

Panel 16: Therapeutic cults

Leitung: M. Carrin Tambs-Lyche (8 Referate)

Panel 17: Ritual and the Individual

Leitung: C. Fuller (1 Referat)

Panel 18: South Asia Languages: Auxiliaries and Compound Verbs

Leitung: A. Montaut, H. Nespital, C. Pilot-Raichoor
(14 Referate)

Panel 19: Performing Arts

Leitung: A. Karpen (7 Referate)

Wenngleich nicht alle angekündigten Referate gehalten wurden und manche Panels als Fortsetzung und Vertiefung anderer Panels gedacht waren, so zeigen doch die knapp 200 angekündigten Referate die zunehmende wissenschaftliche Spezialisierung im Bereich Südasiens. Aufgrund des dichtgedrängten Programms war es somit nicht immer möglich, interessante Vorträge in anderen Panels zu verfolgen. Das von den Veranstaltern initiierte Rahmenprogramm der Konferenz umfaßte die Vorführung indischer Filme, eine Stadtführung sowie ein Empfang der Konferenzteilnehmer beim Bürgermeister der Stadt.

In der Abschlußdiskussion wurde die Gründung einer "European Association of South Asian Studies" (EASAS) beschlossen, um die Aktivitäten der Südasienswissenschaft gerade in bezug auf das vereinigte Europa besser zur Geltung zu bringen. Hierzu wurde ein vorläufiges Komitee unter Vorsitz von Professor Rothermund (Südasiens-Institut, Universität Heidelberg) gebildet, um die erforderlichen Schritte in die Wege zu leiten.

Christian Wagner

Urban Local Government and Decentralization in the Context of the Karnataka Nagarpalika Act

Max Mueller Bhavan, Bangalore, March 10-12, 1995

Strange to say, the principle of urban local government was not formally laid down in the Indian constitution up to 1992/93 whereas the states' obligation to develop *panchayats* was at least mentioned in the Directive Principles. As a consequence of inadequate constitutional provisions, democracy in municipal government has not been stable. Though the respec-

tive Municipal Acts of States provided for regular elections to municipal bodies, they were frequently suspended and superseded for extended periods of time. In addition to that, the State Assemblies provided for types of urban government, e.g. Municipal Corporations and specialized bodies such as Water Boards, which are not accountable to Mayor and Council, thus making local self-government a mockery, not to speak of the very limited modes of popular participation practised.

In order to advance the objective of urban local self-government, the 74th Amendment was passed in December 1992 by the Indian parliament and published in the Gazette of April 20th, 1993, introducing a new part IXA in the Constitution.

Whereas this Amendment (a parallel 73th Amendment pertaining to Panchayats was also enacted) defines the salient features and underlying principles of urban government, much power was left to the State legislatures to amend or repeal the existing laws so that they may be in conformity with the Amendment, also called Nagarpalika Act.

In the eyes of interested citizens and groups, the Karnataka Legislature did a particularly disappointing job: the functions and powers of Ward Committees are not laid down in the revised Act, no efforts were made to establish a really responsible and accountable form of urban management: "The Commissioner (Executive Officer appointed by the State government, H.F.I.) continues to be the real power centre", as one participant phrased it.

The experience from Karnataka indicates that the present configuration of bureaucrats and political parties has little inclination to create new opportunities to reduce State hegemony in urban affairs. Revised State legislation has accorded with the letter of the constitution formally, but has not provided for more local democracy.

This statement alone is enough to show that the 74th Amendment has not changed the Indian political landscape dramatically as some observers had expected. Though popular participation is still quite limited in formal terms, there will be ways and means to exercise pressure upon the politicians who want to be re-elected. Civic groups should not be disappointed and discouraged but continue to elicit support for public action. This especially applies to CIVIC (Citizens Voluntary Initiative for the City), a grouping of concerned citizens from different walks of life which organized hearings and public meetings on the matter not only in Bangalore, but also in other parts of Karnataka.

CIVIC was co-organizer of an international symposium sponsored by Max Mueller Bhavan (German Cultural Institute), Bangalore. More than 80 participants from all over India, Kyrgystan and Germany discussed

about a dozen papers presented and entered into a most lively debate about the future of local self-government in India.

As Shri T.N. Chaturvedi, M.P., phrased it at the end of his keynote address: "The question remains how far the new constitutionalism will ensure a smooth and effective transition from the moribund and halting local self-government institutions to a vibrant, dynamic and self-sustaining system of local government under the Constitution, ensuring more active and informal participation of the people and better public service to the local community."

The reality of Indian cities is far from such a vision, its services and prospects are even deteriorating day by day. Nevertheless, urban government needs a vision to cope with such problems: "Managing a city calls for a totally integrated approach in which government, the community and the individual citizen all play a coordinated role. To the extent that the municipality is able to educate citizens, to the extent that voluntary action groups accept the responsibility to organize citizens to manage their local affairs, our cities will become cleaner and better places in which to live" (Shri M.N. Buch, Centre for Human Settlement and Environment, Bhopal). The 74th Amendment cannot be more than a tentative step in this direction.

Thanks are due to all who presented papers (to be published in book form), to the participants and particularly to Heiko Sievers, Max Mueller Bhavan, Bangalore Director, who was the spiritus rector of the event together with CIVIC and two important Bangalore educational institutions, the Indian Institute of Management and the National Law School.

Hans F. Illy

Legitimicy and Conflict in South Asia: External and Internal Challenges to Governance

Heidelberg, 10. – 11.2.1995

Die zunehmenden ethnischen Konflikte und sozialen Unruhen in Südasien und anderen Regionen der Welt unterstreichen die zentrale Bedeutung einer funktionierenden politischen Ordnung als Vorbedingung zivilisierter menschlicher Existenzformen – ganz gleich welcher Kultur. Diese Konflikte erfordern eine interdisziplinär angelegte Analyse sowohl durch Regionalspezialisten als auch durch komparativ orientierte Politologen. Das übergeordnete Ziel des Kolloquiums "Legitimicy and Conflict in South