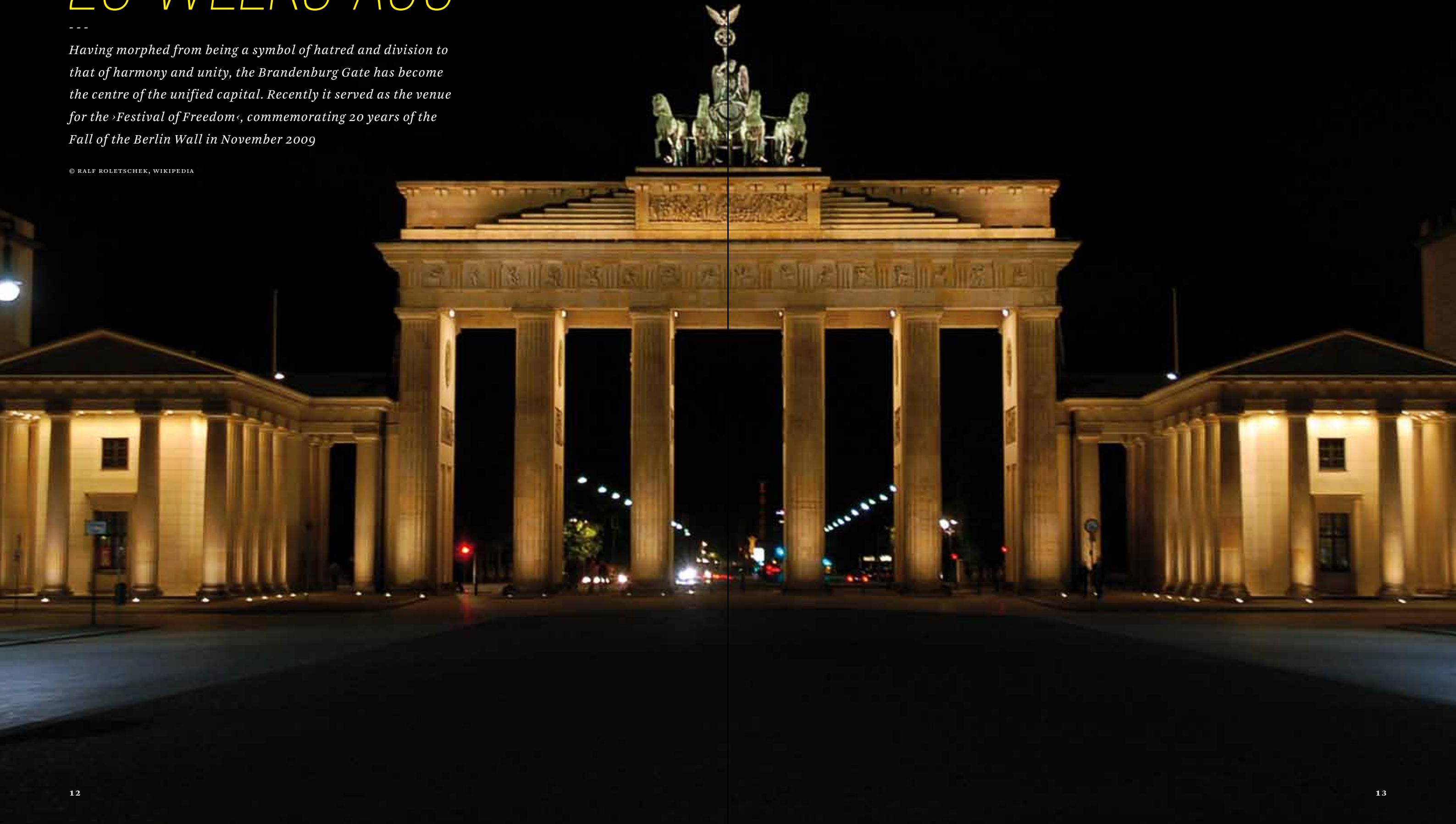
© REUTERS



20 WEEKS AGO

Having morphed from being a symbol of hatred and division to that of harmony and unity, the Brandenburg Gate has become the centre of the unified capital. Recently it served as the venue for the ›Festival of Freedom‹, commemorating 20 years of the Fall of the Berlin Wall in November 2009

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THE FALL OF THE INDIAN WALL

The German Revolution triggered a historic change in Delhi's politics and economics

/ TEXT: JOCHEN BUCHSTEINER

The ›Fall of the Berlin Wall‹ was an event, which triggered several waves of change. The first one struck divided Germany and led to its reunification. The second washed across the region and ended in the expansion of the European Union. The third crossed the borders of Europe and resulted in altered perceptions and systems in many parts of the world.

Also Indians took note of this 20th anniversary. Most of the articles portrayed the end of the Iron Curtain in its German, and therefore imminently emotional dimension but some of the texts also analysed the events of November 9, 1989 in the light of their international impact. Almost all writers welcomed the end of communism although they drew different conclusions from it. Pratap Bhanu Mehta from the Centre for Policy Research in Delhi lamented the worldwide loss of utopia almost wistfully whereas Professor Meghnad Desai celebrated the victory of global capitalism as a catalyst in the resurgence of Asia.

Few Asian nations were as strongly affected by the German events as India. The fall of the Wall and the end of the old world order consisting of two contradictory systems marked the biggest break in the history of the country since its independence. In the almost forty years until the Wall fell, India had defined itself on the basis of the Non-Aligned-Movement. It saw itself as a neutral power between the two ideological poles, although in reality it was closer to one than the other: The distance to Moscow was clearly shorter than the one to Washington. This was even evident in everyday culture. Until the late 1980s Indian students sported Soviet emblems: The badge with Lenin's likeness on the lapel, the much extolled red cap on the head. ›The Soviet Union‹, a glossy magazine translated into Bengali, which brought the latest trends

from Moscow to India, was sold in the kiosks in West Bengal – a federal state which still has a communist government.

The coming together of Indians and Russians, two very different peoples, was due to the ideological vogues and geopolitical whims of the past century. In fact the two states did not have much in common when the subcontinent gained independence in 1947: India was religious, caste-oriented, democratic. The Soviet Union was atheistic, egalitarian, autocratic. Moscow dominated the ›Second World‹. Delhi was preparing itself to lead the ›Third World‹. And then there was a minor historical blemish: In the Second World War Moscow had sided with London – India's coloniser and suppressor.

The socialist spark of the Indian freedom movement triumphed despite all these contradictions and obstacles. Nehru's anti-imperialist impetus and the Congress leadership projected Stalin's empire in a more favourable light. With his antagonism towards the capitalist West, the Soviet dictator seemed to be on the right side: On the side of the allegedly or actually exploited developing countries. As the political commentator and scholar Raja Mohan pointed out in his book ›Crossing the Rubicon‹: Though India never officially accepted the argument that the Soviet Union was the natural ally of the Third World in its fight against the West, exactly this point of view was shared by »the majority of the Indian intelligentsia.«

During the years of their special relationship, the Soviet Union accompanied India on its ›self-determined‹ way to development. In contrast to the ›Coca Cola countries‹ of South-east Asia (a term used by an Indian minister in the 1960s) Delhi cloistered itself away from the free world market and adopted more or less the communist model of planned

economy. Moscow helped with the setting-up of autarchic industries and the development of an excessive bureaucracy of control. The armaments came mainly from the Soviet Union. Even the oil supplies, which didn't entirely stem from the Soviet empire, were processed through Moscow and in roubles.

Initially the surprising fall of the Wall and the collapse of the Soviet empire left Delhi shocked. Not only the Indian communists but even large parts of the seemingly eternally ruling Congress Party went into »deep mourning«, reminisced Raja Mohan. Jaswant Singh who was later Minister of External Affairs in the BJP government, charged the government of Narasimha Rao with clinging to old clichés. However, the trend did not last long.

Delhi was faced with pressing questions, which urgently needed to be answered: How could one remain part of the ›Third World‹ when ›The second‹ had just disintegrated? And what good was a Non-Aligned-Movement when there were no blocks any more? The victory of freedom and the rapid pace of globalisation necessitated economic and political reforms and a realignment of Delhi's foreign policy – and it is to the credit of the Congress government (and later the BJP government) that they accepted this challenge.

The signs had already been there for a long time. The faltering of the planned economy system, strengthened by the demise of the Soviet Union, had also reached India at the end of the 1980s and beginning of the 1990s. But it needed an external impetus for Manmohan Singh, the Finance Minister at that time, to usher in the economic reforms which are today widely perceived as a historic landmark. They were developed just a few months after German reunification.

The Iron Curtain divided not only Germany and Europe but the whole world. Its fall brought India to the centre of the world stage

India's foreign policy also adopted a new course. Russia's first tentative steps towards the United States made it easier for India to overcome its old misgivings. It would take a few more years for India's relations with the only remaining superpower to improve, but the path was already laid. Jaswant Singh, the External Affairs Minister at that time, spoke about »five lost decades« shortly before American President Bill Clinton's historic visit to Delhi in March 2000. With the rapprochement to Washington, India broke away from its traditional Moscow-oriented coordinate system and gradually moved to a position which was equidistant from the important capitals of the emerging multi-polar world.

Twenty years after the fall of the Berlin Wall, India is a prospering and eminent regional power, which is being courted by many. The socialist heritage of its economic system may currently be seen as an advantage in the ongoing international financial crisis, but India is expected to integrate even more vigorously in the global market in the near future.

India has also evolved a responsible foreign policy. Even though it has never ratified the major agreements for controlling nuclear proliferation, it acquired the de facto status of a recognised nuclear power last year. Nothing could reflect better the trust, which India has won in the world after 1989. Just as reunified Germany has found its place in the heart of Europe, a reformed India is on its way to seize its position in the centre of the world. ■

Jochen Buchsteiner is the Asia Correspondent of ›Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung‹ (FAZ). Based in New Delhi for seven years he is covering political affairs in large parts of the continent. In 2005 his book ›Die Stunde der Asiaten‹ (The Asian Hour) was published in Germany.

BREAKING THE BARRIERS

Award winning filmmaker Supriyo Sen on his experiences at the ›Berlinale‹ Filmfestival, German bus passengers and on walls in minds

/ INTERVIEW: KATRIN SOHNS

Supriyo Sen, 41, is one of India's leading documentary film directors. Holding a Master in Journalism he started working as a freelance journalist. In 1994 he co-founded the group ›Perspective‹, changing to documentaries. His movies won several prizes, including this year's ›Berlinale‹ and Hamburg's International Short Film Festival.

With your documentary ›Wagah‹ you've won the first prize at this year's Talent Campus at the ›Berlinale‹. How did you experience the German reaction to your film?

›Wagah‹ was the only among the five winning films at the ›Berlinale‹ which is very close to the Berlin Wall experience:

In both countries the same people were divided. In both countries you have the same longing for each other. So the film was very popular among the German audience. It was a huge reaction. I didn't expect that. Also we were very honoured when the festival people decided to show our short film in the closing ceremony at the ›Berlinale‹. This never happened before.

Did the award boost your career?

My film is now really travelling: Within four months, it was shown at eighteen festivals and won eight international awards. So Berlin really helped our team to be recognised ►

Receiving the ›Berlin Today Award‹ from Wim Wenders (left) was one of the best moments of Supriyo Sen's life



internationally. The ›Berlinale Talent Campus‹ is providing a huge platform: It is not that ten people are invited – it is five hundred young people from all over the world. Also there are directors, editors, writers, filmcritics, journalists getting together. You are exposed to the experience of the great cinematographers who give masterclasses, who talk to you.

Talking about ›Wagah‹: When did you decide to make a film about the checkpoint?

I had been making films about the topic of partition since 2001. The first film was ›Way back home‹, which was a very long movie. I tried to explore the individual memory of partition of my parents. The film was quite popular and won many international awards. So I realised, I should carry on with the discourse of partition. The next film – ›Hope Dies Last in War‹ – is a story about Indian prisoners, who were in Pakistani jails and the families who were still waiting for the prisoners to come back. ›Way back home‹ is dealing with the past of partition. ›Hope Dies Last in War‹ deals with the ongoing conflict. Then I also wanted to have a future view on partition – that is where ›Wagah‹ came in. The question for me was, what future generations think about the partition. Altogether it is a trilogy on partition. It is about the past, the present and the future.

Why did Wagah fascinate you?

For me the ceremony at Wagah is bizarre. The interesting thing about it is the involvement of the people. Some of them simply come for the experience but some really come to see the other side. People want to see ›who are the Pakistani‹ and on the Pakistani side, people want to see ›who are the Indians‹. Also there are families who have ties with the other side. So for me it is a very symbolic place: On the one hand, it is a symbol of division. On the other hand, it is a very strong unifying point.

You've mentioned your personal attachment. Where does your family come from?

My parents migrated from East-Pakistan, now Bangladesh, after partition. Although they were not married at that time – they only got married here – both families came to India. In 1950 one of the worst massacres of the eastern province took place. So they decided to migrate to Calcutta. It was a very tough time.

What in your view could help to achieve more stable relations between India and Pakistan?

If we can't reunite, which obviously we can't, we should try to be good neighbours. We should have exchange. The more we get to know each other, the more we gain from each other.

We have to learn to live as good neighbours. We have to help each other to grow, each as a good nation.

How did you experience the topic of the German partition?

When I first walked through the city of Berlin I really felt like I was walking through modern history. So obviously, I was quite interested to know more about the partition. I talked to many people, I tried to get to know their mindset.

Did you still find the ›two Germanies‹?

Many people say it is still there in the mind of the people. It will take more time. The physical wall might not be there, but walls in the minds remain.

How familiar are you with Germany?

Last year alone, I visited Germany four times and before that six to eight times. Now I really know Berlin. In fact, I will start a new project there. We already started shooting. I really love Berlin. When I go to Berlin I really feel at home. I have great friendships with many Germans. People are very open to other cultures from all over the world.

How do you see the documentary-film-scene in Germany?

Germany has a well established long tradition of filmmaking. You have television channels which regularly show documentaries. You have the ›Berlinale‹, where the documentaries are as important as the fiction films. For us it is a great experience when you see 800 to 900 people queuing in front of a cinema-hall to see a documentary. I would love to see that kind of atmosphere in India also. We might have a long way to go but I strongly believe that we can get there.

What memories do you carry with you from the ›Berlinale‹?

When I got the award at the ›Berlinale‹ from Wim Wenders – this was one of the best moments in my life. Also funny things happened: The night we won at the ›Berlinale‹, we went out celebrating. We had the trophy with us, we were travelling by bus, cheering. So everyone was asking, what had happened. And then people started clapping in the bus and celebrating with us.

What visions, projects, plans do you have for your future?

In the beginning I was more into making activist kind of documentaries to raise serious topics. Now my focus is on storytelling and telling it aesthetically – it is more about cinematic expression. But the issue of non-violence, the issue of peace will always be the subject of my films. Right now I am planning to make more documentaries with children. They are the future citizens of our country. ■

On November 11, Ambassador Matussek presented his credentials to the Indian President, Honourable Smt. Pratibha Devisingh Patil



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OUR MAN IN DELHI

The new German Ambassador to India, Thomas Matussek, on his homecoming to India, the importance of a strategic partnership and his political visions

» It feels like a spiritual homecoming.« With these words the new German Ambassador to India, Thomas Matussek, described his feelings when he landed at Indira Gandhi International Airport in the early hours of October 25, 2009. After an absence of almost 25 years – he served as Press Counsellor in Delhi from 1983 to 1986 – many things seemed familiar, others startlingly different. »My first day was breathtaking – in every sense of the word! From a morning jog in Nehru Park to a visit to a shopping mall, to an evening concert in the park with Ustad Amjad Ali Khan. It was an exciting mixture of past and future, ancient culture and 21st century. The warmth of the welcome by old friends and the proverbial Indian hospitality were really overwhelming.«

His wife Ulla Matussek, a Bharatnatyam and Kuchipudi dancer who is a disciple of Raja and Radha Reddy, is equally enthusiastic about their return. Since her first public solo performance at the India International Centre in 1986, she has performed in Germany, Portugal and the USA and taught more than a hundred girls the classical Indian dances.

»We have formed a very close emotional attachment to this country«, says Matussek. »We kept in touch with India over all these years, we've even built a house in India. But it is not only a moment of nostalgia«, he continues. »Last time we were here India was a ›sleeping giant‹, and now the ›giant‹ has woken up.«

From his former vantage points as Chief of Cabinet to Foreign Ministers Genscher and Kinkel, as Director General for political affairs, as Ambassador to London and to the UN in New York, he has followed India's incredible rise and has had the chance to interact with Indian politicians and business leaders.

Having worked closely with his counterparts from India, Brazil and Japan in the so-called ›Group of Four‹ to achieve a thorough reform of the UN Security Council and a permanent seat for these four countries at the table, he shares India's view that global governance should not just be a responsibility of the G-group, from G-8 to G-16 to G-20, but that the UN should remain the highest seat of legitimacy in the world.

UN reform is by far not the only issue on which India and Germany share common ground. Matussek highlights the long tradition of the good relationship between the two countries. »We share a long and burden-free history. India was always admired by German poets, thinkers and philosophers. Indologists like Max Müller and outstanding doctors like Samuel Hahnemann really left a mark on India. In many respects, Indians and Germans think alike«, he says. And he adds: »As for today I would say that on all fronts – on politics, economy, science and culture – our relationship is really strategic, as Chancellor Merkel and Prime Minister Singh called it.«

However, Matussek thinks there is still room for improvement. Citing the programme of the present Indian government, which focuses strongly on agricultural development, transport infrastructure, education and utilities, he emphasises that Germany and German companies can offer a lot in these areas. He thinks that in many respects the German and Indian economies are complementary. »We are good in top end manufacturing. India, on the other hand, is excellent in IT and services sectors. Working together, we can overcome our shortcomings and will be ideally equipped to meet the challenges of the future.«

Therefore the economic cooperation is a top strategic priority on his agenda. »After all, the prosperity of our countries and the well-being of our people will contribute to the safety of the planet«, he points out. »Next come the truly global issues, ranging from the fight against international terrorism, to reducing poverty and climate change and reaching the millennium development goals.« Matussek stresses that both India and Germany are key players in these areas. »It will be fascinating for me in the coming years to deal with one of the ›giants‹. I am positive that the old traditional and deep relationship of our two countries will continue to flourish in the future.«

Listening to the Ambassador, it becomes clear that the possibilities for Indo-German cooperation in all fields, from business to finance, from science to energy, from security to culture, have never been greater. »Only the sky is the limit!«, he says with a smile on his face. ■

Partner of choice: Chancellor Angela Merkel, Foreign Minister Guido Westerwelle and Minister for Defence Theodor von Guttenberg shortly after the elections

OLD LEADERS NEW ALLIANCES

2009 was a politically decisive year for India as well as for Germany: Both countries elected a new Parliament and government. In April and May elections for the 15th Lok Sabha were held all over India extending from Arunachal Pradesh to Kerala. On September 27 voting was held in Germany from Schleswig-Holstein to Bavaria for the 17th German Bundestag

/ TEXT: PHILIPP ACKERMANN

A comparison between the two elections isn't necessarily called for – at least not at first glance. Germany and India are simply too different. One is a highly developed, linguistically homogenous mid-sized nation; the other a huge, linguistically and ethnically very diverse country with a large margin of development. To be more specific: Germany's total population is approximately the same as that of Bihar, a medium-sized Indian federal state. India has 1.1 billion inhabitants, 23 official and several hundred spoken languages. The list of differences can go on forever.

However, a closer inspection reveals a couple of parallels between the two electoral processes. The election campaign in both countries was criticised for hardly focussing on relevant topics and pronounced as lacking in content. The incumbent heads of government in India as well as Germany got a clear mandate to continue in office, although with new coalition partners in the cabinet. In addition, the other major parties in both countries were clearly punished by the voters.

Let us look back: In the weeks before the Lok Sabha elections, observers remarked upon the absence of one or more central themes in the debates between the candidates. Neither the topic of internal security, which had constantly been on the agenda since the gruesome terror attacks in Mumbai in November 2008, nor the financial and economic crisis took centre stage in the discussions. In fact, the election campaign seemed to focus much more on local problems in the individual federal states and regions.

The same thing was true of the campaign in Germany: The lack of relevant topics in the German electoral campaign also came in for criticism to the extent that commentators pronounced this election campaign to be boring. Although the economic crisis is much more perceptible in Germany than in India, plans to revive the economy did not figure in the campaign. Instead the discussions focused mainly on the coalition options: Was the Grand Coalition between the large parties SPD and CDU/CSU a success? Was there a scope for new political alliances, such as the red-yellow-green ›traffic light‹ model of coalition (Social Democrats, Liberals and Greens) or the ›Jamaica Coalition‹ – an alliance of the Conservatives, Liberals and Greens representing the national colours of Jamaica? Should the new Left Party which was expected to register a clear increase in votes be considered as a possible coalition partner?

However, the voters decided against a new constellation. Chancellor Angela Merkel won a decisive mandate to continue in office. She could not improve upon her 2005 results; in fact, she fared slightly worse this time. But compared to the performance of the other parties the verdict was clear: The Germans wanted their Chancellor to continue. She – and

not her rival Frank-Walter Steinmeier – was trusted with the task of leading Germany out of the present financial and economic crisis.

In India, the Congress Party and its prime ministerial candidate Manmohan Singh posted an even clearer electoral victory. Already in the run-up to the elections there had been speculations that the opposition would not poll enough votes to win. But researchers and experts had expected a result which would lead to some complicated coalition arithmetic. It was generally believed that the Congress would have to form an alliance with numerous, partly very self-assertive regional parties and balancing the various party considerations wouldn't make the task of governing any easier. Thus, it was very surprising for many observers when the party of the Gandhis and Nehrus eventually won an astounding number of extra seats and only missed getting an absolute majority in the Lok Sabha by a relatively small margin. In retrospect analysts give two reasons for this result: Firstly, the resoluteness and personal integrity of the Congress' strong and popular prime ministerial candidate Manmohan Singh found favour with the population and pulled the Congress to victory. Secondly, the Youth Congress, reorganised by Rahul Gandhi, was able to mobilise a considerable number of voters in many constituencies to vote for their young candidates.

Fewer problems were expected this time since the number of coalition partners required was lower. Neither the Communists nor strong and difficult regional parties like the SP from Uttar Pradesh and the RJD from Bihar were needed to form the government. Besides the smaller partners old allies, like the NCP with its stronghold in Maharashtra and Meghalaya, and the DMK from Chennai also entered Manmohan Singh's second cabinet. After the elections in May the Congress had to incorporate an important and very self-assertive new partner into the coalition. The Trinamool Congress, strengthened in West Bengal under its charismatic leader Mamata Banerjee, is now a part of the cabinet in Delhi. By and large, however, the Indian voters wanted more clarity and fewer compromises within the ruling alliance.

Angela Merkel's CDU also has a new partner in the government, that too for a similar reason. German voters clearly decided against the Grand Coalition which had united two large parties in the cabinet for the past four years. Although Merkel's first cabinet was reasonably successful, even drawing praise and recognition from abroad for its measures to deal with the economic crisis, the citizens of Germany obviously wanted more unequivocal circumstances this time: An alliance between the Conservatives and the Left seemed too much like a compromise. A clear indicator of this was the strengthening of the liberal FDP, which achieved a unique result in the history of Germany with more than ►

14 percent of the votes. Under the leadership of the new Foreign Minister Guido Westerwelle the FDP, always invoked by the Chancellor as her partner of choice, took over from the Social Democrats. Now Germany has a liberal-conservative government.

In contrast, the other large party in Germany, the hitherto co-governing SPD with the outgoing Vice-Chancellor and Foreign Minister Steinmeier as its candidate for the Chancellor's post – was dramatically punished by the voters. They lost almost 14 percent of the votes and came up with their worst electoral result in history. The Social Democrats could convert neither the left's marginal voters nor their more middle class clientele to their course; the former drifted to the newly-formed Left Party with its roots in the Communist Party of the erstwhile GDR, while many of the latter migrated to the CDU or the FDP. In view of this performance the SPD is faced with a real debacle. Its leadership is being completely revamped. Now the part has to revive itself while sitting in the opposition.

Notwithstanding all the differences between the two scenarios, the BJP, the opposition party in India, is in the same boat. It didn't attain any gains in the Lok Sabha elections; in fact it even lost some seats. The voters didn't see the Hindu-nationalist party as an alternative to Manmohan Singh's government. Experts are of the opinion that among other factors this is also connected to an overall rejection of all forms of extremism. In their tension-filled environment the Indians are politically inclined towards harmony and not towards divisions. Thus, the BJP's Hindu-nationalistic discourse which was presented on various occasions in the electoral campaign – such as by Gujarat's Chief Minister Modi and the young BJP-candidate Varun Gandhi – did not click with the majority of voters. The BJP is also faced with a need to revamp its personnel. It is expected that the over eighty year-old prime ministerial candidate L.K. Advani will announce his retirement soon and make way for a younger party leader.

Two elections in two very different countries – but the results indicate the same trend. In these times of global uncertainty, people in Germany as well as in India prefer to back the tried-and-tested instead of venturing on experiments. They would rather have a government they already know, even with a few alterations in the actual constitution of the coalition. Clearly the citizens of both countries are more interested in having an unequivocal leadership rather than negotiated compromises.

Naturally this comparison has its limits. There is much that must be read and interpreted differently in India and Germany, such as the voter turnout: It was sixty percent in India – an impressive number given the sheer size and very

different infrastructure of the country. Often it takes the voters several hours of walking in the hot sun to reach the polling booths. They have to face many challenges, particularly in the rural areas where seventy percent of India's population still lives, which doesn't make voting any easier.

In contrast, the seventy percent turnout in Germany was considered disappointing since voting in Germany is significantly easier than in India.

Or the electoral system: The Germans have two votes – a mixed form of the Direct and Proportional Suffrage – whereas Indians only have Direct Suffrage. According to Prof. Yogendra Yadav, one of the most renowned election analysts in Delhi, this can lead to a situation where the number of seats won by a party does not necessarily reflect the total number of votes polled by it. For example, the Communists lost half their seats but not nearly so many votes. Thus it is being intensively discussed, particularly by the smaller parties, whether a switch to Proportional Suffrage wouldn't be a better idea.

In Germany, on the other hand, the opposite has been under discussion for a long time, namely whether an exclusively Direct Suffrage, as it is practiced in India, wouldn't be a more democratic solution, simply because it reflects the will of the majority more clearly.

However, experience tells us that these discussions are mainly being fed by potential beneficiaries, as is common practice in democracies. In reality the chances of any major changes in the existing electoral systems in India and Germany are slim.

To come back to the elections: There can be many interpretations of the results. Nevertheless both results – the one in Delhi and the other in Berlin – guarantee an extension of the cordial and intensive relations between the two countries – not least because of the good relations between Prime Minister Singh and Chancellor Merkel.

Prof. Yadav, the electoral analyst, is a good example of just how well these relations are thriving. He is writing a book about the Indian elections: In Berlin of all places, where he is spending a year as a visiting researcher at the Institute for Advanced Study. ■

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MERKEL'S SECOND ROUND

Angela Merkel was re-elected. She now runs the country with her preferred coalition partner. But will the new government live up to the expectations?

/ TEXT: FRIEDBERT PFLÜGER

German voters have decided: Chancellor Merkel's CDU will govern with the pro-business ›liberal‹ FDP. Until the election, she ruled the coalition with moderation, compromise and prevention of polarisation. Now, her voters expect her to be more focussed, clear and do all that the Christian Democrats could not realise within the Grand Coalition.

But can the new government live up to that expectation? Can Chancellor Merkel change her style of government? The 124-page Coalition Treaty disappointed some observers. Some even pronounced a ›bad start‹ for the new government. Where was the vision, the basic philosophy of the new coalition?

Then came the 10th of November, the Chancellor's main ›Regierungserklärung‹, where she outlined her government's priorities. Just a day after the celebration of the 20th anniversary of the ›Fall of the Berlin Wall‹, Angela Merkel made crystal clear where she wants to lead Germany to.

Her first message was that the worst effects of the global economic crisis will hit Germany next year. Germany still had a long way to go before it would emerge from the global recession. She forecasted a rise in unemployment, which is today – thanks to ›Kurzarbeit‹ (short time work) – at ›only‹ 8.3 percent. The challenge before us, she believes, is as big as the one of reunification: »The problem will get bigger before things can get better.«

Secondly, Angela Merkel puts her analysis in a global context: »The German task cannot only be seen as to simply overcome the crisis here in Germany. With the global recovery, all cards will get freshly shuffled.« Indeed, there is a fundamental reshuffling going on in the economic and political world. Competition increases for market shares, raw materials, energy, water and human capital. Due to these dramatic developments, the Chancellor warned the Germans in her speech: »Established strengths cannot be taken for granted.« Given that background, she concluded by saying: »The question is: Will Germany emerge from the crisis stronger or weaker in comparison to our international competitors.«

Thirdly, Angela Merkel emphasised that the government's answer to the crisis will be, first of all, growth! She does not neglect the necessity of a consolidation of the public budgets, of reducing the deficit, which will most likely grow well above the three percent the EU's stability pact demands. To make consolidation credible, Angela Merkel has chosen Wolfgang Schäuble as Finance Minister. The 67-year old former Interior Minister came out strongly against more spending and deep tax cuts immediately after his appointment. Mrs Merkel, though, made it clear that her first priority is growth. She told the MPs in the Bundestag that the anticipated deficit of 86 billion euro for 2010 could not be brought down decisively by budget-cuts, but by a growing economy. Even before her speech, the new German government had passed a ›law to speed up growth‹, the third economic stimulus programme, which is made up of a 22 billion euro package of tax-cuts for enterprises and families. Merkel indicated that this decision had not been easily taken and she honestly added: »This route is not a guarantee we will succeed.«

In addition to these tax cuts, which will be put into place at the beginning of 2010, Angela Merkel promised further tax-cuts after 2011. She seeks a structural change of the tax system: Simplified, low and fair. This was exactly what Guido Westerwelle, the FDP chairman, Foreign Minister and Vice Chancellor wanted to hear!

Next to growth, Chancellor Merkel named four other priorities: Improving relations between the citizens and the state, overhauling the pension system in the face of demographic changes, developing a sustainable plan for natural resources and promoting freedom and security. One may or may not like her message, one might have different priorities – but here is a Chancellor who knows what she wants: Yes, she can! ■

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TOMORROW'S DREAM?

Germany doesn't come quickly to Indian minds.

However the two countries are engaging in suprising ways

/ TEXT: PRAMIT PAL CHAUDHURI

Increasingly for India's political and strategic leadership the real measure of another country's importance is the degree to which that country can assist theirs in becoming a great power. While countries like the United States and Japan, even Singapore and Israel, score high on this notional index, in this context Germany is not a country which quickly comes to mind among Indians. This is a curious fact given that Germany is by far the largest economy of Europe. And that the study of Indology was, originally, a German invention. The broad reason for this is the differing worldviews of the two countries' elites. India is an aspiring power, a nation whose views on statecraft are not dissimilar to those of a large 19th century European state. New Delhi has no major qualms about the use of military force as an instrument of state policy. And it is uneasy with multilateral regimes that limit its freedom of action. Indian public opinion, as is the case in most modernist states, is obsessed with sovereignty and focussed on symbols of international status.

Germany is a postmodern state. Because of the historical burden of the two world wars, it has subsumed its sovereign aspirations into the larger framework of the European Union. An Indian foreign minister could never dream of promising, as the new German Foreign Minister Guido Westerwelle did in his first foreign policy statement, that his country would not be »going it alone« when it came to its international actions. Few Indians would take pride in being called, as Germany has traditionally been, a »civilian power«. Even less would be impressed by the determined efforts by Germans to suppress any showing of overt nationalism.

Again, most of Germany's neighbours give it full marks for suppressing its nationalist sentiments and carefully maintaining the image and actions of a »civilian power«. But India, which was relatively untouched by the wars of the first half of this century and arguably earned its independence because Germany exhausted the resources of Britain, gives Germany little credit for such attempts at cultural reparations.

Germany also punches below its weight in Indian eyes because civil society links between the two countries are weak. There are few Indian immigrants, less than 80,000 people in the country claim descent from India. Indian corporations

have a footprint in Germany but one that is dwarfed by their presence in places like the US and the UK. This is only partly explained by a general Indian preference for English speaking countries.

Until recently, Germany's ethnicity based citizenship requirements meant that Indians who did come to Germany did so only for so long it took to find an opening to an Anglo-Saxon country. Thus, while annual Indian migration to Germany averaged several thousand a year, the number of Indians who left the country each year was not too much smaller. Hence, the remarkably small accretion of Indian migrants in the country. Germany's tightly regulated labour and corporate environment makes it difficult for Indian firms to practise one of their commonest post-acquisition strategies: hive off backoffice operations and send them to India to save on labour costs. Another strategy of buying small firms for their technology is hindered by German intellectual property right regulations. Many firms noted the problem the largest Indian wind energy concern, Suzlon Energy, faced when it bought a smaller German firm REpower for its technology and was unable to transfer the know-how for many months.

Nonetheless, Germany is a key economic partner for India. Since economic reforms were initiated in India, bilateral trade has ballooned from 2.7 billion euro in 1990 to 13.4 billion euro in 2008. The bulk of this favoured Germany. German exports to India represent about two-thirds of this volume. This makes Germany the sixth largest trade partner of India. However, given that Germany is the world's largest exporter this represents an almost insignificant amount of its trade.

Germany is the seventh largest source of foreign direct investment to India with cumulative investment reaching 2.7 billion euro between 1991 and 2008. But annual foreign direct investment has peaked at a relatively modest 600 million euro.

What is arguably the real German contribution to the Indian economy lies in the heart of the German economic miracle. It is something Indian officials have noted but have ►

On his way to the second round: Prime Minister Manmohan Singh together with Sonia Gandhi, Chairperson of the United Progressive Alliance

© REUTERS

struggled to mimic in India. This is Germany's ›Mittelstand‹, its clusters of hundreds of small and medium engineering and manufacturing firms. While large automobile brands like Audi and Volkswagen are most closely associated with Germany, it is these small firms which produce the bulk of Germany's exports and provide most of its employment.

›Mittelstand‹ firms are a major supplier of machinery and engineering goods to Indian firms already. They represent a third of Germany's exports to India. But their relevance to India is even greater. India's manufacturing sector has been the biggest missing piece in the Indian economic reform story. When reforms were initiated, India's service sector boomed. Its manufacturing sector, however, went into several years of recession. Just before the present global financial crisis erupted, the manufacturing sector had begun to emerge from that slump. Manufacturing sector growth rates had passed double digits and were matching those of the service sectors by 2007.

But India's manufacturing sector is not dissimilar from that of Germany's in makeup. A cluster of large companies dominate the top end, but the bulk of the sector is made up of small and medium sized enterprises. In India, these firms produce nearly half of the manufacturing sector's output, a third of the country's exports and over seventy percent of the sector's employment. Unlike their German counterparts, however, these Indian firms struggle to access capital, cannot get or are simply ignorant of relevant technology and are among the first to go under when the economy goes southward. Simple things like acquiring a credit rating are difficult for these firms. As a World Bank study has pointed out, Indian manufacturers could nearly double productivity if the smaller ones simply used the best off-the-shelf technology, leave aside using the state-of-the-art know-how.

The small and medium manufacturing plants are an important stepping stone for India. Economists argue, they can provide the sort of jobs that rural migrants need in the first step towards migrating towards higher-end urban careers. A lack of such jobs, especially in the regulated formal sector, is a key barrier to this rural-urban transition. And without such a transition taking place, India's economic trajectory will eventually begin to flatten.

The ›Mittelstand‹ story may be replicated in India, at least in part, if India and Germany can move beyond simply a commercial relationship. Such a forward jump is not inconceivable.

One reason is the present leadership in both countries. India's Prime Minister Manmohan Singh and Germany's

Chancellor Angela Merkel are both genuine liberals. Singh has publicly called democracy the only ›natural‹ order of politics and described all others as ›aberrations.‹ Merkel, according to the German foreign policy commentator Ulrich Speck of ›Die Zeit‹, ›deeply believes in the Western values of freedom, human rights and democracy.‹

One of the consequences of this shared worldview is that both have positive views of the United States. Singh's up-bringing meant that he saw the Green Revolution, ushered in by US assistance, transform his native Punjab into the wealthiest state in India. Merkel, raised in communist East Germany, continues to view the US as the defender of freedom and democracy.

The other is that civil society links, albeit from a low level, are beginning to strengthen between the two countries. Between 1997 and 2006, the number of Indian students in Germany has risen by fifty percent to nearly 4000. Business links are increasing and high level political, military and scientific contacts are becoming ever more common. Both governments are making an attempt to encourage scholarship about each others societies.

The new German government has been noticeable in its repeated rhetorical references of the need to recognise the role of the emerging economies. This includes India, as well as China, Brazil and Russia.

Berlin's interests seem to be multiple. One is an acceptance that certain things, including the world economy, are no longer being decided solely by the West. Merkel is one who believes the present economic crisis will be overcome in large part because of countries like India. Two is a recognition that if Germany continues to prosper on the basis of its export-led economy, it must take note of the new markets for its goods that are developing. The Indian-German story has already begun to open new chapters in surprising ways.

When the German fashion house Escada became insolvent recently its saviour proved to be Megha Mittal, the daughter-in-law of the Kolkata-born steel baron Lakshmi Mittal. Escada's labour representative declared her, ›She is our dream partner.‹ That is far from the case between India and Germany today, but it could yet come to be the case. ■

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MORE GROWTH AHEAD

Most countries around the globe are still struggling with economic downturn and recession after the financial breakdown of last year. But despite many challenges India's future looks bright

/ TEXT: NORBERT WALTER

Recession has hit the world hard and its impact is being felt even in the remotest regions. Countries around the globe are battling with the fall-out on their economies, although the impact has varied greatly from country to country. While export-oriented nations such as Germany and Japan have witnessed dramatic dips in their exports, in other countries real estate and financial markets have collapsed or domestic demand has slumped.

But in Asia, in fact, there are signs of hope. Infrastructure programmes have had a phenomenal impact in China, while Singapore is well on its way to making up the heavy economic losses sustained in the past months. Even industrialised countries like South Korea have clearly bottomed out and are now sighting light at the end of the tunnel.

India was spared a severe downturn because of its relatively low level of integration in the world economy. Moreover the country is recovering rapidly from the crisis. Car sales, especially, have picked up since the beginning of the year. Government spending to stimulate the economy has risen significantly and will probably ensure an upward trend in the coming months. Opportunities for growth in the medium term also appear quite promising.

Yet, India is not insulated against risks. In 2009 growth will continue to lag as a consequence of the world financial crisis and the late monsoon. In addition there are fiscal burdens. Public debt has risen to over eighty percent of GDP and the deficit in the central government's budget alone is currently pegged at seven percent. The present government is showing no signs of attempting consolidation, and public debt remains virulent. In contrast to other emerging economies, however, external debt is low and stable. Consequently foreign exchange reserves have dropped only marginally and will probably swell again after the crisis.

Indian policy makers continue to be faced with the challenge of an extremely ethnically diverse population with high

income disparities. Equal opportunities can be achieved only by spending more on universal education. This is where bilateral partnership with Germany becomes relevant. While Germany is increasingly faced with the problem of an ageing society, its strengths in education are still intact. This complementarity should be leveraged by both countries. If Germany can export its competence in education and in return attract young and qualified human resources from India, it will benefit both countries in the long term.

In the short term the focus should be on better utilising comparative trade advantages. India with a population of over one billion can concentrate further on manufacturing labour-intensive products, while Germany should use its capital resources for product innovations – for instance in the energy, automotive and chemical sectors – to remain internationally competitive.

Domestic consumption in Germany will rise only moderately in the medium to long term, while the opposite can be expected in India. In the coming years the country will benefit from a growing middle class that will invigorate the so far low consumption levels. Altered eating habits and mounting demand for consumer durables will result in sustained growth of seven percent. The size of the Indian middle class has quadrupled since 1985. The process of urbanisation is also continuing unabated. Growth in the medium term will be driven largely by the gross investment ratio of over thirty percent of GDP. These and other trends point towards a positive future for India. ■

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PUNE'S PACE

India's new hub has become a preferred destination for German companies.

In recent years it has surpassed most other cities with its rapid progress.

And there is no end in sight to its growth

/ TEXT: VOLKER MÜLLER

They sought enlightenment – and Bhagvan Sri Rajneesh obliged. Thousands of hippies and other civilisation weary Westerners in quest of the meaning of life poured into Pune in the seventies and eighties to live and love in the guru's ashram. In return, they offered him their western possessions. At his death the man who called himself Osho left behind more than ninety Rolls Royce luxury cars.

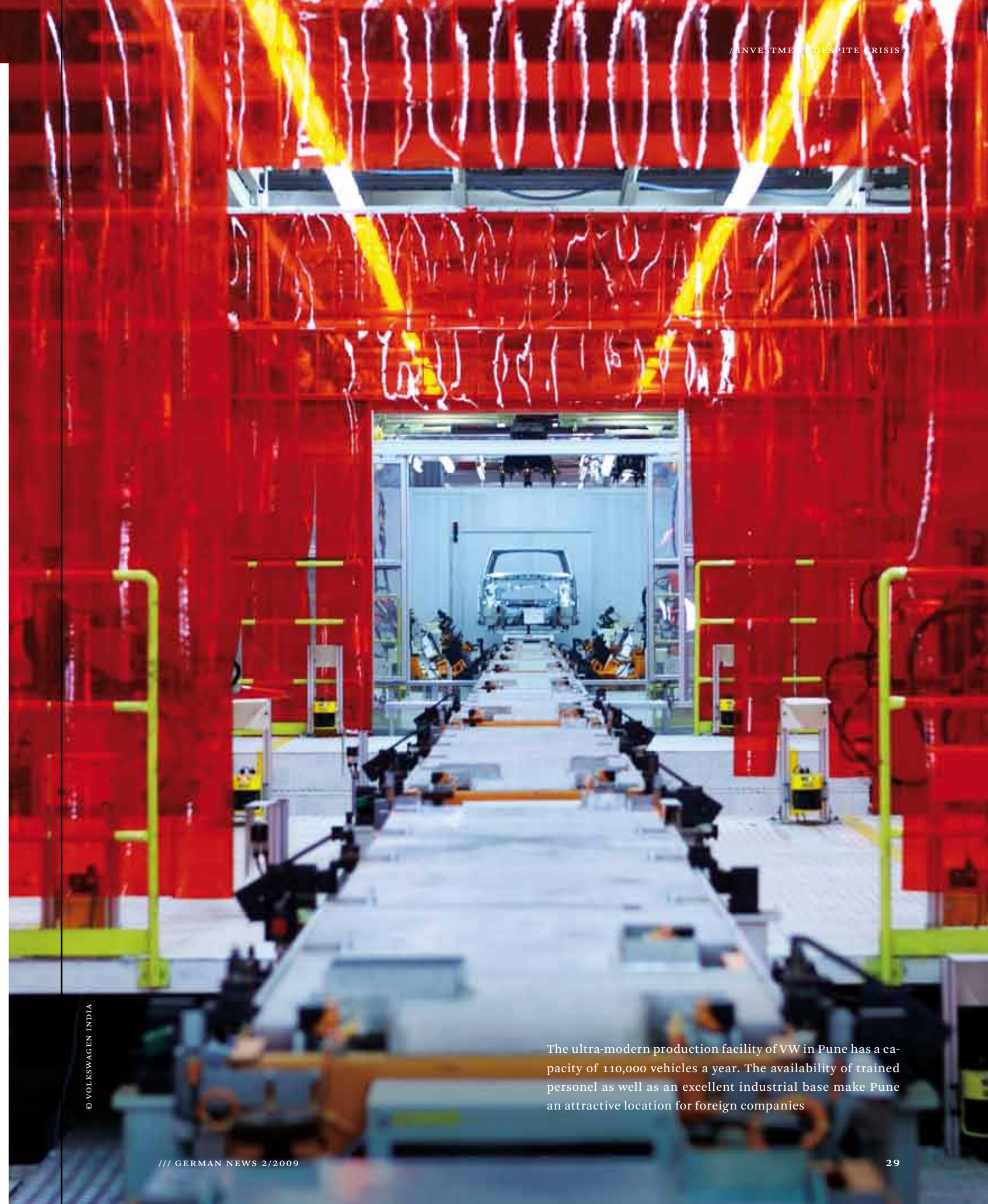
Even today 200,000 Osho-disciples make a pilgrimage to his meditation centre in Pune each year. However, they don't mould the image and streetscape of this city and its millions of inhabitants any more. Industrial executives, artists and researchers have stepped into their shoes. Investors in India, with Germans leading the way, have discovered Pune as the most attractive location in the country. In the past years they have invested billions in this city located barely 150km south-east of Mumbai. The erstwhile spiritual centre has now become an economic hub.

So far 250 German firms and joint ventures have settled in Pune. Many of them have even established their branch offices for India or Asia here. ThyssenKrupp, the pump manufacturer KSB, Liebherr, Behr, Demag, Würth, Allianz, Daimler and Siemens – all of them were drawn to the city which the British had already made their second centre in 1820 in order to escape Mumbai's summer heat and monsoon floods. The Indo-German Chamber of Commerce (IGCC) predicts that the number of German firms in Pune will further increase until the end of 2009. »We foresee no end to this influx«, says IGCC's regional head, Zubin Kabraji. At least 62 percent of the 800 member companies surveyed nationwide are optimistic about being able to increase their revenue in India also this year. A quarter of them even expect an increase of more than twenty percent in their turnover. Only thirteen percent fear a downturn. The optimism is clearly reflected in their future plans: 61 percent of the companies want to augment their investments in India over the next three years.

In the last two years earthmovers had been hard at work digging up the dusty ground about thirty kilometres away from Pune's centre. Cranes hoisted enormous steel constructions through the air and armies of construction workers erected huge assembling units. This spring Volkswagen inaugurated its new automobile plant, built at a cost of 580 million euro in the Chakan industrial park – six months ahead of schedule. It is the single largest investment by a German company in India so far. VW Country Head Jörg Müller promises that the plant will be fully operational by the first half of 2010. Being ready ahead of schedule – in India this is perhaps possible only in Pune. »I had expected it to be more difficult to keep to deadlines«, admits VW's Director of Manufacturing, Thomas Dahlem. In Pune the city administration takes great pains to remove all obstacles in the way. The VW plant was ready after a construction period of just one and a half years – an extraordinarily rapid pace even by international standards. Now the automobile company Daimler from Stuttgart is building a new Mercedes plant not far from VW to replace their first plant which was constructed in 1995.

Car makers love Pune, widely considered the hub of the Indian automobile industry. Tata Motors, Mahindra, the two-wheeler giant Bajaj and the largest Indian automotive parts supplier Bharat Forge have their plants here. The easy availability of skilled workers and the effective network of suppliers have also drawn General Motors and Fiat to the city. The government of Maharashtra expects investments worth more than ten billion dollars in the state's automobile industry by the year 2012 – most of it in Pune.

In fact the city's progress began with the automobile industry. Within the last thirty years Pune has expanded to five million inhabitants, thus becoming the eighth largest city in India. It offers ideal conditions for rapid expansion and sustainable success: An open social climate, support from the local authorities and no dearth of technically well-trained manpower. ►



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The ultra-modern production facility of VW in Pune has a capacity of 110,000 vehicles a year. The availability of trained personnel as well as an excellent industrial base make Pune an attractive location for foreign companies

With five universities and a number of colleges and research institutions the city has traditionally been one of India’s foremost centres of learning. According to local authorities the number of foreign students has also witnessed an annual increase of twenty to thirty percent since the beginning of the decade. At the end of 2007 there were about 6200 foreign students in Pune – more than in any other Indian city.

Raghunath Anant Mashelkar, who was the Chief Scientific Advisor to the Indian cabinet for a long time, is pleased with the many professional newcomers, students, scientists, teachers, social workers and industrialists who have made Pune »a city blessed with so many globally-oriented leaders, a world-class centre for engineering, education, electronics and entertainment.« For Mashelkar, who also lives in Pune, a »really global city of the future is one which focuses on technology, talent and tolerance to the highest degree.« If any Indian city is capable of achieving something extraordinary, it is Pune. Even Indians in distant Delhi are convinced of this. »It is a remarkable feature of the city that it makes new trends succeed, though they are seldom born here«, commends the most influential Indian newspaper, Economic Times, terming Pune the »Big Bang Boomtown«, and promises: »Pune is perfect for anyone who wants to start a new business or to revitalise an existing one.«

The Germans seem to agree. In 1997 Demag Cranes decided against Bangalore and in favour of Pune. »Many firms which use our cranes and hoisting technology – such as Daimler and Renault – are based here in the west of the country«, the company offers as an explanation for its decision. »Pune is the centre of Indian mechanical engineering which means that we find ourselves in closer proximity to our clients. In addition, Pune also has a technically well-trained and experienced workforce at its disposal, also in the field of Information Technology.« The convenient proximity to Mumbai was also an additional factor.

ThyssenKrupp began with the production of machines for the Indian sugar industry here in 1957. »The city thoroughly fulfilled our expectations«, says a company spokesperson. Meanwhile the company also manufactures equipment for open-cast mining, material handling systems, cement plants and power generators.

A brilliant business move, given the immense demand for infrastructure investments in India. Even this model city has pot-holed roads, frequent power cuts and leaking sewage pipes which bear witness to the country’s deficits. »In many fields we still don’t have a world-class infrastructure«, complains an official of the local Chamber of Commerce, MC-CIA, who does not wish to be named.

As a matter of fact the industrial mega city is afflicted by a scarcity of one of the most important resources in production: Electricity. Once a week the city cuts off the power supply to the industries. No company can get by without its own power plant. And not much is expected to change in this scenario in the coming years. The demand for power is increasing rapidly and the Indian state and private energy companies are unable to set up new power plants fast enough to keep pace with the sky-rocketing demand.

Transport also remains a problem for Pune. Lufthansa operates a business jet between Frankfurt and Pune six days a week but the airport – actually a military base – is hopelessly overstretched, does not meet international standards and only offers connections to a few destinations. »Despite the modernisation of the departure lounge the airport is too limited. The military doesn’t leave much space for civilian traffic. Pune urgently needs a civilian airport complying with international requirements«, says Kabraji, IGCC’s Regional Director.

Faced with this deluge of Indian and foreign companies Pune is bursting at the seams. »The city isn’t growing, it is exploding«, says Mashelkar, the chief architect of India’s science and technology policies. With all the disadvantages of rapid growth: Traffic chaos, environmental pollution, loss of greenery and open spaces. »Five years ago the exhaust fume levels were already very alarming«, says Mashelkar, but not much has changed since then. »We should be ashamed of this.« Recently the lack of space also led to the failure of an attempt to woo the International Centre for Theoretical Sciences (ICTS) to Pune. The ICTS is now being built in Bangalore since there was no campus available downtown in Pune.

Besides, Pune is also not an inexpensive city any more. What was once Mumbai’s more economical hinterland has now almost caught up with the capital city. Companies complain that the salaries, taxes and rents in Pune are already eighty percent of those in Mumbai. Now Hyderabad and Kolkata – less expensive cities – are emerging as potential destinations for companies wishing to relocate.

Ultimately Pune benefits from the influx of foreigners. And Kabraji approves of this scenario. »The foreigners bring a lot of high-technology with them and we can learn from it«, he believes. »This gives us a decisive edge over other regions.« ■

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SHOWCASING THE OTHER GERMANS

It’s early days still for German car manufacturers in India; sales figures continue to be in four digits. Carmaker Daimler was the pioneer in India under the banner of Daimler-Benz. The Stuttgart-based company began its association with Pune in 1995, when it leased land for its facility from Tata Motors. From the outset its flagship products were luxury cars for the rapidly growing upper classes, as well as heavy duty trucks. Apart from Volkswagen, Daimler, with its trademark Mercedes Benz, is one of the leading investors in the city of Pune: The company has invested over fifty million euro in the development and expansion of its production facilities. The new Mercedes Benz plant became operational in February this year.

Only BMW, the rival in the premium car segment, has not made any move to join the rest of the automotive community in Pune. The Munich-based company established its

administrative office in Gurgaon, which is a fast growing district headquarters forming the suburban sprawl of Delhi. In 2007 BMW preferred to open its plant in Chennai, the capital city of the south Indian state of Tamil Nadu. The factory is manageable, having an annual capacity of 3,000 vehicles. Despite having a presence in India for barely three years, BMW overtook its arch rival Daimler in sales during the first half of 2009. BMW motorcycles, sporting the blue and white logo, however, are not yet on offer in India. The small car Mini is also not being launched in India.

Sportscarmaker Porsche that has since become a part of the Volkswagen empire, has not yet started manufacturing in India. Till now, the Stuttgart-based company has focused on importing its cars into India with the concomitant imposition of high duties. However, sales of Porsche in India, as elsewhere, are only marginally influenced by the price.

>> WE HAVE THE RIGHT PRODUCT <<

Prof. Jochem Heizmann (born 1952) has been a member of the board of management at Volkswagen AG in charge of group production since February 2007. An industrial engineer by training, he assumed additional responsibility as board member in charge of production and logistics for the Volkswagen passenger cars brand in October 2007. This is one of the nine independent brands within the group. He is consequently the Global Head of Production for the Volkswagen Group. In India the company hopes that the Polo will help it gain a foothold in the market and capture market share from the present industry leaders. Prof. Heizmann spoke to Stefan Mentschel in New Delhi about these ambitious plans

/ INTERVIEW: STEFAN MENTSCHEL

Volkswagen inaugurated an ultra-modern production facility in Pune this March. The total cost of the plant is pegged at 580 million euro (about 40.5 billion rupee). This is the single largest investment by a German company in India so far. What made the VW board take this step?

It was a logical evolution of our strategy. Over the past years we have been consistently expanding our presence in India. We began by importing cars. The next step was the opening of a plant in Aurangabad. We have been manufacturing passenger cars there under the Skoda brand since 2001, and Audi and Volkswagen since 2007. Currently eight different models are being manufactured in Aurangabad. The plant in Pune with a capacity of 110,000 vehicles a year will allow us to scale up to large volume production of compact passenger cars. Currently the Skoda Fabia is being manufactured in Pune. Early next year we will start manufacturing the Volkswagen Polo. We see this as a long term investment for growing market share in India to levels similar to those of the Volkswagen Group worldwide.

Why did you choose Pune?

One of the key factors was its convenient location, forming a triangle with our Aurangabad plant and sales organisation in Mumbai. Pune's excellent industrial base was another

factor. The city is home to several car companies and, more importantly, a good auto parts industry that will expand further in the coming years. The availability of trained personnel also tilted the decision in favour of Pune.

Volkswagen has come to India relatively late as compared to other car companies. How do you plan to catch up?

Over ninety percent of vehicles sold in the country are compact or subcompact cars. To be successful in such a market you need an appropriate product. We believe that our new Polo, which will be followed by another model in this segment in mid 2010, is the right product.

How are you so confident?

Our car will embody state-of-the-art technology and typical Volkswagen quality at a competitive price. Consequently local content will have to be very high. Initially we will procure fifty percent of parts within the country and raise this figure to 75 percent over the next one to two years. At the same time we are targeting customers who are looking for a premium product, that that means a product of very high quality standards. To put it another way, we give best value for money because we are able to offer our customers the maximum for what they pay. ►

Prof. Jochem Heizmann, Global Head of Production for the Volkswagen Group

How much will the Polo cost?

You'll have to wait a little longer. We will announce the price at the beginning of next year.

Although you haven't named a figure, how will you convince your Indian customers to perhaps pay more for a Polo than for a competing product?

One way is a direct comparison. The customers have to sit inside the car. They must feel it, experience it and drive it. The differences will be obvious. The other aspect is the overall cost, or what we call total cost of ownership. Apart from the purchase price, factors such as a good fuel average and low maintenance costs also play a role. Moreover Volkswagen is known for its high resale value. Looking at all these aspects the customers will realise that Volkswagen is not just a high quality car but also good value for money.

Volkswagen is still not very well known in India. How do you plan to change that?

Volkswagen enjoys an excellent reputation, but this is largely due to our past legacy. I often have people asking me about our Beetle tradition. So we clearly have some catching up to do as regards the present, and we are working at it. During the Delhi Auto Expo in January 2010 we will officially launch the Polo backed by a strong media campaign. We will showcase what kind of product it is, how it is manufactured and also its excellent positioning vis-à-vis the competition. There will be further campaigns till the car is available in the market by the end of the first quarter of 2010.

Currently about 1.2 million passenger cars are sold in India every year. By 2014 this figure is expected to cross two million. How big a slice of the pie is Volkswagen aiming for?

Our target is eight to ten percent market share within the next four to six years. These figures are for the Volkswagen Group, that is for its brands in India: Volkswagen, Skoda and Audi. We have divided this into vehicles for large volume production in Pune and smaller volume vehicles in Aurangabad. Plus there are the cars that we are importing. Of course we will gradually be expanding our range of models and hence our product portfolio for our Indian customers. Every time we launch a new car in Europe or other regions in the world we also assess its potential for the Indian market.

How many Polos do you want to sell?

As many as the market demands. But in the medium term we would like to fully utilise the capacities in our Pune production plant.

An optimistic estimate given the current financial and economic crisis ...

We have ambitious but realistic goals. Naturally Volkswagen has also been affected by the crisis, but significantly less so than our competitors. In the first half of 2009 auto markets worldwide declined by 18 percent. Volkswagen lost just four percent. In other words, we are gaining market share. And we are sure that we will manage to do the same in India too.

To achieve a market share of ten percent VW needs a good dealer and service network in addition to good products. Critics are warning that in the short term Volkswagen will not manage to build up an adequate sales infrastructure to be able to sell the targeted 150,000 to 200,000 cars.

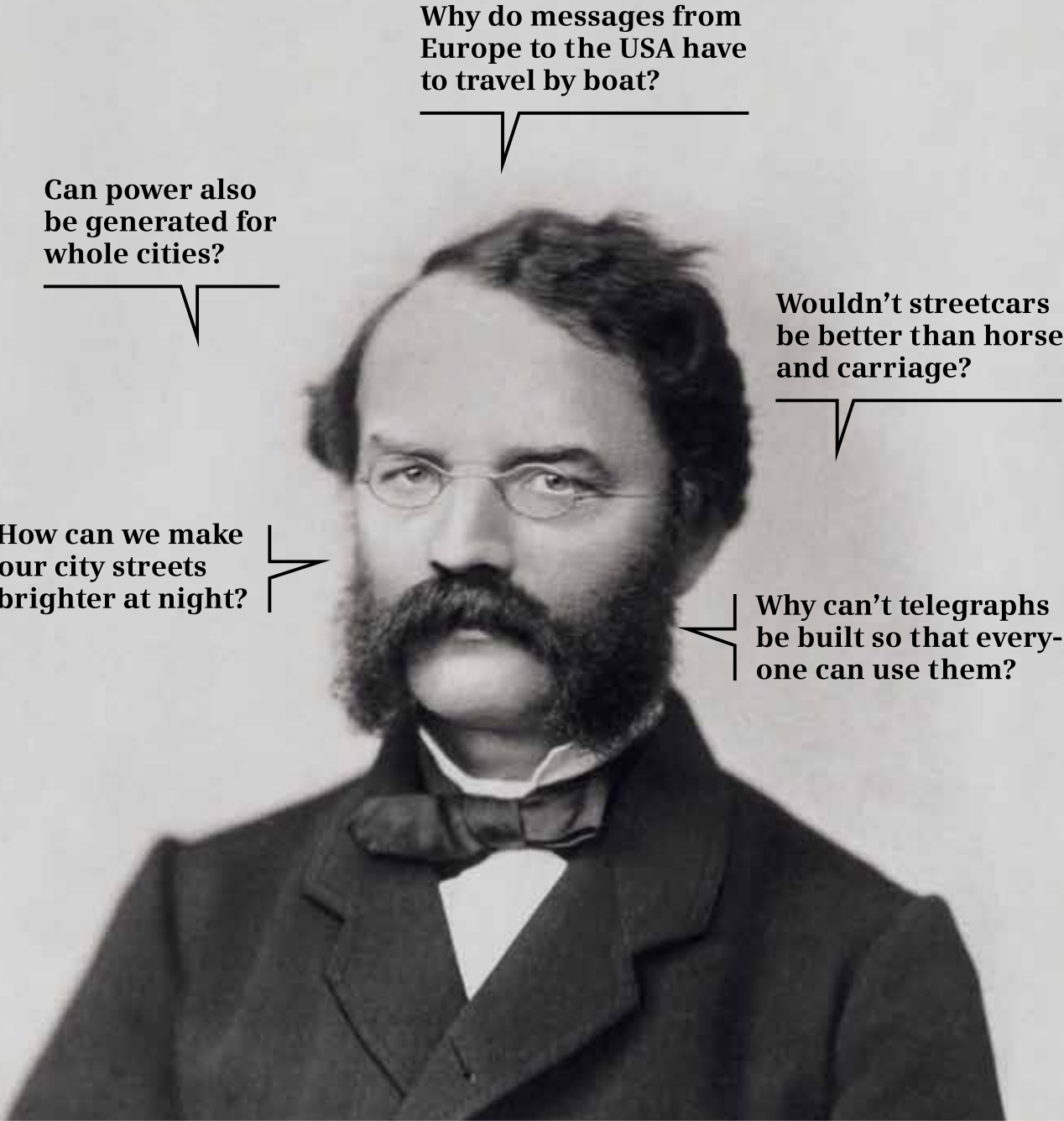
Certainly you have to do more than just manufacture cars here. We are concentrating on expanding our dealer network. Towards the end of the year we – that is the brands Volkswagen, Skoda and Audi – will have about 120 dealers. For Volkswagen alone we are looking at forty locations across the country. And we plan to more than double that figure in the next one to two years. Building up an efficient network of dealers and service centres in a short period of time does not just happen by itself. Part of the reason that we are going a bit slow is that we are very selective. Our partners have to meet very high quality standards and offer our customers excellent service. But we are moving forward.

Where do you see Volkswagen India in ten years?

As I said, our short term goal is a market share of eight to ten percent. In the long term we will have to see whether we can raise this to a level that matches our share in the world market, and that is currently about twelve percent. ■

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Stefan Mentschel is freelance author and journalist. He works in New Delhi and focusses on political and economic developments in South Asia. In 2005 he published his book ›Right to Information: An Appropriate Tool Against Corruption‹ (Mosaic Books).



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NEW TRENDS IN CAPITAL FLOW

Last year Indian companies invested a record amount of two billion dollars in Germany. The financial crisis may slow down the pace but it will not reverse the trend

/ TEXT: NADINE BÖS / ILLUSTRATION: GROUPE DEJOUR

Debjit Chaudhuri will never forget the day. It was 1999, he was 27 years old and had achieved all that »we as Indians aspired to at that time«, as he says. He lived in Silicon Valley, had a good job with Infosys, long hair and tattoos on his back. He was lying on one of the most beautiful beaches in California, the sun was shining. Then his cellphone rang.

His boss was on the line and came straight to the point. »Debu«, he said, »you are going to Germany.« Debjit Chaudhuri was shocked. Germany – wasn't that the country where the Scorpions sang »Wind of Change« and people only ate sausages? But he pulled himself together. »Ok«, he said. »But I'm only staying one or two years.«

That was ten years ago. Until September 2009 Chaudhuri headed almost 500 employees working for Infosys in Germany. Around half of Dax 30 companies were among Chaudhuri's clients. On average Infosys has been growing by about fifty percent year-on-year in Germany, he says.

But the company wants more. »Crisis or no crisis«, Chaudhuri says, »it is an open secret that Infosys is keen to invest more in Germany.« Infosys has been actively looking out for potential take-over candidates. »The company wants to become even more local«, Chaudhuri explains. »Germany is a market that you can't afford to ignore even after the crisis.« Chaudhuri himself is taking this literally: In October he left Infosys and is now going to found his own startup business. He does not wish to reveal any details, but: A large focus of his new business will be Germany. One of his future partners is German.

Many Indian managers share his views on the importance of the country. They want to capture the German market

through mergers and acquisitions. Last year Indian companies invested a record amount of two billion dollars in Germany according to a study by the Hamburg University of Technology (TUHH). In 2007 this amount was just 825 million dollars. The study observes that towards the end of 2008 at least 123 multinational Indian companies with 167 subsidiaries were operating in Germany. »And the trend is going up«, believes Rajnish Tiwari, who headed the survey. Despite the financial crisis? »Naturally the mood is subdued at the moment«, explains Tiwari. With the bankruptcy of polyester manufacturer Trevira one prominent Indian project in Germany has already run aground. »But that does not affect the basic trend«, feels Tiwari.

Tiwari estimates the stock of Indian foreign direct investments in Germany at more than four billion dollars, which shows that India has surpassed Germany's stock of foreign direct investments in India, which is reported at 2.3 billion dollar. He also proffers the reason. »Indian industry is encountering some amount of market saturation in the Anglo-Saxon countries.« Due to its size, central location, excellent infrastructure and high quality of research and development, Germany is the next important target country. »As soon as the economy picks up, the appetite of Indian industry to invest will rekindle«, Tiwari reasons. It is not just the usual suspects from the IT industry who consider Germany to be an exciting market. »Soon it will be the turn of the small and medium sized companies«, believes Tiwari.

However, some small Indian companies in Germany are having a tough time in the present economic situation. »We are under quite a bit of pressure«, admits Sandeep Hattiholi, Germany head of Augen Technologies, an Indian company that provides engineering and design solutions to suppliers

in the automotive and aerospace industry. He, too, has a long-term dream that his one-man sales office in Frankfurt will grow big enough to buy into one of his German competitors. »But we are still far from that stage.« Augen Technologies is a relatively new company that entered the market in 2006 and is focussing mainly on Germany. Augen generates seventy percent of its turnover from the supply chain for Airbus, VW, Opel and other auto manufacturers. The company, which has just 180 employees worldwide, has not yet broken even. »Moreover all our clients are also in a bad shape at the moment. These are very difficult times«, says Hattiholi. But throwing in the towel is not an option. »We simply have to wait it out«, according to him »It's not for nothing that we selected Germany as our most important market.« Hattiholi believes that once the crisis is over he will really be able to take off.

He is not alone in his optimism. Even the »big ones« among the Indian expats are busy making plans for the period following the downturn. Auto component manufacturer Bharat Forge belonging to the Kalyani Group is one of them. In 2004 Bharat Forge acquired the long standing forging company Carl Dan Peddinghaus, which had gone bankrupt. It now operates in Germany under the name CDP Bharat Forge. »One impact of the present crisis will be the consolidation of the German automotive supplier sector. That will bring opportunities for more take-overs by Indians«, explains CEO Baba Kalyani.

»In Frankfurt I go out for a beer with Indian managers now and then,« relates former Infosys manager Chaudhuri. »Then we chat a little.« About the latest take-over gossip, among other things. »Many of the managers are looking for companies they can acquire«, says Chaudhuri. »But no one says it openly.« So, of course, neither does he reveal who is eyeing

whom in Germany. He also prefers not to disclose who the members of this informal round are.

Suresh Kuppuswamy, who heads Tata Consultancy Service (TCS) GmbH in Germany, would certainly fit in. Kuppuswamy's office is perched high above the rooftops of Frankfurt. From the 16th floor of the Messeturm he has a bird's eye view of the entire banking quarter. There is Indian furniture in the corridor. The Tata founders smile out of their picture frames.

Kuppuswamy feels that despite intercultural training and German courses, TCS is too »Indian«. He is determined to change that. When he speaks about the significance of Germany for his company he likes quoting the three points on his boss's Europe agenda: »Germany, Germany and Germany.« Kuppuswamy admits that TCS, too, is open to making strategic acquisitions. According to him a small »hidden champion« from the hi-tech, pharma or media sector that would allow TCS to tap new areas would be welcome. But TCS is not looking at acquisitions merely to add numbers. »We have become cautious in this crisis«, Kuppuswamy acknowledges. »We are not in a hurry.« But a take-over would be good to really grow into the German market, he explains.

Heinz Kreuzer, Managing Director of Tui Infotec could probably write a book about growing together. Over two years ago the Indian software company Sonata became a fifty percent shareholder in the travel and IT service provider through a joint venture. Tui continues to hold the other fifty percent. »Integration was hard work«, says Kreuzer today. And he opens up, about the Indian style of management (much more hierarchical than ours), about communication problems (the Indians never say no even when they mean no) and about the biases that made his colleagues fearful and apprehensive ►

Proximity to
customers / suppliersDeveloping products
for GermanyUnderstanding
German marketBuild basis for
Western EuropeAcquire
technology

(the Indians will just copy our technology and disappear). But, »We put in a lot of effort, offered integration courses, sent many German employees to India to exchange experiences, and overcame the barriers bit by bit«, reports Kreuzer. »Thanks to Sonata's buy-in our company once again has real potential for growth.«

It is not just German managers, Indians too occasionally complain about cultural barriers in Germany. Debjit Chaudhuri, for instance, still has not got used to the fact that »in Germany one never takes along one's family to a business meal.« Private and professional matters are kept apart much more strictly than in Indian corporate culture. »Apart from that Germans also discuss much more«, he says. »Indian bosses are often patriarchs. What they say is done.« German

bosses on the other hand will often ask subordinates about their opinion for weeks till at some point a consensus is reached. And which does he prefer? Debjit Chaudhuri pauses to think. »The German way often leads to a sophisticated and impeccable outcome. On the flipside, sometimes by the time the decision is taken the opportune moment has already passed.« ■

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Nadine Bös is business correspondent for the German daily newspaper 'Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung' (FAZ). She first travelled to India in 2005, focussing on the topic of micro-insurance for the poor for her diploma-thesis. In her work for 'FAZ' she has always kept an eye on topics related to India especially in the field of micro-finance.

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A NEW PASSAGE TO INDIA

The recently launched programme of the German Academic Exchange Service is yet another milestone in the bilateral science cooperation. Academic and technological relations between both countries have a long tradition, but they are more relevant than ever and could soon show their true potential

/ TEXT: CHRISTIAN SCHWÄGERL / ILLUSTRATION: J.GIBSON

A New Passage to India is a bold name for an endeavour that plans to massively scale up academic and scientific ties between India and Germany. After all, the famous novel ›A Passage to India‹, written by Edward Morgan Foster in 1924, deals with deep-rooted prejudices, deceit and betrayal. Thus the emphasis here is clearly on ›new‹ because the intentions behind this initiative are truly commendable. It was conceived to encourage more young Germans to venture to Indian universities. The objective of the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD) and, in fact, of the governments of both countries is to enter into a future partnership that will ultimately develop solutions for some of the world's most pressing problems.

At first, it may appear that Germans and Indians have little to offer to each other. A mere 4000 young Indians are currently studying in German universities – peanuts compared with almost 100,000 Indian students enrolled in US universities that seem to exert a magnetic attraction. On the other side, just 150 young Germans per year come to India.

Political, academic and business leaders in both countries know only too well that these figures, in no way, reflect the true potential and importance of their bilateral relations. Shyam Saran, the Indian government's special envoy on climate change, has good reasons for working with Germany

to get a gigantic solar energy project off the ground and gain access to German environmental technology. There is a sound rationale for German automotive technology being under the Tata Nano's hood. German universities are making concerted efforts to attract students and researchers from India because they anticipate talented high performers among them. And it is no coincidence that the organisers of the traditional Nobel Laureate Meetings in Lindau on Lake Constance selected India as the first partner country this summer.

That decision gave 43 handpicked young Indians the opportunity to discuss major issues relating to the future of our planet, such as climate change, with the luminaries. Subsequently, the students embarked on an ›academic tour‹ and were able to ascertain for themselves that while Germany has achieved some historic breakthroughs – from the first nuclear fission to the discovery of electromagnetic waves to the foundations of green genetic engineering – research today continues to be of a very high level and the goals are extremely ambitious.

The visitors were able to see a selection of the eighty elite Max Planck Institutes, 16 national Helmholtz Research Centres and sixty industry-oriented Fraunhofer Institutes. These flagships of German research are similar to the ►



© STEVE BATRICK ANTIQUE PRINTS AND MAPS

An old map of the continents engraved by J. Gibson in 1758

South

Indian Institutes of Technology (IITs). Many universities, for instance in Munich, Aachen and Berlin, are also making concerted efforts with strong political backing to close the gap to the world's premier universities. One must also not forget that big German companies and Germany's medium-sized sector rank among the most innovative in the world, not just in the automobile and engineering industry but, in fact, more in the booming energy and environmental technology sectors. Companies such as Bosch and Siemens are earning good money with the much touted 'green technologies' for saving mankind from climate change and resource conflicts. These companies have long been significant employers in India.

In fact, academic and technological relations between both countries could have been as excellent as now envisaged by both governments under the 'strategic partnership in innovation' much earlier. Fifty years ago the government of what was then West Germany displayed great farsightedness by funding the establishment of the Indian Institute of Technology in Madras. Now only a nice exhibit in the foyer is a reminder of the German origins of this elite academy. Today, researchers in Chennai collaborate mainly with the United States.

But relations are once again picking up. Students from Chennai shall be given preference in admission to German technical universities. The German company Bosch will finance a research laboratory at IIT to get inputs for its R&D activities as an automotive supplier. An out-and-out 'green' Tata Nano that facilitates mass mobility without harming global climate can show the way forward for cooperation.

Conversely, German research, too, can inspire Indians, as was evident two years ago. At the initiative of Federal Chancellor Merkel and Prime Minister Singh, the Max Planck Society sent a scientific exhibition on wheels – the 'Science Express' – to India. In seven months the train attracted over two million visitors.

Germany has a strong interest becoming a destination of choice for at least some of these visitors because the country

is set to undergo a major demographic shift. With fewer young people, the next generation of human resources is shrinking in an economy that is dependent on innovation. However, there are already about 1300 Indian researchers and university teachers working in Germany. Only Russia and China exceed this number among foreign academics.

If Germany's academic strategists could have their way, this figure can rise significantly. Conversely, Indian policy makers hope that German researchers will help in finding solutions to the problems of the subcontinent. New, highly efficient energy technologies and more environmentally sound products are needed to combat climate change. Breakthroughs are needed in agricultural research and biotechnology in order to feed a future global population of nine billion. Infectious diseases such as HIV, malaria and tuberculosis must be overcome to help lift people out of absolute poverty. Germany has excellent research facilities in all these areas.

The Indo-German Centre for Science and Technology in New Delhi, which was inaugurated in end 2008 by the research ministers of both countries, will start providing funding for joint projects from October 2009 onwards. It is an attempt to take up key research issues jointly and as equal partners. Of course, there was some squabbling about who first came up with such an excellent idea. Relations between an aspiring superpower that is still growing into its role on the world political stage and a mature European economy that needs to stand its ground in times of globalisation can never be entirely free of tensions. Yet the closing sentence of the novel 'A Passage to India' about it still being too early for a friendship between the protagonists certainly does not hold true for Germany and India. ■

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Christian Schwägerl is correspondent for the German weekly magazine 'Der Spiegel' in Berlin. He specialises on science, environment and energy, including international negotiations about these topics. He has written several articles about India's climate and science policy.



Source: Fahrig

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The Brandenburg Gate: One of the main symbols of Berlin, Germany and German unification

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Source: Ausserhofer

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MISSION MAX PLANCK

»I made my first trip to India in 1971 as a young student with my VW Beetle«, recalls Peter Gruss. Today as President of the Max Planck Society (MPG), he is promoting the organisation's international character. India plays a central role

/ TEXT: CLAUDIA KAHMEN

Six science journalists from renowned Indian daily newspapers landed in Berlin on October 5 for five days of an intensive programme. It was the first time ever, that the Max Planck Society invited Indian journalists to Germany. They visited several Max Planck Institutes, met a Nobel Laureate and also sampled European cuisine and various beer types from Bavaria. The programme included visits to the Fritz Haber Institute in Berlin-Dahlem, which has a history reaching back to 1912, the Max Planck Institute for Infection Biology in Berlin-Mitte, the Institutes for Gravitational Physics and Colloids and Interfaces at the new campus in Potsdam-Golm, as well as the Max Planck Institute for Plasma Physics in Garching near Munich. The Indian guests were particularly impressed by their meeting with Nobel Laureate Theodor Hänsch, one of the researchers at the Max Planck Institute for Quantum Optics in Garching.

Hänsch is one of now 17 Nobel Laureates produced by the Max Planck Society since its inception in 1948. One third of the directors at Max Planck Institutes are of foreign nationality. This year, Rupak Majumdar was appointed as first Max Planck Director of Indian nationality, joining the Max Planck Institute for Software Systems. Together, the more than 8,000 scientists of the Max Planck Society make it one of the leading research organisations of the world; measured by its publications, it is second only to Harvard University.

Besides visiting Max Planck Institutes, the journalists met representatives from the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD), the German Research Foundation (DFG) and the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation in the Max Planck Society's Berlin office and were introduced to the funding opportunities available for foreign top scientists in Germany. In Munich, they experienced a cultural experiment of a very special kind: A concert by the horn players of the Bavarian State Orchestra as a part of the series ›Himmelsklänge – Vogelgesänge‹ (Celestial Sounds – Birdsongs) organised by the Max Planck Society in cooperation with the Bavarian State Orchestra.

»Nothing is more internationally organised than research«, said the President of the Max Planck Society, Prof. Peter Gruss, in conversation with his Indian guests. At present, one-third of the more than 270 Max Planck directors are non-German nationals, just like almost half of the doctoral scholars and more than eighty percent of the post-docs. Only recently, the Max Planck Society established an institute in Florida, USA, and recruitment for directors at its new institute in Luxembourg is underway. At the same time, the Max Planck Society is also consolidating its presence in key countries.

India is an excellent example for this: With the arrival of Felix Kahle in spring 2008 a Max Planck representative has been posted in India for the first time. Kahle, the India expert of the International Relations Unit of the Max Planck Society, is currently attached to the German Embassy in New Delhi. In addition, a large number of support programmes are also being offered. So far, 15 former Max Planck guest researchers receive funds from the Max Planck Society to build up Partner Groups at their respective home institutes in India. The ›Max Planck India Fellowship Programme‹ has proved to be equally successful. At present it enables 25 young top scientists from India to do their research at Max Planck Institutes, also with the perspective to set up a Max Planck Partner Group in India. Along with this, the Max Planck Society has also recommended the establishment of a jointly-financed ›Indo-Max Planck Centre for Computer Science‹ to the Indian Ministry of Science and Technology.

»The range of themes being studied scientifically in the eighty Max Planck Institutes is simply staggering«, said one of the Indian guests while leaving. »Even the study of the history of feelings has found a place in the Max Planck Institute for Educational Research.« The six journalists could only experience a small part of this research spectrum during their trip. Nevertheless, they were satisfied as they returned to Delhi, their heads and bags crammed full of impressions and information.

Claudia Kahmen works for the Press and Public Relations Department of the Max Planck Society, where she is responsible for International Public Relations.



© MAX-PLANCK-GESellschaft / AXEL GRIESCH

For the first time the Max Planck Society invited Indian journalists to Germany. On their visit Prof. Peter Gruss, President of the Max Planck Society (centre) emphasised that nothing is more international than research



The India Representative of the Max Planck Society Felix Kahle (back left, next to Prof. Peter Gruss) accompanied the Indian journalists on their tour through Germany



MAX-PLANCK-GESELLSCHAFT

The Max Planck Society for the Advancement of Science is one of Germany's largest, independent, non-profit research organisations. In our **eighty institutes and research facilities 8,700 scientists** conduct **independent not-for-profit research of the highest calibre in the areas of natural sciences, bio-sciences, social sciences, and the humanities**. Max Planck scientists carry out cutting-edge research at the frontiers of traditional and emerging research fields and claim no fewer than **seventeen Nobel Prize Laureates** among their ranks.

New, multi-disciplinary research topics complement the scientific work of the universities in selected fields. One of the Max Planck Society's primary goals is the support of junior scientists.

MPIs offer **more than 4,000 PhD students** from all over the world a highly attractive working environment and excellent research facilities. In addition **3,000 young scientists per year** take on a **post-doc position**.

India is a special focus of the Max Planck Society in its international collaborations. That is why with **Felix Kahle, India expert of the Max Planck Society's International Relations Unit**, it has for the first time appointed a **Representative** outside Germany based at the **German Embassy in New Delhi**.

Felix Kahle
Max Planck Society
Representative India
c/o German Embassy
6/50 G, Shanti Path
Chanakyapuri
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www.mpg.de

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■ **557 young visiting scientists at Max Planck Institutes come from India**, an increase of over eighty percent over the past five years, making India the second most important partner for the Max Planck Society in the international exchange of young scientists. Every 10th doctoral student working and doing research at an MPI from abroad is from India.

■ Many doctoral students from India are enrolled in the **International Max Planck Research Schools (IMPRS)**. IMPRS are graduate schools run jointly between MPI and Universities. At the **55 IMPRS** about fifty percent of graduate students are foreign nationals. Indian junior scientists constitute the largest single group of participants from abroad (120 in 2008). **The programme is run in English.**

■ **15 Max Planck Partner Groups** are working in India, as many as in no other country. Partner Groups are **led by former Indian guest researchers at a Max Planck Institute**, who are of proven scientific excellence, and have returned to their institutions in India, continuing their research activities in close co-operation with their former hosts. The work of each Partner Group receives **financial support for a period of five years**, allowing the returnees to build up their own Research Groups and to remain close research ties with an MPI.

■ **»Max Planck India Fellowships«** is a new and **India-specific programme** with the goal of linking young Indian top researchers to a Max Planck Institute. In 2009, **25 young Indian scientists** are holding a **»Max Planck India Fellowship«**. It gives them the opportunity **to spend a minimum of one month a year at a Max Planck Institute** for a period of up to four years.

■ Through **start-up workshops** scientists from MPIs are able to acquaint themselves more closely with research conditions in India and establish initial contacts with Indian scientists

■ **44 project co-operations** are presently being pursued by scientists from MPI with partners in India.

BERLIN PHILHARMONICS VIRTUALLY IN INDIA

The new service of the Berlin Philharmonics the Digital Concert Hall offers almost all concerts of the world-famous Berlin orchestra live on the internet. State-of-the-art technology ensures excellent quality and enables classic-lovers all over the world to watch and listen to the concerts from wherever they are. From 1 July, tickets for the upcoming concert went on sale. The first broadcast of the new season took place on 28 August, when Sir Simon Rattle conducted a programme that included ›Berlioz's Symphonie Fantastique‹.

www.dch.berliner-philharmoniker.de

ALPINE BOLLYWOOD

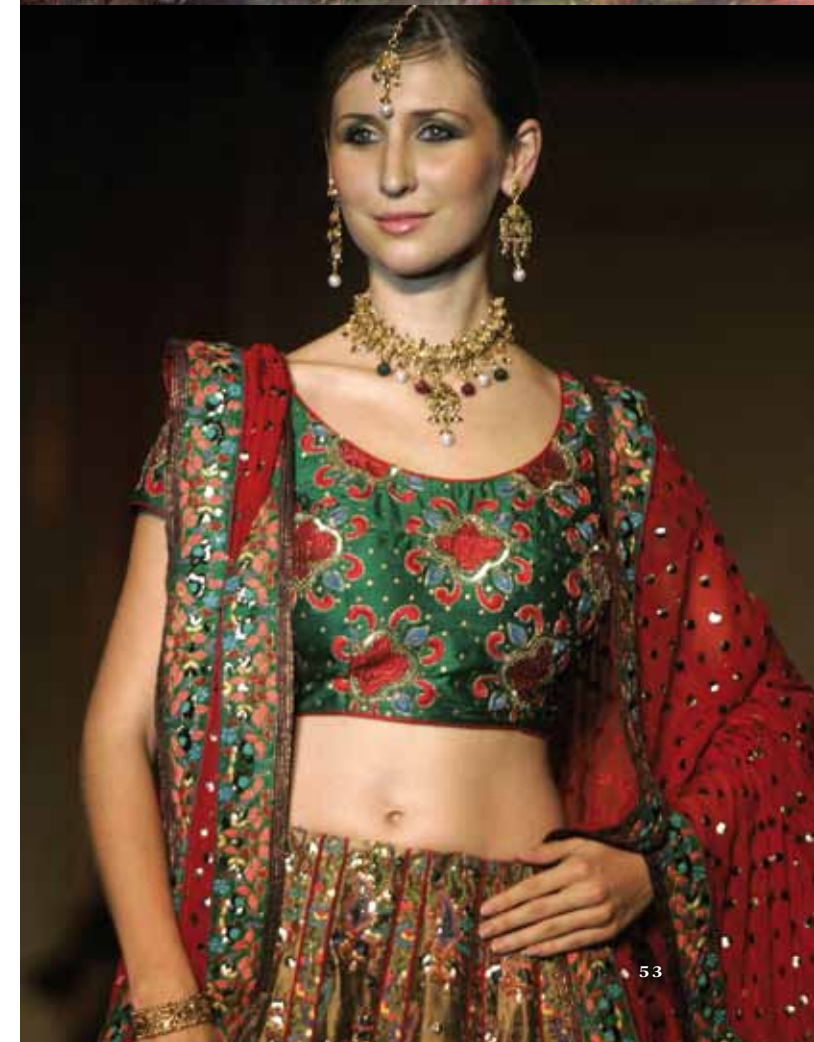
An extraordinary Indian dancer who desires to escape his destined vocation as a priest, lands in Austria and meanders through life in a totally alien social and cultural milieu. This is the theme of a proposed Indo-German-Austrian film production involving melodrama, dance and music in an intercultural scenario. Advisé Film & TV Production (Germany), Eagles Films (India) and WEGA Filmproduktion (Austria) have scheduled the shooting for the film ›Waltz on the Raga‹ for 2010, and the release by 2011. In a way, this film perpetuates the metaphor of the Alps as an ideal dreamworld for romance and melodrama – be it divine or celluloid – as depicted in this early 20th century collage.

www.advise-film.com

FROM BAMBERG TO BOLLYWOOD

German model Claudia Ciesla, 21, mesmerised Kolkata with her stunning looks, when she came in November 2008 for the promotion of Orin Paul's Bengali action movie ›10:10‹. Since then there was no looking back for Claudia who is aspiring for bigger roles in Bollywood. Knowing well that there would be no future without Hindi, she is learning this language these days. In two other Bollywood productions Claudia played a role: In ›Karma‹, that of a German hippie, and in ›Ki Jona Pardes‹ an abandoned wife.

www.cclaudia.net





PINA BAUSCH: IN MEMORIAM

Pina Bausch, revolutionary under the dancers and choreographers of early post-war Germany, died unexpectedly – and untimely, on 30 June 2009. Born in 1940, she became known worldwide, not least because of her saying: »I am not interested in how people move, but what moves them«, created a legendary way how she worked out a new piece with her dancers. She gave them tasks to solve, but not steps, she put questions to them, did not give them instructions. »What did you feel as a child, when ... «, was often the beginning of a session with the dancers, always concerned with the fundamentals of human existence. Pina was deeply influenced by India, its array of religious and philosophical thoughts, its charming visual culture, its people, which found expression in ›Bamboo Blues‹, a piece which was specially dedicated to India, where it was premiered in 2008.

www.pina-bausch.de



KAPIL SIBAL HONOURED IN GERMANY

Honouring Kapil Sibal, Minister for Human Resource Development, the ›Foundation Lindau Nobel-prizewinners Meetings‹ inducted him to its Honorary Senate, along with EU Commission President José Manuel Barroso. As Minister of Science and Technology (until 2009) Minister Sibal devoted himself to establishing India as a centre for science and expanding worldwide cooperation networks in science, research and technology, especially with Germany. This year, 43 scholars from India participated in the annual Meeting of Nobel Laureates in Lindau at Lake Constance, where India was the partner country as first international country to be designated such.

www.lindau-nobel.de



GERMAN FOOTBALL STAR WITH INDIAN ROOTS

The German Federeal Football League club ›SC Freiburg‹ has extended the contract of 44-year old Robin Dutt as Chief Trainer till 2012. »We have full confidence in him«, a member of the board of ›SC Freiburg‹ said. Having been passionate about football when he was young, Dutt's football career made a steep ascent, when he was appointed coach by the Federal League club in 2007. Before that, he was a professional football player and trainer at various clubs at the local level. Robin Dutt has an Indian father from Kolkata, but was born and brought up in Germany.

www.scfreiburg.com



DEUTSCHE WELLE

Deutsche Welle has recently expanded its television services in Asia with two new channels: DW-TV ASIA+ and DE-TV ASIA. Along with the news and in-depth reports, that Deutsche Welle is known for, these two new channels offer an increased focus on European lifestyle, culture and the arts with shows like ›euromaxx‹, ›ARTS.21‹, ›drive it!‹, ›In Focus‹ and ›GLOBAL 3000‹. In the future, Deutsche Welle will also look at expanding its programming palette by working with local partners and institutions.

www.dw-world.de/asia

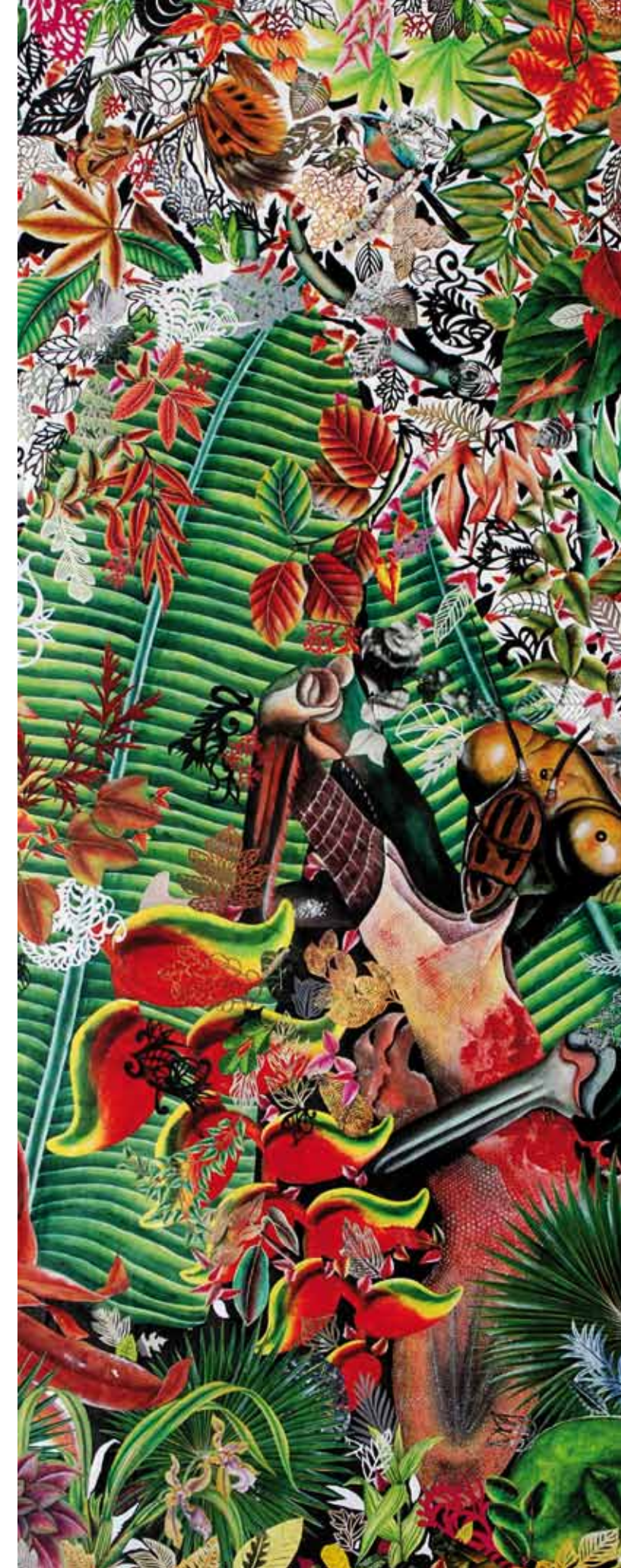
GERMAN-INDIAN ART EXCHANGE

The mega event of contemporary art in Delhi, the India Art Summit from 19 to 22 August 2009, showcased three galleries from Berlin: Gallery Aanant & Zoo brought an exhibition of German artist Michael Müller to Delhi. Galerie Christian Hosp, established recently in the new area in the renovated ware house of the former railway station Hamburger Bahnhof, has the objective to represent Asian art in Berlin and focusses especially on contemporary Indian art with well-known names such as Ravinder Reddy, Suhasini Kejriwal. Gallery Beck & Eggeling from Düsseldorf presented their collection of contemporary Indian artists as well as paperworks of Pablo Picasso at the India Art Summit.

www.christianhosp.com

www.aanantzoo.com

www.beck-eggeling.de



ABHORRENCE OF VIOLENCE

Both the famous Indian artist M. F. Husain and the celebrated German artist Norbert Bisky have dedicated their more recent work to the Mumbai tragedy. Husain, who is living in London and Dubai, called the terrorist attacks an »act of rape« against India and wished to express his anger and sadness through his artwork. Meanwhile Norbert Bisky was in Mumbai during the attacks in preparation of the opening of his exhibition. Instead, he found himself in the middle of terror. Many months later he put this trauma on to canvas. It is almost one year ago that terrorists attacked the city of Mumbai, killing more than 160 people

/ TEXT: MEERA MENEZES / PAINTING: M. F. HUSAIN

It is an ironic twist of fate that the long-time Mumbai resident M. F. Husain was not in India when the attacks in the city took place in November 2008, whereas the German artist Norbert Bisky was. Both artists, however, felt compelled to react to the incidents creating works which dealt with the carnage in very different ways.

For Husain what ensued in Mumbai was as brutal and offensive as rape, hence the title of his work »Rape of India«. It was exhibited at London's Serpentine Gallery as part of the exhibition »Indian Highway«. The painting depicts a mother with child who is being charged by rampaging bulls. Her head flung back, the agony and anguish on her face is apparent to the viewer.

A founding member of the Progressive Artists Group in 1947 Husain has tried to create a unique Indian visual vocabulary melding western modernism with Indian iconography. He often draws on Indian myths combining them with contemporary incidents as in »Rape of India«. The woman in the painting can be read as a reference to Mother India, whereas

the bulls targeting her embody forces of evil. Here the male and female, good and bad grapple with each other in a painting which is laced with both sexual and violent overtones. The motif of the woman and bull can also be traced back to the fight between Goddess Durga with the buffalo/bull-demon Mahishasura. Interestingly, the two panels of the painting seem to have been split up as if to indicate a rupture in the very fabric of secular India.

Norbert Bisky, on the other hand, is best known for his large format works rendered in the socialist realistic style that recall the communist propaganda used by the East German government. The athletic blond, blue-eyed boys set against white gesso-ed backgrounds seemed to celebrate the virtues of discipline and a pioneering spirit. They are, however, ironic metaphors for the communist regime's attempts to paint a rosy picture of a perfect world.

The fall of the Berlin wall in 1989 was a defining moment in Norbert Bisky's life. In one fell swoop the certainties and ideologies that he had grown up with in East Germany to



M. F. Husain, Rape Of India, 2008, acrylic on canvas, 182.8 x 121.9 cm

staunch communist parents seemed to disintegrate. This historic event spurred him on to become an artist and he studied painting at the Berlin University of Arts in the master class of the acclaimed German artist Georg Baselitz.

Bisky visited Mumbai in November 2008 for the opening of his exhibition »cloud cuckoo land« at Galerie Mirchandani + Steinruecke. By a quirk of fate he was on his way to meet his gallerist Andreas Osarek at the Taj when the attacks took place. His traumatising memories of that night and the days that followed were depicted in a series of paintings he titled »Colaba« after the district in Mumbai of the same name.

In contrast to his earlier works, the paintings here are largely evacuated of all human form and the background is dark and brooding. There is a sense of menace and an aesthetics of violence that pervades these works. Bisky himself admits that after the bloodbath in Mumbai in which several people were gunned down he didn't think it appropriate to people his works. Instead he deploys pictorial metaphors like items of everyday use to mark human presence and the trail of terror.



By doing so, he draws the viewer's attention to the very banality of evil – blood smeared mattresses which were jettisoned out of windows, torn chairs, stacked furniture, the bedsheets used by hostages to make a quick escape and the gunshot pocks marking the façade of buildings. They act as poignant witnesses to the untold horrors that unfolded over several days.

Whether subtly or in your face, one common motif stands out in the works of the young German artist and one of India's senior most painters. They both dwell on the complex interplay between the forces of good and evil, bringing in its wake a trail of violence and ruptured lives. ■

Meera Menezes is the Delhi correspondent of the art magazine »Art India«. She has been involved with the Indian contemporary arts scene since the late 80's and was the liaison person in India for the Amsterdam based »Foundation for Indian Artists« (F.I.A). Currently she is working as a director in the TV-production company »On The Spot Media Services Pvt. Ltd«.

SLUMDOG AND WHITE TIGER IN GERMANY

In March 2009 ›Slumdog Millionaire‹ was finally released in Germany. A few months later Aravind Adiga's bestseller ›White Tiger‹ appeared in the market. Both film and book triggered a lively debate on modern India

/ TEXT: SUNANDA RAO / ILLUSTRATION: JANNA MORTON

Once upon a time, in a far away land, there lived a beautiful princess. She was held captive in the castle of an evil dragon. A poor, but brave lad from the village took it upon himself to rescue her. He fought the dragon with his own might, slaying it with his sword, and thus rescuing the princess. They eventually fell in love, got married, and lived happily ever after.

This plot maybe richly redolent of a 19th century Grimm brothers fairy tale, but these days, it makes a befitting script for a Bollywood flick. Slumdog Millionaire and The White Tiger, last year's best selling film and novel, were both savoured like a Cinderella-like fairytale. Their rags-to-riches drama made them universal hits, indicating that such themes continue to intrigue the world. These stories were set in India, a country where poverty has long been romanticised in novels and films. But now, thanks to India's torrid economic boom in recent years, the world is seeing the country in a new light. In Germany both the book and the movie have attracted wide attention with the Media and Press who have dealt with the theme of a »New and Rising« India in detail, referring to these two. Also the riveting commercial success of both stories makes German people ponder about its Unique Selling Point. Publishers in Germany feel that the success of Slumdog Millionaire and White Tiger has shown that »there is a growing hunger for information about India. It is suddenly a very hot topic«, says the Beck publishing house in Munich. »Sensitivity towards India has grown stronger than ever before.« Such was the success of Slumdog Millionaire that in its first week it saw 155 000 people flocking to the theatres to see the German-dubbed version of the

film. The German translation of Slumdog Millionaire, ›Rupien, Rupien‹ has, till now, sold over 170,000 copies, reports the publishing house Kiepenheuer & Witsch. The response to Aravind Adiga's White Tiger has been overwhelming too. Its publisher, Beck Verlag, reports it as a best seller in Germany even before the Booker Prize was conferred.

German critics do not mince words in saying that it is not just the Indians who seem disturbed by the globalisation branching out to the world with its roots in the US. Lifestyle journalist Cordula Schmitz, working with ›Die Welt‹ in Berlin, feels intrigued by a particular scene in the film where Jamaal Malik recognises Benjamin Franklin on a hundred dollar currency note but does not know the person on a hundred rupee note, i.e. Gandhi. »The underlying message of globalisation stemming from the US is the real subtext of Slumdog Millionaire.« says Cordula, »Boyle takes the stereotypes of Bollywood and Hollywood, weaves the theme strongly and out comes a mix which is as strong as the pulse of the globalised world.«

The German newspaper ›Die Zeit‹, carries the White Tiger book critique by Susanne Mayer who describes it as »murder mystery«, »Gloomy Satire« or »Reversal of the Bildungsroman«. She sees the story, »as that of a poor village boy who goes to the city and builds his own existence: A way from innocence into amorality.« Mayer finds the book »shamefully gloomy« and »screamingly comic... Arvind Adiga's protagonist, describes with his frog-like-perspective of a servant, the world of his ruler.« She sees the story as a parable of the relationship of the third world to the first. Alex Rühle of the ►



© JANNA MORTON

›Süddeutsche Zeitung‹ was enthralled by the Booker Prize Winner. Adiga's entrepreneur protagonist Balram writes his success story to the Chinese Prime Minister. The character has a »naïve perspective towards the Indian reality of portraying the difference between the rich and poor, the backward and the modern.« Rühle is fascinated by the »bright, crisp sarcasm« with which Adiga writes his text.

Besides the enormous praise for the Oscar winning movie Slumdog Millionaire, some German articles try to dig into the jarring reality of modern India: ›Focus‹ Magazine finds the movie's imagery stark and sometimes, grotesque, »Slumdog Millionaire sweeps you off your feet. At the same time, parents should think twice about watching the movie together with their kids. Some scenes are so powerful that even elders have to swallow hard.« Other newspapers like the ›Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung‹ focussed on the film being all about multiple choice questions. Peter Körte's article has the headline of »Slumdog Millionaire: The world as Multiple Choice«. He tries to look behind the entire philosophy of a new »Globalised Model« of the world. Körte is not shocked by the grim living conditions of the slums, or the masses or the poverty, but the fact that, »in the midst of a city like Mumbai the same jingles are played, the same sitting order is maintained like in the studios of Köln-Hürth with our own Günther Jauch; that on the other side of the cultural colour, exactly the same rules are being followed ... it is as if aliens have landed and have set up their small enclaves and everywhere, there is a power of illusion that it is important to grasp lessons which give meaning to life ... things which are often erased from memory because they seem so

meaningless.« Like fairy tales, symbols can pacify or aggravate deep anxieties. India dreams of being a millionaire, but it lives with the anxiety that it's really a ›Slumdog‹. As Dr. Deepak Chopra sums it up, »Slumdog impersonates the new India. Jamaal Malik is India which is making its way to the club of the rich and affluent. If Slumdog is a viable symbol, the future it points to is just being born. An out-of-the-way picture can dare to be universal, which means that India may dare to be universal one day. Indians are suddenly aware that they have a place at the table where previously only the rich dined ... but will the Sahib turn his back and shut them out?«

While we seek a deeper sense of what White Tiger and Slumdog Millionaire are trying to achieve in the modern society, both the authors, Aravind Adiga and Vikas Swarup maintain that their works are purely a composition of various melodies of experiences in their lives. Both works are meant to be »fun reading and engaging.« In fact, they aren't meant to be any different from the Cinderellas and Snow-Whites of the 19th century, where you read a fantasy and ponder over reality at your own leisure. ■

Sunanda Rao works as editor for diplomatic affairs for the Hindi Daily ›New World‹ as well as a correspondent of the ›Deutsche Welle‹. She is currently based in Delhi after having worked for ›Deutsche Welle‹ in Bonn, Germany for twelve years. Sunanda covers current international affairs and is also a keen observer of the Indo-German as well as Indo-European relationships.

UNEXPECTED LAUREATE

The news that this year's Nobel Prize in Literature had been awarded to German author Herta Müller was received with great enthusiasm in Germany. While conferring the prestigious award, the Swedish Nobel Prize committee described her work as »landscapes of the dispossessed.« For her part the author seemed to be stunned and speechless

/ TEXT: SASCHA LEHNARTZ

Even connoisseurs of the German literary scene were caught unawares on October 8, 2009 when the Nobel Prize in Literature was awarded to the Romanian-born German author Herta Müller. Hardly any critics had her on their list of potential candidates for the Nobel Prize even though the 56 year old author has won a number of prestigious literary awards for her work in the past. Most Germans had never even heard of her. Unlike the last two German Nobel laureates in literature Günter Grass (1999) and Heinrich Böll (1972) Herta Müller had neither been perceived as a politically active intellectual nor had she ever sold enough copies to make it into the bestseller league.

That Herta Müller has so far remained a rather marginal figure in the German literary scene could be connected to the fact that she started off on the fringes of the German speaking area and gradually wrote her way into its centre. Müller was born in 1953 in Nitchidorf in Banat, a region in western Romania where German emigrants – known as the Banat Swabians – settled about 300 years ago. Thus her mother tongue was German even though she grew up in Romania. Her grandfather, a farmer, was expropriated by the Communists. Her father was a soldier in the SS in the Third Reich and worked as a truck driver after the war while her mother was sentenced to five years of forced labour in a Soviet camp.

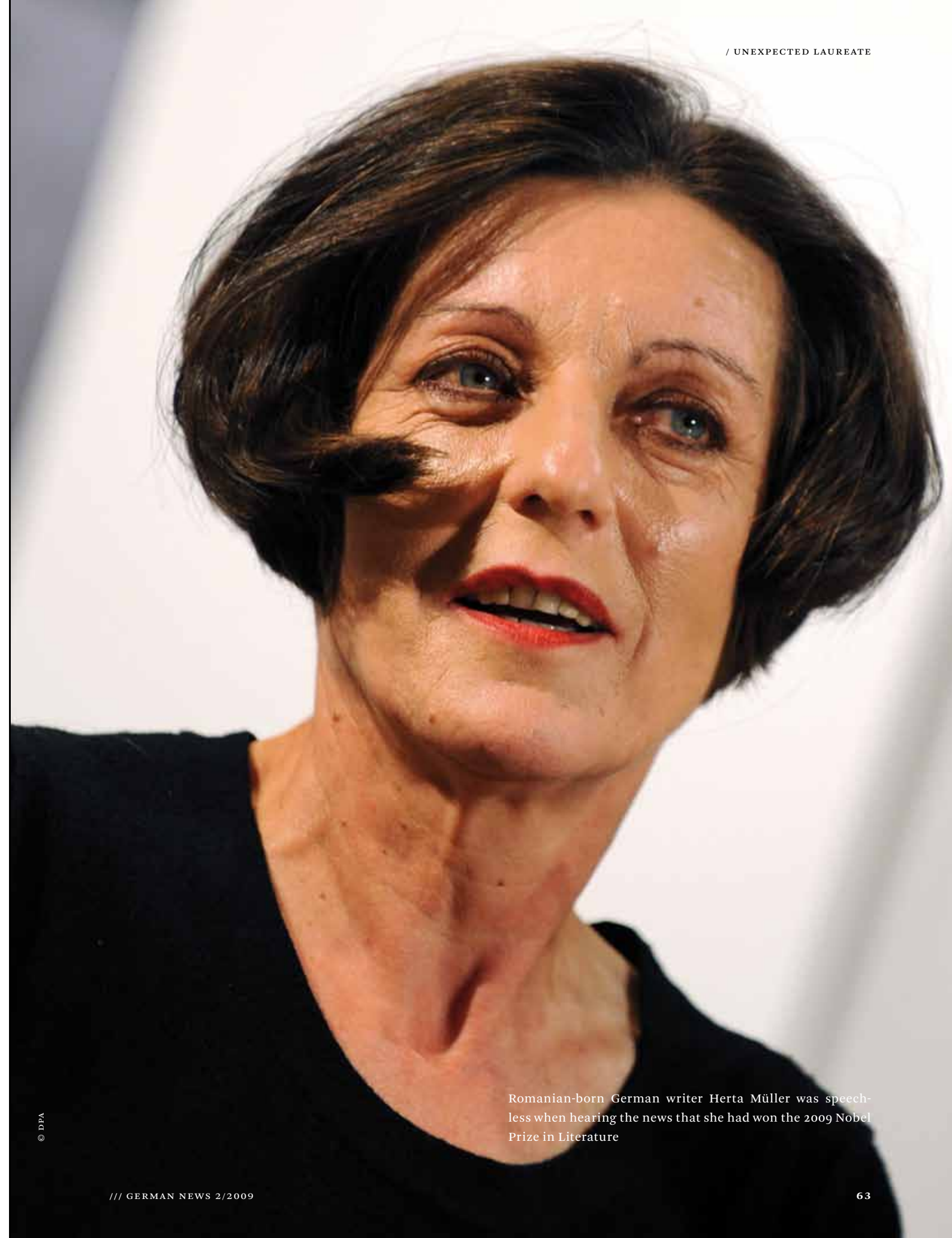
Herta Müller studied German philology in Communist Romania and initially worked as a translator in a factory before being dismissed for refusing to collaborate with the secret service Securitate. She wrote ›Nadirs‹ (Niederungen), her first literary work, towards the end of the seventies. However, it was only in 1982 that Romanian censorship allowed the book to be printed – in a heavily abridged version. An uncensored version was published in West Germany in 1984. The book portrayed the dismal day-to-day life of the ethnic German villagers in Banat from the perspective of an adolescent girl. Her blunt representation of this environment provoked accusations of being a ›nest-fouler‹ in her homeland Romania.

However, she had already found the central theme of her writing with her first book: How can a human soul survive in a totalitarian state? Since then she has repeatedly modified this theme in novels like ›Even Back Then the Fox was the Hunter‹ (Der Fuchs war damals schon der Jäger), ›The Land of Green Plums‹ (Herztier) and her latest novel ›Everything I Possess I Carry with Me‹ (Atemschaukel) which brought her much critical acclaim. According to the Nobel Prize committee she depicts ›landscapes of the dispossessed‹ in her texts.

In 1987 Herta Müller immigrated to Berlin with her husband at that time, the author Richard Wagner. Initially Wagner had a strong influence on her writing style which was in turn characterised by the German of the Banat Swabians: The language of this exiled German minority is rich in unusual imagery and archaic expressions. Müller herself names the Austrian writer Thomas Bernhard as one of her role models. Well-meaning critics in particular have even compared her with Franz Kafka, another great author who lived and wrote on the margins of the German speaking area – in Prague. And yet, Müller has a style of her own: Occasionally her expressive language includes formulations which sound almost clumsy. Her texts lack Kafka's openness to multiple interpretations as well as his humour.

Her most recent novel ›Atemschaukel‹, which is her most intense book so far, is based on the reminiscences of the Romanian-born German poet Oskar Pastior who spent several years in a Ukrainian concentration camp. ■

Dr. Sascha Lehnartz lives in Paris and is France correspondent of the German daily ›Die Welt‹ and the weekly ›Welt am Sonntag‹. He holds a Ph.D. in comparative literature from Columbia University and writes mostly on politics and culture. His forthcoming book on daily life in France will be out in the fall of 2010.



Romanian-born German writer Herta Müller was speechless when hearing the news that she had won the 2009 Nobel Prize in Literature

BEYOND CHANDIGARH

/ BEYOND CHANDIGARH

A school founded ninety years ago revolutionised the perception of architecture, form and design and continues to influence style even today: The Bauhaus in Weimar. Germany's most famous art school for classic modernism permeated not just Europe but the entire world. India too has buildings, works of art and functional objects influenced by Bauhaus ideas

/ TEXT: KATRIN SOHNS

Walter Gropius, founder of the »Staatliches Bauhaus« in Weimar in 1919, one of the first schools for modern design, placed practice above theory, creation above learning. In his »experimental laboratory« Gropius wanted artists, artisans and architects to work jointly in the production process to develop a contemporary and functionally relevant language of form. They were guided by what Louis Sullivan said as early as 1896: Form follows function. The style of teaching was also ahead of its times. The students were not just learners; they were directly involved in a creative process that was also intended to fulfill a social and visionary mission.

After World War I, Germany was in the throes of poverty, hunger and unemployment. In his manifesto of April 1919, Gropius dedicated the Bauhaus to social and ethical principles. The mission of the Bauhaus was to address people's basic needs. This idea attracted outstanding architects and artists, among them Josef Albers, Marcel Breuer, Johannes Itten, Lyonel Feininger, Paul Klee, Wassily Kandinsky, László Moholy-Nagy, Oskar Schlemmer, and later the architects Hannes Meyer and Ludwig Mies van der Rohe.

Soon after its inception the Bauhaus became a victim of the political instability in Germany. Following protests and intrigues in Nazi circles it was forced to move to Dessau in 1925. Pressure from the NSDAP, which denounced the

Bauhaus as a »breeding ground of Bolshevism«, caused it to be privatised in 1932 and moved to Berlin. In the following year it was finally dissolved.

This repression put an end to the experiment in Germany, but the emigration of many Bauhaus proponents actually marked the beginning of the expansion of this movement. They took up important positions as architects or teachers on all continents. The response to Bauhaus was strongest in the United States, Japan and Israel. Few people are aware that the largest Bauhaus housing estate anywhere in the world is in Tel Aviv.

Following the Bauhaus trail in India leads to an interesting find: A Bauhaus exhibition took place in Calcutta as early as 1922 – the first outside Germany. Curated by Rabindranath Tagore who visited the Bauhaus in Weimar in 1921, it displayed works by Lyonel Feininger, Johannes Itten, Paul Klee and Wassily Kandinsky. This exhibition is considered to have triggered the influence of European modernism in India.

It was not just Bauhaus art but also its architecture, with its cubist forms, flat roofs and smooth, unembellished facades that made an entry in the subcontinent over the following years. One of the earliest examples is the Golconde in Pondicherry designed by Antonin Raymond. In the 1930s and 1940s, however, there were few, usually isolated ►

Entrance to the concrete High Court Building in Chandigarh designed by Le Corbusier. The city has less to do with Bauhaus than is generally believed



instances of foreign architects, who actually implemented this »new objectivity« in their buildings. The influence of Bauhaus grew after India gained independence. The desire to break with the past and the associated quest for new utopias encouraged more Indian architects to flirt with radical Bauhaus ideas. These now almost forgotten testimonies to a new style of building in India include the West Bengal New Secretariat (1949-1954) by Habib Rahman in Kolkata or the Ahmedabad Textile Industry Research Association Building (1950-1952) as well as the National Botanical Research Institute (1957) in Lucknow by Achyut Kanvinde.

Architects in those years were very international, both the architects that came to India from abroad and those in India who visited foreign countries, returning after some years with radically new ideas. Prior to visiting India, Antonin Raymond, a Czech-born American, spent many years in Japan where he worked for Frank Lloyd Wright. Kanvinde, on the other hand, studied under Gropius in the United States. This international exchange led to a fusion of Bauhaus ideas with those of other schools. »There were some people who continued to be loyal to the fundamental ideas of Bauhaus but in many parts of the world it went through an evolution – also in India«, says Iftikhar-Mulk Chishti, architect and professor at the School of Architecture and Planning in Delhi. »The main difference I see in India was in regard to the climate. Architects here were trying to keep the sun out instead of taking it in. At the same time they wanted to keep the breeze flowing and to achieve cross-ventilation.« To some extent the Bauhaus ideal of rooms flooded with light (Gropius) became the concept of rooms flooded with air in India.

A further link between the two continents was established later, in the 1960s. The Ulm School of Design, considered the most successful institution to succeed the Bauhaus after World War II, was actively involved in the setting up of the National Institute of Design (NID) in Ahmedabad. »For a long time the Institute regarded itself as the Indian Bauhaus«, says Dr. Norbert Korrek, architect and research assistant at the Bauhaus University in Weimar. Graduates of the Institute such as Sudhakar Nadkarni and H. Kumar Vyas exported ideas from Ulm to India, where these lived on and became infused with Indian philosophies.

The American designer Charles Eames, who was very important for NID, wrote a text on the Lota vase as a metaphor for the simplicity and purity of form. »It became an NID icon, just as Max Bill's stool was an Ulm icon. Both objects embodied fundamental principles, both expressed the Gandhian

principle of honesty and simplicity«, says Sudhakar Nadkarni, who is currently a professor at the Industrial Design Centre in Bombay. He still looks back fondly on his years in Germany. »Ulm made me realise the importance of the social and humanist role of design. It brought me closer to a Gandhian philosophy of simplicity and the aesthetic, perfection and excellence.«

The best known example of avant-garde architecture in India – Chandigarh – on the other hand, has less to do with Bauhaus than is generally believed. Le Corbusier never taught at the Bauhaus, although he felt an affinity with its ideas, and his writings were read at the Bauhaus. »Chandigarh exemplifies Le Corbusier's strong need to individualise forms. In that aspect he is far removed from Bauhaus«, says Norbert Korrek. »Even the big representative buildings in the government district, while architecturally modern, were built in archaic fashion by hand. The Bauhaus however stood for industrialisation, for the culture of the industrial society.«

Le Corbusier, who was commissioned by Nehru to build the new state capital of divided Punjab in the 1950s, designed a concrete metropolis that was divided into rectangular residential, commercial and leisure areas. Everything was part of a strict plan. A recent application that wants the entire urban and architectural work of Le Corbusier to be declared a UNESCO World Heritage Site states that the shape of trees determined where they would be placed on the streets. On completion, Le Corbusier left behind detailed instructions on how the city was to be expanded, but there was no time to implement them. Theory was overtaken by reality. Vast streams of refugees forced Chandigarh to grow faster than planned. Le Corbusier also never anticipated that the city's inhabitants would add ›local colour‹ and that – as Swiss author Christian Kracht remarked recently – »even some holy cows would wander through his city.«

Today Chandigarh represents »the euphoric vision of the New Style of building and the practical problems of the International Style«, sums up Norbert Korrek. The attempt to rethink everything from scratch – living, building, life, and ultimately the individual – made even many of the genuine Bauhaus masters lose sight of the needs of those they originally wanted to reach. But this need not be regarded as a failure, feels Iftikhar-Mulk Chishti: »Bauhaus was a revolution. In a revolution one doesn't know to what extent people are willing to change. Bauhaus is still relevant and it will continue to be so until the next revolution takes place.« ■



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AsiaSat 3S Reception Parameters
East Position: 105,5° | Transponder: 12 H | Frequency: 4,071 GHz | Polarization: horizontal | Video Standard: PAL
Video Compression: MPEG-2/DVB | Layer 2 Audio Compression: MPEG-1 | Modulation: QPSK | Symbolrate: 14,240 Msymbols/s | FEC: 3/4

DID YOU KNOW THAT...

... »Kummerbund« has an Indian connection

/ TEXT: JUTTA JAIN-NEUBAUER

The Indian Music Director Zubin Mehta

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This is a fascinating story of the word *kamarband* or German *Kummerbund*, a sash or waist band, which has undergone a long and arduous linguistic journey from its Persian martial origins to its Mughal courtly fashion conventions to its colonial Indian usage as *cummerbund*. From here it entered the English language and then probably slipped into the German language somewhere in the nineteenth century in the avatar of *Kummerbund*. It is well known in the parlance of cultural linguistics that, as words travel over a period of time and pass through various cultural contexts, the nuances of their meaning change according to adaptations to that culture's pre-existing institutions. In Germany, a *Kummerbund* is quite an essential part of elegant fashion, in combination with a dinner jacket or a tail coat, in lieu of the customary sleeveless vest of the three-piece suit. For the smart bridegroom, guests at a gala event or conductors, a *Kummerbund* is a must to complete the perfect dress code of a man of fashion.

Let us now look at the various spellings and connotations that the word had acquired before settling down as *Kummerbund* in Germany.

According to Mansura Haidar, *kamar* or *kamarbandi* are Persian words which had crept into Urdu during the Mughal era. The Steingass Persian dictionary explains the term *kamarband* as »waistband, sash, girdle, belt, zone, alert, ready for battle, armed, a servant.« *Kamarbandi* in Persian has been rendered into English as »armament, prepared for battle, readiness for service.« It is in this context that the term has been used in Persian and Urdu.

Another interesting feature of the word *kamarbandi* is its usage for a ceremony at the time of initiation into particular male religious or congenial organisations like those of the *Ghazis* (Warriors of Faith), the *Akhis* (Confraternity), the *Futuwwa* Corporations of Central Asia, Persia, Turkey and other places. The initiation of aspirants to the organisation was marked by the ceremony of *kamarbandi*, when a girdle was tied around their waist. Often also a sword or a personal weapon was tied to the waist by a superior member of the *Akhi* confraternity in accordance with *Akhi* custom and the ceremonial canon of *futuwwa* followed by an oath-taking that the aspirant would be loyal to his conviction. It is recorded that *Akhis* were close companions of Osman (1258-1326), the founder of the Ottoman dynasty in Turkey, in whose time the custom of *kamarbandi* ceremony was practiced. Incidentally, the word *kamra* refers to a string worn also by the Zoroastrians.

In India *kamarband* was amply in circulation during the Mughal period, where – more than its martial connotation – it had acquired a prominent place in the courtly fashion. The evidence of Mughal painting would suggest that the

emperors, noblemen and courtiers wore a fine brocaded muslin or silken *kamarband* over a *jama*, a full-sleeved outer wear for men. Often the Mughal emperors looked to Iran for the cultivation of their aesthetic taste. The Persian influence on Mughal paintings, was very prominent initially, for example Emperor Babur spent many years, while on the move, in Herat where he admired the works of the greatest painters of the Persian tradition; or the famous Iranian calligrapher Sultan Ali and painter Bihzad had adorned some of his favourite manuscripts. His son, Emperor Humayun, had set up a royal workshop with two Persian painters Mir Sayyid Ali and Abd as-Samad. Apart from painting, it is quite apparent that the Persian influence on fashion in the Moghal court, such as the word *kamarband* and the convention of wearing a sash, had Persian antecedents.

It is well known that the Mughal culture – its architecture, conventions of paintings, the paraphernalia of the palace and the courtly codes and customs had deeply influenced the culture of the Rajput princely states. *Kamarband* thus, also became a part of the Rajput courtly fashion.

Mughal rulers customarily held a special periodic *darbar* or court in which a number of princes were invited and honoured with titles and gifts. In imitation of this custom, the British, especially under Lord Canning, the first Viceroy of India, held a series of such *darbars* bestowing gifts upon the princes who were loyal to them. The gifts given by the Mughal emperors and the British Viceroys included precious clothing such as cloaks, turbans, shawls, sashes and a variety of ornaments. Court painters also were remunerated with such precious textiles.

Tryna Lyons in her book »The Artists of Nathadvara« mentions that the Maharana of Udaipur presented his courtly painter Bhagavan Das »as a token of his appreciation ... a turban, *kamarband* (waist-cloth) and *dupatta* (ornamental scarfs) of fine Banarsi muslin with borders of genuine gold brocade (*zari*). The turban and *kamarband* had been further embellished by dying in the Rajasthan *lahariya* (wave) technique, which produces colourful zigzag design.« It is conceivable that the Mughal word *kamarband* got conventionalized as *cumberband* in colonial Indian English and from there entered the English language as such, possibly with the double meaning of the word *band* »to tie« in Urdu and »strap« and »belt« in English.

This peculiar anglicisation of *kamarband* to *cummerbund* (with double »m« and »u« in »bund«) could then have paved the way for German *Kummerbund*, not only linguistically but in its modern fashion usage too. Therefore the German word *Kummer* (meaning »sorrow, grief«) has nothing to do with this accessory piece of fashion. But who can deny that German fashion has a *Kummer* (griefingly longing) for the *Kummerbund*? ■

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www.goethe.de/india/50years



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www.christkindlesmarkt.de



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www.gruenewoche.de



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www.transmediale.de



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11 – 21 February 2010

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www.berlinale.de



CEBIT

2 – 6 March 2010

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www.cebit.de



BOOK FAIR LEIPZIG

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www.leipziger-buchmesse.de



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www.artcologne.com

IMPRINT

Editor: Jens Urban
Managing Editor: Katrin Sohns
Assistant Editor: Jutta Jain-Neubauer

Publisher and Printer: Jens Urban on behalf of the Press
and Information Office, Embassy of the Federal Republic of
Germany, 6/50 G Shanti Path, New Delhi 110021 India.

Circulation: 76,000

Translation: Anja Malhotra / Anu Pande

Design: Groupe Dejour Berlin, Germany (www.gdbg.de)
Art Director: Jörg Walter, Groupe Dejour Berlin
To get in touch with Groupe Dejour please write to:
office@gdbg.de

Printed at: Ajanta Offset and Packagings Pvt. Ltd.
B-95 Wazirpur Industrial Area, Delhi 110052

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Next issue of the GERMAN NEWS: Spring / Summer 2010

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