The term *globalization* long held a privileged position as a theoretical catchword. Its hegemonic status has crumbled, though; partly because the excitement over changes in the level of investigation—worldwide as opposed to regional and national—has cooled down. Instead, work on details is gaining in prominence. Investigations of idiosyncratic historical developments and of interactions between different social realms in the process of globalization demonstrate the complexity of phenomena in question. Voices have been raised to denounce theoretical generalizations about a multitude of historically contingent cases. At the same time, the discussion has moved from a focus on economic and technological detail to culturally specific potentials of transnationalization or transregionalization. Since globalization has become an accepted phenomenon, many crucial questions now concern the area of global cultures. Globalization necessitates communication with unfamiliar partners. Different cultures provide different symbolic orders as groundwork for communication and action. In such a scenario, values and communication rules from within a single national culture will not always be adequate tools. The switch to another cultural memory or the negotiation of new cultural memories for communication groups beyond the paradigm of the nation establish global cultures in the sense of new symbolic orders, new arenas for communication. Individual capacities for such moves depend to a significant degree on cultural skills acquired in a national or regional culture. Different cultures have differing capacities for putting their own heritage at risk.

At this stage, it makes more sense than ever to investigate the capabilities of proponents of individual national cultures to transcend fixations on national heritage and move on to globalized scenarios of interaction. While such studies would be helpful with respect to countries all over the globe, my own expertise demands that I limit my study to Germany, a Western country and former colonial power. Germany is generally viewed as a *Kult nation*, its *Sonderweg* and the experience of the Third Reich further contribute to cultural seclusion and illusory self-
sufficiency in an increasingly global world. Even today the difficulties that significant parts of the population, its politicians and intellectuals have in coming to terms with the realities of a multicultural immigrant society and accepting the challenge of identity formation in globalized, multicultural settings are fairly apparent.

A cultural self-centeredness and an actual lack of “globalized biographies” may well be impairing the ability of many Germans to act competently in culturally mixed environments. But the situation of contact still deserves more attention than it receives. Conservatives tend to brush off failures in non-European contexts and instead refer to rich histories of cultural transfer within Europe or with the United States. On the other hand, many cultural critics like to dismiss even the most serious and well-intentioned attempts at interacting with other cultures as orientalist, imperialist, even racist. They move on to reformist movements—migrant literature, literature by international postcolonial star authors—and leave many things unsaid about the genesis, workings and failures of experiential modes in the old German tradition, culturally hegemonic as it may be.

In order to focus on the clash between limited German negotiation skills and increasingly demanding global constellations, my study takes a look at German travel writing about India in the twentieth century. One key assumption is that interchange with non-European regions is different from multilateral negotiations within the confines of Europe. Lack of experience, lack of knowledge and lack of willingness to make cross-cultural communications a priority all reinforce outdated modes of behavior and communication. In the case of India, Germans have for centuries inventively promoted images that are meagerly substantiated by travel and experience. This tradition runs through from the Middle Ages to the Romantics’ utopia of India as a land of poetry and paradisical bliss to CDU candidate Jürgen Rüttger’s infamous slogan “Kinder statt Inder” (children instead of Indians) in the 2000 state-election campaign in North-Rhine-Westphalia. At the same time, more pragmatic views as well as criticism of prevalent practice have always been integral parts of German culture, even if most well-intentioned efforts had tremendous difficulty in dissociating themselves from ruling doctrine. The second key assumption deserves a closer look. It states that actions, experiences and writing strategies as demonstrated by travel literature are more intricate than postcolonial critics think, e.g. poetologically motivated or part of productive interchange.

A Case for Literature
The coming-to-grips with India in experience and writing is as much a test run as it is a valuable exercise for German negotiation skills. An
impressive body of travel literature attests to this. Unfortunately, this whole corpus of work is routinely discredited as mass literature or as simply an instrument of dominant racist, orientalist or imperialist ideology. While it is certainly important to address all travel writing as literature—the travel experience is not available as such, its representation is informed by certain symbolic orders and therefore in need of interpretation—its reduction to ideological messages is counterproductive.

This objection actually extends to much of postcolonial literary criticism. Representations of the Third World in German literature have often come under attack as fabrications with a strong colonialist bias. To be sure, many individual texts and authors have been engaged in orientalist and imperialist discourses. And more often than not the critiques are telling. Much of the literature in question is marred by a dismaying lack of sensitivity and reflection. As Susanne Zantop once remarked, the postcolonial writer is not merely the writer who makes literature after the globe has been decolonized on a political scale. To qualify as truly postcolonial, he should above all be able to reflect and critique his own position. Instead of acknowledging, let alone integrating the “Other’s” voice and viewpoints, Western literature still tends to shy away from dialogue. Instead, it engages in representational patterns that shrink the Other to the stature of an object. It is postcolonial literary criticism’s key issue to expose certain standardized mechanisms of dealing with the Other. These mechanisms include: projection, the other as evil alter ego or paradisical utopian space; distancing in time, the Third-World subject is relegated to an earlier (primitive/innocent) cultural stage of development, lacking the deeper insights of European intellectuals; and the detached modern tourist gaze, accompanied by the very practical desire to view things from a privileged position: from up above or from the safe distance of the train compartment or the automobile seat.

While the achievements of postcolonial studies as a whole are quite remarkable, it has become more and more apparent that the criticism produced by no means exhausts the literature in question. It has always tended to reduce literature to an instrument in political struggles. The writer is habitually measured against the ideal of political activism she does not necessarily aspire to nor is obliged to strive for. The writer of fiction as social and cultural critic, as a privileged force in the reengineering of political processes having gone seriously awry a long time ago—this is itself an overcharged vision of authors amid the decentering modern and postmodern force fields of the twentieth century. While moral obligations and cultural responsibilities may indeed exist, it should not come as a surprise if authors do not meet them. After all, their field of reference is determined by relatively homogenous traditions, based on native language, canonized literature and a clear-cut set of notions about
issues such as representation, realism, the role of the author, the role of writing and so on. Before they can remodel the real world, they first have to remodel their own literary cosmos. And in this effort they are up against a vastly intricate web of constraints. Therefore, it is not impossible that what can be viewed from a critical distance as ideological failure may on closer observation still be a powerful attempt at rearranging common European or German frameworks of verbal expression, however much likely to misrepresent an Other.

Another argument concerning the same point hinges upon the distinction between theory and practice or between conceptualizing and acting out. The theory of theory (the theory of science) claims that theories should be precise, unambiguous, and economical. The practice of theory may well be different, but no doubt the driving force of the activity always aims at the clearest possible construction of distinctions and lines of argumentation. Playfulness, compromise, difference may be achievable in the act, but there is no way of denying that the bulk of theoretical work engages in the construction of dichotomies and linear reasoning. A generalizing and abstracting activity, be it essentialist or merely designed for heuristic purposes, sets up dichotomies and inevitably misses the complexity of the living. Clifford Geertz instead argued in favor of “thick description”; more recently Anil Bhatti has claimed that human interaction across historically established barriers should be based on the acknowledgement of the Other rather than on acts of understanding. In both cases strong conceptualizations and deductive reasoning are dismissed in favor of complex yet somewhat humble cognitive activities lacking closure. In so far as postcolonial theorizing involves both a political edge and strong guiding dichotomies—at the core we find empirical substrata such as physical suffering or differences in material living conditions—it necessarily and willingly ends up with a strongly conceptualized picture of the world, indeed so strongly conceptualized that at times it loses sight of most potentials of the current situation for future development.

Unqualified dedication to a political cause does not, however, raise the predictive power or the explanatory adequacy of a line of thinking. Especially literature is not limited to political activism, and in taking on an entire web of references and contexts, its sensitivity reaches beyond the polarizations that theoretical and political work delivers. In putting the focus of interpretation on literary questions of representation and aesthetics, the relation of the individual text to issues of postcolonization and globalization will be much more differentiated. Immediate preoccupations and cultural ignorance do not become more tolerable, yet their predominance, their endurance and possible alternatives will be traced more thoroughly as contingent upon a complexity of traditions. While
rebellion seems possible, it still takes a genius to master and overcome the intricate legacies of the past. This is often more than can be expected.

The Corpus

The Deutsche Bibliographie (DB) gives an idea of the wealth of material published on India as a subject matter throughout the twentieth century. The subheadings under the category Indien changed significantly over the years, and the Deutsche Bibliographie did not always distinguish thoroughly between travel accounts proper, fictionalized accounts and fiction. It does not spare the scholar an autopsy of the available material. Still, the bibliography gives valuable insights into the proportions of the reception of India on the book market. This is not the place to elaborate on book production in general, but I do wish to point out a few tendencies indicated by the listings.

Roughly speaking, the eight five-year periods from 1911 to 1950 averaged about 110 entries for Indien each, including new editions of popular books such as Waldemar Bonsels’s Indienfahrt (first edition 1916, the 1930 printing brought the number of copies in print to 350,000), Hermann Graf von Keyserling’s Reisetagebuch eines Philosophen (1919, 3rd ed. 1920), Hermann Hesse’s Aus Indien (1913), Ernst Haeckel’s Indische Reisebriefe (1882, 6th ed. 1922), or Sir John Retcliffe’s (alias Hermann Goedsche) Nena Sahib (1858). After 1950, the number of entries gradually rose from approximately 230 for 1951–1955 to approximately 450 for 1981–1985. The postwar period saw a particularly sharp increase in highly specialized scholarly work (e.g. sociology, geology, literary studies) and travel guides (eight entries for 1981–85, ten entries for 1986–90). Such information-centered texts relegated individualized narratives and adventurous tales for younger readers (reifere Jugend) to the lesser ranks. The corpus is no doubt varied, ranging from art history, philosophy and religion to anthropologies of Indian literature in translation (individual authors in translation are not listed under Indien) and German literature with Indian subjects to anthropological, political and economic studies.

The absolute number of travel accounts and fictionalized reworkings of travel experiences may amount to somewhere between one and two hundred. Some trends become immediately apparent. Early on the travel activities tended to be related to professional interests and were in this sense spin-offs from missionary work, trade relations or politically motivated visits. The journey of the Kronprinz Wilhelm of the German Empire and Prussia in 1910-11 was the topic of at least six independent publications. Emil G. Pick’s Reisebriefe eines österreichischen Industriellen aus Abessinien, Indien und Ostasien from 1909 highlighted an industrialist’s impressions. Later, the Hagenbeck preserve in Ceylon (John Hagenbeck,
Unter der Sonne Indiens, (1926), mainly based on animal trade, attracted wild life experts as well as naturalists, mountaineers and other guests. Examples are Hermann Wiele (Für Hagenbeck im Himalaja und den Urwäldern Indiens: Dreißig Jahre Forscher und Jäger, 1925), Oscar Kauffmann (Aus Indiens Dschungeln, 1924), but also the traveling painter Oswald Malura (Als Maler durch Indien: Eine nicht alltägliche Trampfahrt, 1949). Occasional glimpses at the life of Christian missions were given (e.g. Luise Albrecht, Eine Frau erlebt Indien, 1938), but with respect to spirituality, the main thrust strongly gravitated towards non-Western experiences of the self and of religion, ranging from an interest in theosophy to hippie culture to New Age (Christiane Rucker, Unterwegs nach Indien: Meine Reise zur inneren Harmonie, 2000). When indologists traveled, their accounts tended to downplay the personal element. Richard Garbe, Indische Reiseskizzen (1889, 2nd ed. 1925), Paul Deussen, Erinnerungen an Indien (1904), Helmut von Glasenapp, Die indische Welt als Erscheinung und Erlebnis (1948), Dietmar Rothermund, Šmal Indien (1979), Annemarie Schimmel, Berge, Wüsten, Heiligtümer: Meine Reisen in Pakistan und Indien (1994) are some examples over time.

On the whole, professional pursuits gradually receded as a motivational factor for journeys to India. Traveling gained importance as an activity in itself. Individuals traveled to fulfill their dreams and later wrote about it. World travelers and correspondents emerged as a new class of specialists commissioned to travel and document their insights in writing. Names such as Sven Hedin, Alma Karlin (both widely read in translation), Richard Katz, Colin Roß, Arthur Holitscher, Egon Erwin Kisch, or Gisela Bonn come to mind. Later, in the late 60s, the two impulses merged when globetrotters made it a point to finance their favorite pastime by writing about it. Travel guides became popular,17 and accounts of Indian experiences that were obviously subjectively colored had chances of survival in only two niches. They either related to extreme experiences of globetrotters and mountaineers, for example in the Himalayas, or they were written by novelists. The latter had regular access to India mainly on the basis of institutionalized international cultural relations. Particularly the Goethe Institute (in India named Max Mueller Bhavan) regularly invited German authors and organized reading tours. Among others, Günter Grass and Ingeborg Drewitz benefited from the Max Mueller-lecture circuit.

Apart from such trends and patterns, a few long-time residents of India who published their impressions in German are noteworthy. They were actually exposed to everyday Indian culture, and occasionally added unusual perspectives: J.A. Sauter, Mein Indien: Erinnerungen aus 15 glücklichen Jahren (1921/22); Otto Mayer, Zwanzig Jahre an indischen Für-
Obviously, a lot of research has to go into the closer analysis of individual cases. Very little work has been done even on prominent authors. Authors of the second rank are regularly mentioned but do not seem to merit closer attention (Hanns Heinz Ewers, Waldemar Bonsels, Rudolf Kassner, Bernhard Kellermann, Marie von Bunsen, to name a few prewar names). Particularly literature from the 70s onwards may even be lost over time. Much of the material was published only in paperback, and it seems that neither libraries nor private collectors have made a point of preserving it.

Methodology and Case Studies
It is not my goal to write a general introduction to German travel writing on India. Instead, I want to look at patterns and skills of negotiating global cultures. Travel writing from India shows what kinds of people took the risk of exposing themselves to a strange culture, which traditional images and ideas had a strong hold on the imagination of the individual, and when and why dominant discourse was subverted or crumbled. The central aspect of cultural negotiation is foregrounded, and a multitude of different perspectives, time and again coinciding in the treatment of certain key issues, ensures differentiated, yet coherent results.

My study is designed to elaborate on cultural and sociological, not so much on political, economic or technological developments. It sets out to analyze differing capacities and capabilities in cultural negotiation, contingent upon dominant intertexts, shifts in the makeup and habitus of the traveling elite, unsettling travel experiences or ambitious philosophical and poetological programs. The findings are not necessarily representative of German society. The individuals involved cover a broad spectrum of German society, and yet their travels, aspirations and problems are conceivably “exotic” for much of the German population. Those who travel to India and do not write, those who write but do not publish, and indeed those who do not publish nor write nor even travel are left out of the picture. Nevertheless, travel literature in both its crude and more sophisticated versions is deeply anchored in German culture. Social restrictions, cultural backgrounds and intertextual constraints pre-structure the make-up of the group of travelers just as much as the available set of preconceptions and writing strategies. But in contrast to the situation at home, the traveler-writer’s expectations inevitably enter into some sort of dialectics with an experience of India that cannot possibly meet them all. Sickness, failure of the means of transportation and other factors may cause irritation. Duties such as writing, to be performed in a
hostile climate, may undermine an uncritical complacency just as much as obligations to contact certain people, to go to certain places, or to provide certain pieces of information or even photographs to a third party involved. Regardless of whether the writer involved tries obstinately to stick to his agenda or whether he tries to find new ways of understanding and representation, it is always crucial to identify such breaks and fissures in the travel routine. The moments of physical breakdown, of unhappiness and uncertainty, but also the bold gesture of introducing new techniques of observation or representation and disparities between argumentation and metaphors all point to unresolved problems at the core of the experience abroad or its representation. Many times, such problems are not thoroughly worked through on the part of the author for lack of willingness or reflective power. It is all the more important to locate them and treat them as experimental innovations or crucial shortcomings in the process of establishing global cultures.

After a close look at numerous travel writings encompassing the spectrum of different approaches, professions and decades, certain recurring patterns stand out. It becomes possible to assemble a number of case studies each of which should discuss a critical issue. Some of the issues are more obvious than others, but each of them is central to at least three books on Indian travels and pertinent with many others. Each case study will start out with the close reading of an individual text and then contextualize the findings with reference to the corpus as well as to cultural and historical developments.

a) The Human Body
Already Hermann von Keyserling had noted that Ceylon’s climate changes a traveler’s character. It seems clear that the human body as a receptacle of culturally coded behavior is compromised in an environment where its usual functioning is no longer guaranteed. The body’s vulnerability forces different routines upon the traveler and brings him culturally off balance.

b) Socializing and Western Contexts
Cultural demarcations are enforced, maybe even defined, by the erection of in- and out-groups. The club culture of the British was at some point copied by the Germans, but certain experiences, such as unexpected friendships with Indians, loneliness in British hotels, professional contacts with Indians as painters, photographers or merchants, also pointed in another direction.

c) Communication Techniques
In the nineteenth century, Germans were often known to have a command of the Sanscrit language. This was not a living language, but the
The widespread fascination with Indology still enabled many Germans to communicate if crudely with native Indians. How the knowledge was used, and particularly how the ability to communicate in Sanskrit was supplemented by later generations deserves attention. Generally, very few dialogues appear in the travel writings. Journalists with their high interest in interview situations are a notable exception to this rule.

d) Itineraries and Intertexts
The most common travel routes to and in India have changed over time. While it would certainly be an overstatement to call the developments dramatic, they had specific causes and certain impacts on travel experiences.

f) Pictures
Illustrations are almost a defining characteristic of German travel writing from India. Many authors took pictures with handheld cameras and included them in their books, some even painted on the subcontinent. The implicit or explicit assumption always is that pictorial representation can represent Indian reality more adequately than any written account. The dialectics between writing and pictures deserve close attention, both in the process of coping with experiences in India and from the point of view of the aesthetics of reception as a feature of the finished book.

g) The Romantic Tradition
Romantic images linger over many of the travelogues. Some of them are clearly generic, but others function as references to specific canonized texts. The rejuvenation of Eichendorff’s *Aus dem Leben eines Taugenichts* and others has some curious and funny aspects.

h) Information and Pragmatism
The expectations of the reading public have changed significantly over the years. Instead of the exotic tales prevalent until World War II, many readers now demand guidebooks for travelers, how-to-books for professionals abroad or nonfiction on politics and the economy. This shift in interest has also impacted the general approach travel writers adopt in view of their material.

Notes
2 Among others, sociologists have moved towards culturally informed interpretations of globalization issues. See Roland Robertson, *Globalization: Social Theory and Global Culture,*


5 The notion is of course a contested matter (see Hans Magnus Enzensberger, “Europäische Peripherie,” in Kursbuch 2, 1965, 154–173). “Former European colonies” or “current extra-European cultures” may also establish the intended reference, while “developing countries” is surely burdened with unfavorable connotations.

6 Texts written by Anna Seghers, Elias Canetti, Günter Grass come to mind, furthermore Hans Magnus Enzensberger, Peter Weiss, Uwe Timm, Hans Christoph Buch, or Dieter Kühn. Postcolonial criticism of the texts in question has primarily originated in the USA. I name only two important publications: Arlene A. Teraoka, East, West, and Others: The Third World in Postwar German Literature, Lincoln, London 1996; Sara Friedrichsmeyer, Sara Lennox, Susanne Zantop, eds., The Imperialist Imagination: German Colonialism and its Legacy, Ann Arbor 1998.


11 See fn. 1.

12 Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak wishes to “insert” the subaltern as “the being on the other side of difference” into “the long road to hegemony.” “This is absolutely to be desired,” she adds, willing to take risks in an enterprise of social engineering the single-mindedness of which cannot be a measure for literature (G. Spivak, A Critique of Postcolonial Reason: Toward a History of the Vanishing Present, Cambridge, Mass. 1999, 310).


14 For my purposes, estimates are sufficient.

15 This is no more than an educated guess. At this point no comprehensive overview is available, and to my knowledge nobody has a firm grasp of the relevant material. The most detailed accounts of German-Indian cultural encounters are still little more than unsystematic collections of material. See Walter Leifer, Indien und die Deutschen: 500 Jahre Begegnung und Partnerschaft, Tübingen, Basel 1969; Veena Kade-Luthra, ed., Sehnsucht nach Indien: Ein Lesebuch von Goethe bis Grass, München 1993; Martin Kämpchen, ed., ‘Von der Freiheit der Phantasie . . .’. Indien in der deutschsprachigen Literatur 1900–1999, die horen 196, Bremerhaven 1999.
The journey even licensed a special subcategory in the Deutsche Biographie for 1911–14 (see fn 13), where the six items are listed.

The travel guide is of course a phenomenon originating already in the nineteenth century. But the first Baedeker for India was written no earlier than in 1914, and a significant rise in the number of Indian travel guides occurred only a long time after World War II.

As Manfred Pfister has pointed out, certain intertexts such as books on the subject, standard behavioral patterns and current clichés may prestructure an encounter quite comprehensively. More specifically, some factors in question are: fictions on India (the Romantics, Kipling, Tagore etc.), scholarly work on India, the itineraries, which often follow certain well-trodden paths, and the roles a traveler chooses to play or has to play (in India as a woman, as an emigrant, as a painter, as a moutaineer, as a biker, as a journalist, as a prince). All of these components may guide the traveler to the point where she merely repeats what others have made of the subject before. (Manfred Pfister, “Intertextuelles Reisen, oder: Der Reisebericht als Intertext”, in: Herbert Foltinek, Wolfgang Riehl, Walde-mar Zacharasiewicz, eds., Tales and their telling differences: Zur Theorie und Geschichte der Narrativik, Heidelberg 1993, 109–132).