

Werner Brandhuber



Magical *India*

or When I Almost
Pulled Down
Sri Krishna's Pants

novum



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DEDICATION

I can dedicate this little book to only one person:

My Gurudev Vishwaguru Sarvbhoum Jagatguru Paraans
Swami Maheshwarananda Puriji Maharaj.

This incarnation of divine light, born in India into a holy family, is one of the great wisdom teachers of our time and an incredibly powerful yogi. He has guided my life, removed obstacles, and paved the way so that, all in all, it has been a happy and successful one, and He will certainly—when the time comes—open for me that door which, according to the scriptures, can only be opened from within, and which He has opened for millions of souls before me during many incarnations as a yogavatar: the door to Sat, Chit, and Anand, the door to eternal being, infinite consciousness, and infinite bliss. I bow at your lotus feet, Vishwaguruji!

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

From the bottom of my heart, I thank my parents, who sadly passed away too soon, for enabling me to grow up free and protected and to develop according to my abilities. My mother's infinite love and my father's sensible and quiet nature – and in later years, the memory of them – carried me through the ups and downs of life. Thank you, Mom and Dad!

I would also like to take this opportunity to thank my four children. Why? I will answer with a bon mot: "It is already a miracle that adults make children, but the greater miracle is that children make adults." Thank you, Marilyn, Daliah, Govinda, and Maximilian.

And, of course, the two women of my partnership life and the mothers of my children also deserve a big thank you! Thank you for the happy times! I will always love you. Love is eternal, but partnerships are not. "There is a crack, a crack in everything. That's how the light gets in." (Leonard Cohen)

INDIA - FROM AGRICULTURAL COUNTRY TO INDUSTRIAL NATION

When I first traveled to India in 1977 as a 20-year-old man, India was a different country than it is today. Rural India was shrinking at a rapid pace and industrialized India was growing. What we call "progress." For example, the number of telephones rose from less than a million landlines to more than a billion mobile phones. At that time, there were two different types of cars on India's roads: the posh Ambassador (a 1956 Morris Oxford replica) and the Premier Padmini, a Fiat 1100. In my memory, and certainly in the memory of many Indians my age, the Ambassador is still the best car in the world. Far behind in second place is perhaps a Rolls-Royce. The older we get, the better we were. This amusing saying also applies to our cars. Now, at the end of 2019, as I write these lines, almost every well-known car manufacturer is represented in India with its products, and many have factories here. Where there used to be dirt roads, there are now roads, and where there were roads, there are highways. Where there used to be highways... oops: there wasn't a single highway in India back then. Now, in 2019, there are several thousand kilometers of four- and six-lane highways. Every now and then, you come across a tractor driving the wrong way because a farmer wants to take a shortcut from the field to his farm. However, such dangerous recklessness only baffles us Westerners. Indians say, "Chalta hai," it'll be fine. We Austrians sometimes seem to me to have an Indian streak, but we are a little more realistic and say in similar situations, "What can go wrong."

I am editing my little book, which I wrote a few years ago, in the small Indian town of Vrindavan, in a nice, modern room, and at ten o'clock in the evening I can write by the light of electric lamps, because all Indian cities are now electrified (as are the vast majority of villages). Electricity generation and annual consumption have risen from 150 TWh/year at that time to well over 3000 TWh/year, while gasoline and diesel consumption has increased more than tenfold during this period. In northern India in particular, the roads are constantly congested, and southern Indians humorously say that other countries build roads first and then cars, whereas in northern India it is the other way around. And when I want to research figures or statistics, I have fast 4G mobile internet 24 hours a day. Attentive readers will not have failed to notice that this has certainly benefited the preceding lines, which were researched on the internet.

As it happens, the pride and egos of many Indians have grown along with the number, size, and price of the cars they drive. Nevertheless, humility and modesty are still widespread wise traits here in India, which spread a pleasant atmosphere throughout the country.

A lot has changed in Europe since 1977, too. Let's think back to our cars. You used to see lots of Volkswagen Beetles on the roads, and some of my student friends drove the cult car 2CV (also known as the monkey swing because of its soft suspension). I haven't seen a 2CV on the road for years. My first car was a Renault 4, also a monkey swing. But I loved it. Slowly, Japanese cars began to appear on the streets, and my parents bought a Mazda after owning a Peugeot. Without the internet and mobile phones, everyday life was different, for better or worse, depending on how you look at it. Being permanently available certainly has its advantages. However, a walk across a green meadow is certainly more relaxing without a cell phone.

Unlike Europe, which was largely destroyed after World War II but already had around 200 years of industrial

development behind it, India did not start from zero when it gained independence from colonial rule in 1947, but from minus one hundred. For example, 88 percent of Indians were illiterate when the British had to leave, back when Jawaharlal Nehru, the first prime minister of the vast country, spoke the now classic powerful words in parliament: "At the stroke of midnight, when the world sleeps, India awakens to a new life."

TERRIBLE COLONIAL ERA

Let's take a brief look back. In 1947, the population of South Asia was severely traumatized as a whole. Several famines during British rule, which in some regions wiped out about a quarter of the population within a few years, broke the psychosocial backbone of society, so to speak (Europe experienced such man-made famine only once, during the religious wars, and it took 30 years, from 1618 to 1648, to almost halve the population of Europe). Taxes were extorted from the population with brutal force, first by the East India Company and then by the British Crown. After uprisings, the British often massacred the entire male population of entire cities. Even old men were slaughtered. This happened in Delhi in 1857 after the unsuccessful first war of liberation, when all men aged 16 and over were murdered in a massacre that lasted several days. Or the famous Jallianwala Bagh massacre in Amritsar. It only became so famous because, exceptionally, the international media reported on it. Hundreds of peaceful demonstrators died in this massacre in a park. The commanding general later said: "I think it is quite possible that I could have dispersed the crowd without firing. They would probably have returned and laughed at me." The general did not want to be laughed at, so he ordered fifty rifles to fire into a densely packed crowd. These are just two examples. The era of colonialism, when we Europeans wreaked havoc throughout the world and deliberately sought to destroy other cultures, is still far from being coming to terms with here in the West. Most of the atrocities committed have never been discussed honestly and publicly. For India, these were the most bitter years in her thousands of years of civilization.