“Akademischer Nachwuchs” – Reflections of a veteran on a strange concept

First I would like to thank the organizers of this Symposium for their kind invitation. However, I cannot equally admire their wisdom in chosing me as a keynote speaker. I must admit that this is my first keynote speech, so I have much more reason than you to feel nervous. The more so, since I fear that this lecture cannot satisfy the definition of a keynote speech as »the most important speech given at a large meeting«. You are obviously contributing to serious research here, and my talk is not even about research. As you will see shortly, my idea for this lecture was to give you my veteran perspective on being a junior academic, in the hope that this might be an appropriate topic, and one that connects historical observations and modern issues. If it is, perhaps in a complicated way, encouraging, then I would regard this as successful.

»Akademischer Nachwuchs«

Let me start with some basics and explain that my own experience as a student is limited to the UK for a couple of years and Germany for many more years. But I have since seen many institutes and encountered a few academic traditions and cultures and so I hope that the following reflections, although based on the situation in Germany, may have wider implications in one or the other respect.

In Germany the term for junior academics is “Akademischer Nachwuchs”, which literally would mean academic offspring. As often with faded metaphors, we are not usually aware of or reflect on their implications. In Germany the term academic offspring evokes the image of the head of an institute as a fatherly figure. Complementary to this terminology the doctoral supervisor is called Doktorvater

– the father of the doctor to be. This word and the concept has even survived the recent reflections on gender and language, so now even the term Doktormutter is used.

For understanding the context one has to know something about the organisational structure of German universities, which are based on what is often called an institute, although many other names are in use in different locations. What I mean is the organisational core structure of a small academic subject, as Indology, with a minimum of one professor and one assistant. Qualifications of these assistants may vary, they may be doctoral students, postgraduates or Privatdozenten, an old term for the status of someone eligible for a professorship. There used to be versions of these posts that were permanent, occupied by the highly qualified to wait for a professorship, but since the last reforms, these posts have a maximum duration that is not dependent on the post, but only on the holder of the post, who cannot be employed for longer than 6 years as a postdoc.

In an institute you may find one or more professors and assistants, lecturers, students employed for a few semesters, as well as assistants working in research projects. The idea behind this structure is that the institute functions with the main professor as the head, who is responsible for every detail. It depends on the individual constellations whether this is played out in a strict hierarchy. For instance, no assistant can go to a conference, except in his or her free time, without consent of the head of the institute, and getting funds for travelling to this conference one again needs a signature of the head of the institute. You can imagine that this allows for a wide range of relationships between head and employees, we could say from support to control.

But hierarchy does not end there. There can also be a professoral hierarchy in institutes with more than one professor, with the result that in some more conservative universities the main professor decides everything, the others next to nothing. Actual practice depends of course on individual constellations, again ranging from the amicable institute climate to the unfortunately wide-spread long-standing conflict among the professors of one institute.

The system works on the assumption that someone eligible for a professorship, that is someone having completed his Habilitation, and claiming the status of a so-called Privatdozent, will get a permanent job soon and – excuse the polemics – that it is not crucial whether he or she receives an income up to then. This is perhaps one of the few instances in Germany, where no union and no court has ever intervened against – let me put it bluntly – compulsory unpayed labour. For the

Privatdozent is required for the continuance of his status to teach in the university, but for free. The term derives from Latin privatim, which used to mean "private" lectures by professors, that is to lecture without fee. In the early nineteenth century Peter von Bohlen, whom Indologists know as the editor of the *Bhartṛhariśataka*, wrote polemically in his autobiography that no one knows how the Privatdozent survives. They had to live like unsuccessful artists, always in need of some other income. One might assume in modern times social laws, a completely different system of contracts in the university, and other political and social developments would since have made a difference. But some fundamentals of the system remain the same.

Almost two decades ago the German government made the situation much worse by getting rid of all permanent posts below the professor. When I was a postdoc, the central government also raised the hurdles for employment by introducing a lower maximum age for being employed as a professor, and also rigorously enforced the rule that six years after Ph.D. one would be unemployable in Germany. In the same series of drastic reforms salaries of both professors and assistants were cut. The aim of this policy was publicly termed the scrapping of a generation, »Verschrottung einer Generation«, which implied that nobody would care that a whole generation of scholars would stand no chance to get a job in Germany. This was a time, when virtually all German postdocs applied abroad. When a few years later even the press that had been applauding the reforms realized that some reforms had been a nightmare for academics, they changed their position and wrote on the severe side-effects. Of course the government started a new initiative to reinvite scholars that had fled (the phenomenon was called »brain drain«), and of course declared it a success. Meanwhile many had forgotten what had caused the exodus in the first place.

The effects of this time on those concerned is today difficult to retrieve, since its facts are drowned in a sea, or perhaps better a swamp, of permanent reforms. German universities as a rule modernize all the time and believe that this defines progress. But in fact, as we all know from our study of Indian texts, time also enfolds in cycles. It is now after four reform cycles, for instance, that we will have a new B.A. in Indology, in other words, we are slowly returning to the old system that was tested and that we should have never given up. But at the time resistance could have costed you a job, so most people did not even try to protest.

But still I think there is too much readiness in universities to accept nonsensical reforms. Let me just give you one instance. In Germany modernization means

internationalisation, and I guess it is because of the post-war history of (Western) Germany, modern always means US American. The latest absurdity in my university is the institution of *tenure track commissions*, this is not a translation, the English term is actually used in German. A *tenure track commission* makes sense, when you have tenure posts, but we have hardly any in our university, and none in our faculty, where we now have a commission of that name. The commission in fact decides about a renewal of contracts with a maximum duration of two years, after which the person has reached his or her six years and is no more employable in a non-permanent university position. In other words, we are talking about the very opposite of tenure track. For those concerned this is simply adding insult to injury. The assistants were rightly annoyed, but it seems no one else noticed the absurdity. But using wrong English terminology is the core of our strategy of modernisation.

Some of this may not apply to other academic cultures, which are in fact quite different around the globe. In some countries universities have no institutes in the German sense, people come to the university to teach, but they have no real office, so that there is no locus for the German-type institute structure.

And with this I want to return from politics to the institute structure and especially the relations between professors and assistants. Despite all the necessary criticism I do not want to sound too negative. In fact, I have more often than not enjoyed the atmosphere of daily work in quite a few Indological institutes. Where else will you find people to talk about your outlandish research projects. The institute family can be pleasant, even cosy, and a sustaining team experience. In many cases it entails a most valuable support given by the head of the institute to the younger generation, something that is often beneficial to one's motivation, self-esteem, and also to one's career.

But as the image of the family can suggest, this system can also mean that the academic offspring is under total control of the *pater familias*, and that loyalty is what is demanded and what matters. Working in such an environment can be a terrible experience, and it has ended careers.

This close structure has another public expression, and that is an academic group mentality, a tendency to think in academical schools. In the Oxbridge system a lot of emphasis is placed on the college as the real home and formative force for the student. There is no counterpart of this in Germany, but we tend to have a strong concept of what it means to be a student of Prof. X. Students were often not exposed to different influences and so one assumed that the being a student of

X more or less defined one's academic field, method and mentality.

As the anthropologist would expect there are academic rituals reinforcing the group identity. One that many scholars are very happy to undergo is organizing or taking part in felicitation volumes, a practice extremely wide-spread in Germany, and by the way, also in India. The group identity is a strange animal, it rears its head in fights about succession, appointments, and it may express itself in surrogate wars. Let us assume our Prof. X is in academic, and perhaps personal conflict with Prof. Y. What we almost automatically expect is that this is also a conflict of schools and that other members of group X may fight members of group Y. I shall give a historical example for this below, those with some experience may know current ones.

One might think that such nonsense can be safely ignored, and that the wise thing is to become the Advaita Vedāntic kūṭastha sākṣi, the unconcerned witness. I agree, but from an academic and historic position the history of a subject simply cannot be explained without understanding such personal conflicts. I shall now give a few examples from history.

There is a common notion that academical newbies should not be too brisk in their criticism, especially of those professors whose support they might need later. An example would be the well-documented case of Friedrich Suhtscheck, an Austrian scholar of German Studies who wanted to prove in the 1930s that the Parzival legend was based on Persian sources. In the course of his research he met with considerable resistance – as is not uncommon in academic circles –, but also with encouragment. The whole matter was discussed in the press, which presumably boosted his confidence. In his writings he managed to insult many colleagues from varying fields of studies and even ignored constructive criticism of specialists in fields he did not fully comprehend. Even the widow of the Indologist Karl Friedrich Geldner in Marburg had tried to moderate and wrote to him:[1]

> Permit me to give you some motherly advice. Refrain a little from too graphic expressions and accept scholars with other opinions, even if you can prove them wrong. I have a long experience in learned circles (I am a ward[2] of Albrecht Weber) and know, how easy it is for too impetous gentlemen to block their own path.

1 Translations from German sources are mine.

2 Geldner as is well-known married the ward (German: Mündel) of his teacher.

Naturally these warnings did not have an effect. And thus it took half a century until at least some of Suhtschecks findings, some of which had found approval by specialists much earlier, found their place in academic history.

But the dilemma whether one should be wise and hold one's tongue applies not only to cases of younger academics with anger management issues. Even the most gentle postdoc or Privatdozent will at some point, that is after many years in the trade, fail to understand why he or she should still hold back.

Before introducing a few more cases, I wanted to mention that there is the notion that Indologists are easily irritated and like to quarrel about trifles, as a publisher once wrote about the conflict between Max Müller and Otto Böhtlingk. In fact the practice at least in German Indology goes back to literary polemic exchanges between the German romantics and their classical counterparts. In particular, the literary scandal around the so-called Xenien, a collection of polemic verses written by Goethe and Schiller against the Schlegel brothers, must have influenced August Wilhelm Schlegel who adopted a similar style of exchange later when he was one of the first Indologists. He even extended the genre of polemical verses written against other academics into Sanskrit verse. Schlegel sometimes talks of an academic martial law, which apparently means that despite the highly polemic quality of one's writings, one must retain a certain fairness and refrain from personal insults. And it is clear that he adhered to this rule, even when some of his adversaries, as Heinrich Heine, did not.

But the idea of an academic martial law is not so far fetched, as the next example, this time from German studies, shows. Here one Privatdozent of German Studies by the name of Eugen Wolff, in 1892 got into a fight with the Professor Eugen Burdach about what would later become the dichotomy between Literaturwissenschaft and Literaturgeschichte. It was a conflict between methods, but also one between a young scholar without a secure position, a Privatdozent, against one of the established big guns. This scandal has resulted in a very amusing resumé, which I cannot adequately translate. It describes the conflict between the two scholars as a war with unequal weapons, in which the professor shoots with heavy calibre weapons, but the Privatdozent, the postdoc, can only hit the air with a light sword.

> Besonders in Form von Rektoratsreden fielen in diesem friedlichen Krieg schon Schüsse vom allerschwersten Kaliber, gegen die sich selbst die schneidigsten Lufthiebe streitbarer Privatdocenten naturgemäß als ohnmächtig erwiesen.

> (In this peaceful war heavy shots were fired, especially in the form of president's speeches, against which even the most dashing strikes of battlesome post-docs proved impotent by nature.)

In other words: With heavy guns against light swords this was an unequal match. Burdach, the full professor, had publicly rejected the ideas of, as he said, greenhorns like Wolff, and called him trivial, dull etc. A first repudiation by Wolff avoided such polemics, and was answered by Burdach with another barrage of insults. Wolff now stated that in the case of further insults, he would demand satisfaction. The whole conflict had apparently exploded quickly, but this result was unexpected, since academic duelling had already gone out of fashion by the time. In the end no duell was fought, and this was apparently the last attempt at duelling in German academia. But this is an interesting and not untypical case, where personal and academic conflict was hard to disentangle. We find the same phenomenon in countless reviews and their repudiations.

Already in German Indology the first conflict, which was, as far as I can see, based mainly on personal insults, misunderstandings, or hurt pride, resulted in a division of the academic subject. If you wonder why in Germany Indology and Indogermanistik (Indo-German Studies) seperated in the very first generation, this was the result of an appointment of Franz Bopp to the Berlin Sanskrit chair, a chair on which A.W.Schlegel, who had been only deputed from Berlin to Bonn, wanted to retain a claim. When Bopp was installed in Berlin, Schlegel's chances to return there were slim. From then on relations between Bonn and Berlin became uneasy and turned into a prolonged conflict. Students of Indology, who studied almost always in Bonn and Berlin, were wiser, they ignored the conflict, and got along with both contenders. Only Christian Lassen, the successor of Schlegel, took Schlegel's side explicitly.

In recent years many sources from the early history of Indology were made accessible and studied. Unfortunately they are accessible only to those with some training in nineteenth-century German. One particlarly interesting piece is the autobiography of Peter von Bohlen. Bohlen was hoping for, as he says, the high aim of an academic teacher and wished to enter oriental studies, which was only deemed possible in Paris. Bohlen describes his time as a student in much detail, and we get a good impression of typical problems at universities, as for instance, the almost military organisation of German fraternities with their endless duelling. When Bohlen wanted to pursue his dream of learning Oriental languages he proceeded from the university of Halle to Bonn, which meant that he had to more or

less walk 430 kilometers to Koblenz and then take a raft on the river Rhine. In Bonn he met Schlegel and switched to Sanskrit studies: his aim was now to go to London and then to India. But in the end finances and his new wife demanded that they settle in the town of Königsberg, where he got an academic job, and unfortunately died soon afterwards. Bohlen was a student of Schlegel and also of Bopp in Berlin, and he soon became friends with Friedrich Rosen and other second generation Sanskritists like Stenzler. In Berlin he also met the philologist Lachmann, who will feature in one of our next stories. From Bohlen I just want to translate a timeless quote about the state of a postdoc:

> The domestic life of a Privatdozent can nowhere be called rosy, nor is it eventful, but in the best case, when care about nutrition does not cloud the mind, it flows evenly [...]

Schlegel and his students

It has to do with the German obsession with one of the formative times of German literature that we know so much about Schlegel and his students. Schlegel was one of the so-called romantics in Germany, but later became one of the founders of Indology. One other factor is that the romantics used letters like we use emails. They wrote almost incessantly and often preserved letters for later publication. Schlegel is an interesting case, for we have plenty of material for reconstructing his work, his relations with students and many other details.

The most extensive exchange of letters with students stems from the time that his main student Christian Lassen travelled to Paris and London for his own further studies, but also for collating manuscripts for his teacher's editorial projects, especially the *Rāmāyaṇa*. Their exchange of letters has been published long ago, and remains an interesting source that shows how supportive Schlegel was about his students, but also how difficult he was, when things did not go as he had imagined them. We have 230 pages of letters, an extremely rich source for reconstructing the teaching method, topics of supervision, but also international academic networks, the Indological situation in Paris and London and much more. Schlegel and his followers already worked in a European academic and literary network.

In 1824 Lassen writes from London that Baron Schilling, who had been sent to him by Schlegel, was taking up much of his time. But from the erudite traveller Lassen learnt a lot about Buddhism, about Tibetan language and other topics. When abroad Lassen was obviously flooded with further Indological information

and during one of his travels he co-authored a famous Essay on the Pali Language, which is now considered one of the seminal works of academic Buddhist Studies.

In his letters Schlegel patiently helps him with all sorts of questions about manuscripts, with many Indological details that few readers of these letter may have understood. Lassen, on the contrary, helped Schlegel in academic as well as personal matters. For instance, when the social climate for Anglo-Indians in England deteriorated, the Anglo-Indian son of the eminent Indologist Colebrooke, who was in close contact with Schlegel, was sent to Bonn for his studies, and lived in Schlegel's house. Here Lassen was asked to accompany him from London to Bonn, which he did.

But soon the letters center on one problematic topic: Lassen had a travel scholarship and payments by relatives to sustain him. When the latter stopped he ran into financial troubles. Schlegel now increasingly scolded him for being not focussed on his main task, especially when he started sending him funds from his own pocket. Schlegel now adopts a double strategy of promising Lassen a career in Bonn, but also demanding more work. When he demands that Lassen return from Paris, and he does not comply, even Alexander von Humboldt, who was living in Paris and was a good friend of Schlegel, had to intervene and calm down Schlegel. But this story ends well, Lassen became Schlegel's successor and both remained on good terms. Both were the teachers of many famous names of German and European Indologists. Lassen during the end of his life must have had a stroke and could not speak enough for teaching. At this point students gravitated towards – as Haug writes – Marburg (Gildemeister), Berlin (Weber), or Tübingen (Roth).

In that phase, in 1845, Lassen wrote to Ewald:

> I will soon be all alone in Bonn [...] Gildemeister will go to Marburg, since his works on the Holy Robe have earned him an appointment in Marburg. Schlegel was always until his death an enlivening force in my existence. Even when engrossed with other works, he often returned to Indian Studies. In my last talks with him he talked to me about reincarnation.

So Lassen was a case, in which supervisor and student were estranged, but again found a common ground that lasted.

Other now famous students had their problems with Schlegel, we know of the cases of Friedrich Rosen and Adolf Friedrich Stenzler. The second is a name ev-

ery student of Sanskrit knows, since his brief Sanskrit grammar is a standard book that has survived and remained in use in many reworkings, but still goes under his name.

In general, relations were quite friendly and close, as the following letter by Schlegel shows, where he reports:

> This letter was brought by Stenzler, who just arrived from London. He was ill and wishes to recover a little here. He visited me the day before yesterday with Brockhaus, and I kept the young folks here almost the whole forenoon. Stenzler has, as I think, developped very favourably. The more that he is now completely "debopped": he mentioned even ridiculous mistakes that I had not yet spotted.
>
> Diesen Brief brachte mir Stenzler, eben von London angekommen; er war krank und will sich hier etwas erholen. Er besuchte mich vorgestern mit Brockhaus, und ich behielt die jungen Leute beinahe den ganzen Vormittag bei mir. Stenzler hat sich, wie mich dünkt, sehr vortheilhaft ausgebildet; überdieß ist er nun ganz entboppt: er erwähnte selbst lächerliche Fehlgriffe, die ich noch nicht bemerkt hatte.

Probably Stenzler knew how to heighten the mood of this teacher.

And I wanted to mention Friedrich Rosen, simply because he is an almost forgotten early Indologist, whose biography you can now access even without a knowledge of German. Rosane Rocher has recently published a biography of his after a truly extensive search for sources, a pioneering work that has forced us to make some changes to the early history of Indology. Quite contrary to the endless works that are being written on Orientalism, works that live by the same few quotations one has heard again and again, this stands on a completely new ground. Rosen, who was part of a circle of students who studied, or were in contact, with both Schlegel and Bopp, found employment at the university of London, a university that was unlike Oxford open to non-Anglicans. To cut the story short, I think it is obvious that, had Rosen not died very early, he would have become one of the main Indologists of his time, the first editor of the Rigveda and many other things. Max Müller would have never fought with Böhtlingk on where to edit the Rigveda and might well have ended up in Paris or Petersburg, rather than in Oxford.

But the first volume of Rosen's Rigveda, a work from which Schlegel, who had no interest in the Veda, had tried to dissuade him, was published posthumously

without notes, commentary, or even variant readings, a torso that did not really reveal the qualities of the author.

Let me just close this chapter by stating that both Rosen and Stenzler ran into similar problems with Schlegel. Both travelled to Paris and London, were extremely helpful, but did not do everything Schlegel demanded, or not fast enough. And Rosen understandably did not want to take sides in some of the academic conflicts Schlegel cultivated with Oxford and London. So both made their path after breaking with or at least reduced contact with the towering figure of Schlegel.

Lachmann

The final case is particularly absurd, since here academic truth has been the victim of a quarrel between teacher and student. It is from the field of textual criticism.

In textbooks for editing or textual criticism we find the idea that there exists an old or classical method to deal with the editing of texts. It is called the Lachmann method, since it was invented by the German Classical and modern philologist Karl Lachmann. Lachmann worked on Latin texts, on the Bible, but also on medieval and modern German texts. The method, as described in detail by later generations, since no one still reads Lachmann, involves creating a genealogical tree of manuscripts which allows to attach more weight to certain constellations, that is, to agreement of certain branches of this tree and thereby identify the original version of a text.

The famous rival school is the school of Bediér, which after subjecting Lachmann's method to a rigorous criticism, advocates the use of what is called the best manuscript. Often the Lachmann school was perceived as German, the Bediér school as French, although one wonders why that should matter.

Without going into details of the theory, the actual string of events was this: Bediér had proposed a stemma codicum, a genealogical tree of the transmission of a text he was working on and came up with a stemma with three branches. What happened then must have been highly annoying: Bediér's teacher published an article demonstrating that Bediér's stemma was wrong and that the real stemma had only two branches. The text-critical implications of this are potentially far-reaching, at least if one thinks that this method is to be applied mechanically. If in a three-branch stemma two branches agree, then this is the reading to be chosen. If there are two branches, with one reading per branch, the editor can chose either reading. What Bediér now did was to psychoanalyse his teacher: he tried to prove, not without good arguments, that editors preferred two-branch stemmas, because

it allowed them more leeway. This was a devastating criticism, since it destroyed the semblance of objectivity that had surrounded this method.

The factual criticism spurned a long controversy that forced adherents of the method to rethink. But the whole topic had also an unusual personal note, a teacher demonstrating his pupil's error publicly, which can be seen as a breach of the teacher-student relation, ine that lead to the revenge of the pupil in trying to destroy not only the whole method, but also adding insult by calling the method adopted by his teacher the method of Lachmann. In a nationalistic French context this was an insult easily understood.

As so often, the context was eventually forgotten, also that Bediér was the first to have used the term »method of Lachmann«. Subsequent generations have adopted the term, and continue to do so, even when it was explained in detail that Lachmann had not actually invented the method. Lachmann did not even use stemmas, later perceived as the hallmark of the method. In fact, the actual methods of Lachman and Bediér are not that different. So the idea of a method of Lachmann is ultimately based on Bediér's anger about his teacher. But for some reason the idea that Lachmann had still somehow invented the stemmatological method was impossible to stop. It was like in the Woody Allen joke, where someone asks the doctor what he should do about a relative who thinks he is a chicken. The doctor suggests: Have you tried telling him that he is not a chicken. "Oh, we cannot do that", is the answer, "we need the eggs." Today almost all theory on textual criticism needs the "eggs": without a method of Lachmann much of the ensuing theoretical edifice built upon it, or rather its criticism, could collapse.

Thus very recently an Italian philologist, where the study of the history of textual criticism is mostly conducted, showed in much detail that Lachmann never used the method of Lachmann. In fact, Lachmann – in his pragmatism – used a method suspiciously similar to Bediér by identifying a best manuscript. The antagonism, it seems, the conflict between a German and a French school, and the charge that Bediér's teacher really belonged to the Germans, was apparently staged as a revenge by an estranged pupil. In a sense Bediér's teacher had overstepped a boundary: it is odd for a teacher who is supposed to be – as in our image – like a father and support his pupil to refute him in public.

Let us finally return to more recent times. You may have understood that I am trying to explain that the situation of postdocs is something that has to be brought to public attention in order to hopefully improve the situation. Whether this will be useful in the case of Indology in Germany I am not sure, because at the moment

one institute after the other is being closed.

I think organising meetings like this is a very important component, and it is a pity that we could not all travel to Vienna and have all those informal conversations that make conferences so valuable. I am also glad to see that you are doing much better with your international meeting than we did, when we started a meeting of Indological assistants many years ago. The only thing we accomplished, except becoming well acquainted with each other – which is quite useful now that some of us are in offices, where we should better cooperate than fight – was that in our meetings we once decided that we should try get our own candidate elected as head of the Indological section of the German Oriental Society (DMG). The professors had their own cadidate, but since we were better organized than the professors – we showed up in greater numbers at the vote –, our candidate was elected. Some people were baffled, even angry, but actually the effect was negligable. The only effect was that "the assistants" had suddenly not done, what they were supposed to, to agree and assent. Since no argument against our vote could be found, the matter was put to rest. And there were more postdocs in this office afterwards.

Let me close with one recent phenomenon, which is the renewal of the old professoral powers in the German system. It affects only some professors and the process has been almost invisible, except for those suffering its consequences. I was alerted to this first through a newspaper article, where one extremely knowledgeable writer stated that the old type Ordinarius professors, this is the term used in Germany for the system before the reforms of the late 60s, have reincarnated today as the so-called speakers of what is called a Sonderforschungsbereich (SFB). This is the largest and most prestigious type of research group funded by the central government via the DFG. The number of SFBs serves as an indicator of the university's excellence, another concept that has become a modern German obsession. As a consequence those who manage to organize and gain an SFB are like mountaineers who have made the ascent to Mount Everest. They become revered figures in their universities. These are the so-called speakers who have unprecedented powers, not just over their project, but indirectly also over other institutes involved. I realized the impact of this development, when a colleague in such a project joked that this position is like Tolkien's ring bearer: one ring to rule them all, and in submission bind them. From the perspective of normal heads of institutes who have become part of an SFB, this can mean that even a full professor, to whom our constitution seems to promise freedom of research, becomes one of many sāmantas of a new mahārājā.

But this is not the only way for professors to rise above the crowd. The so-called academy projects are now much coveted goods, also because they can last for 12 or even twenty years. In this way they permit scholars, who are not happy with retiring at 65, to continue. If one gets an academy project late in one's career, and there is interestingly an age limit for almost everything, but not for that, one can continue to direct staff and indirectly control one's successor for more than a decade, or so I have heard.

So much for my talk. I am not sure I have succeeded with my aim to motivate you, but at least I hope that you got the impression that the fate of the Privatdozent, of the young academic, is something that remains vividly on one's mind later.