

## INTERNATIONAL TAGORE CONFERENCE Halle (Saale), Germany — August 2–3, 2012

### Vitae oratorum

Dr. **Renata Czekalska** (Poland) works as adiunkt (reader) at the Jagiellonian University, Krakow, Poland. She specialises in South Asian culture, 20th century Hindi literature, the modern history of South Asia, and intercultural communication. Her recent publications include studies on the origins of modern Hindi poetry and a hermeneutic analysis of the main thematic structures in the poetry of Ashok Vajpeyi. She has also published several book-length translations of Hindi poetry into Polish and Polish poetry into Hindi.

Prof. Dr. **Shyama Prasad Ganguly** (India) was formerly professor and chairperson in the Centre of Spanish, Portuguese, Italian and Latin American Studies at Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi. He has authored/edited numerous books including pioneering reception studies on Tagore in the Hispanic world, *El Quijote* in India and bilingual poetry anthologies, published from India, Spain and Latin America, and guided research for many years on contemporary Latin American literature. He has carried out many Indo-Hispanic academic and cultural projects and founded and edited two important Hispanic journals in India (*Hispanic Horizon* and *Hispanistica*), and is on the editorial advisory boards of a number of international journals. He has been in the governing body of the International Association of Hispanists, and has received a number of international honours.

Dr. **Lydia Icke-Schwalbe** (Germany) received the degree of Diplom-Ethnograph from the Humboldt University, Berlin (1963) and a subsequent doctorate from the University of Halle-Wittenberg (1979). Since 1964 she served the Museum of Ethnology (Museum für Völkerkunde) in Dresden, retiring in 2006 as chief curator for South and East Asia. A main focus of her research and activities was and is the eastern regions of South Asia, particularly the social and cultural anthropology of so-called tribal groups including ecoculture. She has curated a number of exhibitions, was guest lecturer at the Department of Anthropology of Ranchi University, and a consultant for the International Committee for Museums of Ethnography. At present she is the president of the Deutsch-Indische Gesellschaft, Dresden, and the Naturwissenschaftliche Gesellschaft Isis (established in 1833).

Dr. **Mirja Juntunen** (Sweden) is lektor (senior lecturer) of South Asian Studies at Stockholm University, Sweden, and adjunkt (reader) of Hindi at Aarhus University, Denmark. She earned her PhD in Indology from Stockholm University and has worked as Director of Nordic Centre in India 2006-2012.

Dr. Dr. **Martin Kämpchen** (Germany), born 1948 in Germany, studied German literature, theatre and philosophy in Vienna (PhD in 1973) and comparative religion at Santiniketan (PhD in 1986). Living in Santiniketan (West Bengal, India) since 1980, he works as a translator, writer and editor. He has translated Sri Ramakrishna and Rabindranath Tagore's poetry from Bengali to German, and Vivekananda from English to German. His academic work includes several publications on Tagore and his relationship with and image in Germany. He is a regular contributor to the German daily *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* and to *The Statesman* in India. He has received the Tagore Literature Prize of the Indo-German Association, the Rabindra Purashkar of the West Bengal government and the Merck Tagore Award.

Prof.Dr. **Klaus Karttunen** (Finland) (born 1951) has been professor of South Asian and Indo-European studies at the University of Helsinki. He has published a number of monographs and articles on the contacts between ancient India and the world of classical antiquity, on the history of Asian studies, and on various aspects of Indology, and translated several classics of Indian literature into Finnish.

Prof.Dr. **Blanka Knotková-Čapková** (Czechia), associate professor in cultural studies, studied Bengali language and literature and Asian cultures. She received her PhD in 2000 with a study on the poetry of Bengali modernism. Currently at the Metropolitan University Prague, where she is the guarantor of the study programme at the Department of Asian Studies, and Charles University, Prague, at the Department of Gender Studies, she specialises in teaching postcolonial studies, gender studies and Indian cultures. Her research specialisations are in the gender analysis of modern Bengali literature and translations of post-Tagore poets. She is the author of three monographs in Czech, and research studies in books and journals in the Czech Republic, India, the Netherlands, Poland, the USA and Slovakia. She has been visiting lecturer in India, Poland and Slovakia.

Prof.Dr. **Ananda Lal** (India) is professor of English and coordinator, Rabindranath Tagore Studies Centre at Jadavpur University, Kolkata. His works include a companion to Indian theatre, the first reference work in any language on that subject, and the first full-length study in English of Tagorean drama. His research-based CDs include one on Tagore's own audio recordings. He has directed twenty theatre productions, including Tagore's *Arūp'ratan* (as a multilingual musical) and *Tapatī*, and worked for such internationally acclaimed successes as Tim Supple's *Midsummer Night's Dream*. He has a 30-year-old portfolio in television and film as an awardwinning scriptwriter, researcher, commentator, narrator and subtitler, and has been interviewed by the BBC, Radio Nederland and UGC-Doordarshan. A Cambridge fellow (1994) and Fulbright fellow (2005), he has lectured widely in the USA, Canada, UK, Continental Europe, Australia and, of course, India.

Prof.Dr. **Bernd-Peter Lange** (Germany), born 1943 in Berlin, studied English and German philology and comparative literature in Berlin, Hamburg and London. He obtained his doctorate with a thesis on Dickens's novels in 1969 at the Free University, Berlin, and from 1970 to 1988 lectured there and at the Technical University, Braunschweig, where he completed his habilitation with a thesis on British enlightenment genre theory in 1978. He held professorships in English literary and cultural studies at the TU Braunschweig (1983-1988), Oldenburg University (1988-1993) and Magdeburg University (1994-2008), where he was dean of the Faculty of Humanities in 2004-2005. From 1996 to 2008 he lectured widely at Indian universities including Santiniketan, and is since 2008 a guest professor at the Institute of English Philology, Wrocław University (Poland). His research and publications encompass the fields of modern English, Irish and Indian English literatures, postcolonial studies, utopian writing and cultural studies.

Dr. **Georg Lechner** (Germany) studied French, English and philosophy in Munich and Paris, receiving his doctorate in 1962 from the Ludwig Maximilian University of Munich. He was the director of many German Cultural Centres (Goethe-Institutes) on three continents and over four decades, and director of programmes at the headquarters in Munich. He is the initiator of the "East-West Encounters", Bombay, co-founder of the Franco-German bilateral network "Interréseaux", commissioner of the German Festival in India 2000-2001, and a member of the board of directors of the Indien-Institut München. He has published on various topics including Germans in Paris, development aid and Friedrich Max Müller; among his films are *Tabla Calcutta* (1967) and *I Point to India* (1973).

Prof. **Swapan Majumdar** (India), born on 9.9.1946 in Calcutta, received his MA degree in comparative literature in 1968. Formerly professor of Indian literature at the Department of Comparative Literature, Jadavpur University, and director of culture and cultural relations and of the Rabindra Bhavana of

Visva-Bharati, Santiniketan, he held several important official culture related posts, among them that of first secretary (culture) and director of the Indian Cultural Centre, Embassy of India, Fiji Islands, and member of the general council of the Sahitya Akademi, New Delhi. At present he is the honorary director of the Eastern Regional Translation Centre, Sahitya Akademi, Calcutta. He is/was the editor of various journals and literary texts. He has authored studies on the Indian dimensions of comparative literature and Bengali theatre, and an authoritative catalogue of Tagore's books, and translated from Hindi, English and German to Bengali and from Bengali to English. He was awarded the Kalidas Nag Memorial Gold Medal for Culture Studies in 1997.

**Klara Gönc Moaçanin**, MA (Croatia) is a senior lecturer at the Department of Indology and Far Eastern Studies of the Faculty of Philosophy, University of Zagreb, Croatia. She works mostly on *nāṭya* and the *Mahābhārata*, and teaches Indian literature, both classical and modern (New Indo-Aryan and Dravidian), and Indian art, history and theatre (also Asian theatre). She is interested in comparative literature. She has published a book in Croatian on the theatrical practice of classical theatre forms (Greece, India, Japan etc.).

Prof. **Prabodh Parikh** (India) is a poet/fiction writer who mostly ends up writing letters to friends in Gujarati/English. He studied philosophy in the USA in the 1970s and retired as a teacher of philosophy in 2005. At present he is in-charge of the International Art, Literature and Culture Faculty, Whistling Woods International, a film school in Mumbai. He is also the director of Katha Centre for Film Studies, which is involved in projects related to film curatorial practice. His lifelong love for jazz (Village Vanguard in New York), beer (pubs everywhere) and sadadosa (tiffin services in the streets of Thiruvananthapuram) takes him to different cities of the world, where he also lectures on contemporary Indian literature, arts and cinema. Gandhi and Tagore continue to engage him, as much as Buddhist monasteries. He has been engaged with Tagore's writings and paintings for more than a decade and has presented papers at conferences in India, Spain, Canada and Australia. His fiction and poetry in Gujarati, and English translations, have been published in book form as well as in several literary journals.

Dr. **Guillermo Rodríguez Martín** (Spain), born in 1970 in Valladolid, obtained a doctorate in philology from the University of Valladolid and, after an MA in literature (1996) from the University of Madras, a PhD from the University of Kerala (2006) with a dissertation on A.K. Ramanujan's Poetic and Aesthetic Theory. He was the co-ordinator for Indian studies at the Centre for Asian Studies of the University of Valladolid from 2000 to 2003, where he continues to teach postgraduate courses. Specialising in Indian writing in English, Indian literary criticism and contemporary culture, with publications in India and Spain, he is advisor and member of numerous cultural institutions in Spain and Europe, board member of the Spain-India Foundation, etc. As promoter of the Casa de la India founded in Valladolid in March 2003 by the government of India, the university and the city council of Valladolid, he has headed this institution from its inception. In April 2012 he received the Friendship Award from the Indian minister of external affairs for promoting Indo-Spanish cultural relations.

Prof. Dr. **Turuvekere Subbanna Satyanath** (India) is a former professor at the Department of Modern Indian Languages and Literary Studies, University of Delhi. He received his Master's degree in Kannada language and literature from Bangalore University, M.Phil. degree in linguistics from the University of Delhi and doctorate in comparative Indian literature from the University of Delhi. His teaching and research areas are comparative Indian literature, translation studies and cultural studies. He has published nearly sixty research papers in English and Kannada in the areas of his interest. He was a visiting scholar at the Universities of Pennsylvania and Georgetown (Guyana), and a visiting professor at Kannada University, Hampi. As a part of the M.Phil. programme in comparative Indian literature, he taught

a course on translation studies in Indian languages, and during the 2010-11 session he, along with his students, worked on a bibliographic study of Tagore's translations in Indian languages.

Keynote speaker Prof.Dr. **Hulkuntemath Shivamurthy Shivaprakash** (Tagore Centre, Indian Embassy Berlin), who holds an MA degree and a doctorate in English from Bangalore University, has written and researched exhaustively on mediaeval Indian literature, particularly in Kannada. He is the author of eight books of poems, nine plays, and two books of criticism in Kannada, and of an English work on traditional theatres. He has also translated Kannada devotional literature into English, and edited an English anthology of Kannada poetry. His poems and plays have been translated into English and various Indian languages. He has been awarded several prestigious prizes and was twice the director of the National Theatre Festival sponsored by the Kerala Sangeeta Nataka Akademi. A professor at and former dean of the School of Arts and Aesthetics of the Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi, he is at present the director of the Tagore Centre, Indian Embassy, Berlin.

Prof.Dr. **Harish Trivedi** (India) is a retired professor of English of the University of Delhi, and was visiting professor at the universities of Chicago and London. He has published extensively, particularly on the nexus between Britain, English literature and India, and postcolonialism and postcolonial literary representations, has also prepared scholarly annotated editions of Hardy's *Tess* and Kipling's *Kim*, and written on Tagore, including on his internationalism. He is the chairperson of the Indian Association for Commonwealth Literature and Language Studies, vice-president of the Comparative Literature Association of India, and one of the six co-ordinators of an international project based in Stockholm for writing a history of world literature.

Dipl.-Päd. **Arabella Unger** (Germany) holds a degree in pedagogy and is a retired teacher. She obtained her certification as a secondary school teacher for history, German and Protestant theology. She is preparing an MA thesis on Albert Schweitzer's concept of veneration for life for her ongoing studies in philosophy (with the focus on bioethics) together with religious studies (with the focus on Indian religions) and Indology, and at the same time working on a dissertation on Tagore's pedagogical concepts for a degree in pedagogics at the University of Tübingen. Her special interests are philosophy, particularly the historical and systematic ethics of living beings in Eastern and Western philosophies, religious studies and pedagogy.

**Christian Weiß**, MA (Germany) was born on August 6, 1959 in Kernen-Stetten (near Stuttgart), Germany. From 1981 until 1989 he studied South Asian history, Indology and German literature at the University of Heidelberg. From 1989 until 2003 he worked for a big German publishing house. In 2003 he founded "Draupadi Verlag", a publishing house focusing on German translations of important works of Indian literature and on academic works on South Asia. To date he has published more than 70 titles, among them five books on Tagore.