

The conference doubtlessly constituted a great opportunity to learn more about the "internationality" of slave trade and forms of slavery in the modern world as well as on particularities genuine to different societies. And, it certainly contributed to shed more light on forms of slavery still existent today, although they are different from what we know as the "traditional, true slavery".

The fourth "Colloque internationale sur l'esclavage" will be held in Avignon from 16-18 October 2002 and will be organized on Women in Slavery – in honour to Suzanne Miers. It will examine the roles of women in slavery across all geographical regions of the world, in different systems of slavery (indigenous and imported), and over time periods from antiquity to contemporary times, as well as trades in female slaves and other means of acquiring them, and their tactics of 'resistance' and other accommodations to the positions in which they found themselves. As Maria Jaschok and Suzanne Miers put it in the introduction to their volume on Women and Chinese Patriarchy, "(p)overty and the patriarchal system in China, British labour recruitment practices, the indifference of both the Chinese and British governments, and the lucrative nature of the traffic all conspired to turn prostitutes into marketable commodities." A minority of the prostitutes did, of course, emigrate by their own "free" will, as they intended to earn money for their families, but most were sold by poverty-stricken parents, kidnapped or lured away by trickery. This is but one form of slavery still existent today, and Suzanne Miers has for many, many years made the role of females in slavery one of the main topics of her research.

Angela Schottenhammer

### **10<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Indo-German Consultative Group**

Jaipur, 2.-4. November 2001

The Indo-German Consultative Group (IGCG) is a non-official group of several leading industrialists and a few professors — about a dozen members on each side — which meets once a year to discuss the economic, political and cultural relations between the two countries. The terms of reference of the IGCG are that they write letters to both heads of government containing concrete proposals for the improvement of these relations. The venues alternate between India and Germany. The respective governments provide local hospitality but do not interfere with the agenda. The two co-chairmen of the IGCG are at present Dr. I.P. Singh and Dr. Theo Sommer.

The IGCG was established after the state visit of Prime Minister P.V. Narasimha Rao when he inaugurated the Festival of India in Germany in 1991. He suggested the formation of this group to Chancellor Helmut Kohl who readily agreed to this idea. The first meeting of the group was held at Bonn in 1992. The style of the discussions was initially somewhat cautious and formal, but when the members got to know each other in the course of several meetings, the discussions became more lively, e.g. the present writer who has been a member of the group since its inception gave a talk on "India and Germany: Two Invert Nations" at the meeting at Tegernsee last year which sparked off an intensive discussion.

This year's meeting in Jaipur was a rather special one as Sept. 11, 2001 was still in recent memory and Chancellor Gerhard Schröder had visited India only a few days before the meeting. His visit was the first one of an SPD-chancellor. Willy Brandt had visited India as a Foreign Minister, but could not visit it as a chancellor as his term of office was cut short. Helmut Schmidt was not interested in India and never visited it. Considering this, Chancellor Schröder should have spent a few more days in India. But at least he did come and invited Prime Minister Vajpayee to visit Berlin in 2002. In fact, they agreed to meet every year from now on. In this context they should both take an interest in the letters sent to them by the IGCG.

One of the most intensely debated points on the agenda of this year's meeting was the impending WTO-conference at Doha whose organisers had circulated a new directive only recently which had caused an uproar in India. An echo of this uproar was transmitted to the IGCG by the impassioned intervention of Rahul Bajaj, one of India's greatest industrialists who has been a member of the group for a long time. He upbraided the industrial countries for not implementing earlier resolutions while at the same time urging the developing countries to open their markets. The German side deplored a notification of the Government of India of November 2000 which had established new non-tariff barriers to foreign trade. Rahul Bajaj argued that India should revoke this notification only after the industrial countries also revised their policies with regard to textile quotas, the protection of the European agrarian market etc. The usual German position that this is a matter of European policy which the German government could not change by itself was criticised by the Indian side. Germany is after all the biggest country in Europe and should use its influence in this respect, Indo-German co-operation in the fields of science, technology and education provided much scope for constructive proposals which could be endorsed by both sides. The "sandwich programme" for the M. Tech. degree of the five Indian Institutes of Technology was highly recommended for further extension by the IGCG. A similar programme should also be started for the Indian Institutes of Management (IIMs). Under this DAAD-"sandwich programme" the students start their course in India, then spend one academic year in Germany and return home in order to finish their degree there. In the first round about 90 scholarships were provided for the M. Tech. programme by the German Ministry for Economic Co-operation (BMZ). Due to a cut in the budget of that ministry, the number of scholarships was curtailed in subsequent years. It is to be hoped that this programme will regain its earlier dimensions.

The DAAD supported by several other institutions had started an impressive "road-show" for the marketing of German education in India a few days before the IGCG-meeting. More than 3.000 students had attended this show in New Delhi which was also visited by Chancellor Schröder. The overwhelming majority of these students showed an interest in bio-technology. This could, indeed, be a most fruitful field for Indo-German co-operation. India's rich bio-diversity and its treasures of traditional knowledge of the uses of plants etc. call for further scientific exploration. Prof. Ragnath Mashelkar, Director General, Council of Scientific and Industrial Research, who has attended many meetings of the IGCG, refers to this exploration of traditional knowledge as a "partnership with the past". This message was included in the

letters to the two heads of government. Germany could profit from this partnership and provide advanced training in the respective technology to Indian students.

A further suggestion in the field of education included in those letters concerned the establishment of joint degree courses by selected Indian and German universities in the humanities and social sciences. At present several German universities are trying to set up B.A. and M.A. courses to be taught in English so as to contribute to the internalisation of German university education. In this context such joint degree courses would be highly desirable. Whereas at present about 1.400 Indian students are registered in German universities, very few German students pursue their studies in India. Those who do venture to go to India are often discouraged by the lack of correspondence between Indian and German course requirements. If a period of study in India only enriches personal experience but has to be considered as a loss of time for the completion of course work, most German students would not wish to attend Indian universities. Joint degree courses would help to bridge that gap. They would also lead to constructive co-operation between Indian and German university staff.

It would be beyond the scope of this report to refer to all issues discussed at the IGCG-meeting. But finally it should be stressed that for the members of the group this is not only an international but also an interdisciplinary and "intersectoral" experience. Indian and German scholars of natural sciences and humanities meet each other and also interact with industrialists and businessmen. All of them can contribute to the discussion of common themes such as the problem of international terrorism which loomed large on this year's agenda. The next meeting will be held in or near Berlin in September 2002. At that time the IGCG will also review the steps taken by the two governments towards the implementation of this year's recommendations.

Dietmar Rothermund

Hinweis: Einen ausführlichen Bericht zur internationalen Frischwasser-Konferenz "**Water for Life**", die vom 19.-21. September 2001 in Mankarai, Coimbatore, Tamil Nadu, Indien stattfand, finden Sie unter [http://www.kkstiftung.de/Entwicklungszusammenarbeit/frames/doku\\_fr.html](http://www.kkstiftung.de/Entwicklungszusammenarbeit/frames/doku_fr.html). Die 5 Kapitel (19 Seiten) stehen dort zum Download bereit. Im Karl Kübel Institut in Coimbatore, Südindien, diskutierten im Rahmen einer internationalen Wasserkonferenz rund 70 TeilnehmerInnen von Regierungs- und Nichtregierungsorganisationen aus Südasien mit deutschen Entwicklungsexperten über Lösungsmöglichkeiten für den Umgang mit dem knappen Gut Wasser.