



BETWEEN THE STORMS  
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My year at the Wissenschaftskolleg was bracketed by storms – man-made at one end, “acts of god” at the other. I flew from Boston's Logan Airport on October 1, 2001, barely three weeks after two airplanes had taken off from the very same place for their deadly attack on New York's World Trade Center. The normally routine check-in ritual was in visible

disarray. Uniformed, rifle-bearing National Guardsmen and extra security personnel nervously oversaw our boarding; passengers and airport staff seemed equally ill at ease in their newly re-choreographed roles. On arrival in Berlin, I found the stillness of the Villa Walther deeply comforting, although even in our secluded apartment among the treetops one could not avoid the backwash of September 11. Throughout the year, reports of suicide bombings, terrorism, and war shadowed our lighter exchanges around the lunch table and provided constant reminders of just how unreal life was in our privileged scholarly community.

How strangely fitting, then, that on July 10, just three weeks before our departure, Berlin was swept by the storm of the half-century – a disaster that uprooted mature trees, destroyed property, and took seven lives around the city. Once again, the Wissenschaftskolleg's internal rhythms cushioned many of us against direct exposure. While the storm raged, we sat warmly cocooned in the Romanian cultural center's salon, listening to Helmut Lachenmann's last concert of the year. Helmut's commentary brilliantly illuminated the subtlety of the music. As the young trio tackled his difficult passages, lightning flashed and trees swayed violently outside the tight-shut windows. For us, it was silent theater. Not until the concert was over and the storm had passed by did we get any inkling of the havoc it had caused outdoors. Germany was still to experience the disastrous floods of mid-August, but by then we were home, enmeshed again in our all too mundane realities.

Those two moments at the beginning and end of the fellow year sum up for me the essence of our stay at the Wissenschaftskolleg. It was a safe haven in an unsafe time – a place for study and quiet reflection, chamber music and intimate conversation, and, of course, concentrated writing, while the world outside often seemed to have gone mad.

It was by any account a productive year. I wrote or substantially rewrote eight articles, of which four were in press and three had appeared in print by the time the new academic year began in September, 2002. Even the most minor of these benefited from the chance to carry out my work in new surroundings, far from the usual background noise of university life. An article about law and the life sciences turned into a meditation on the US courts as agents of ethical as well as socio-technical change. A piece on risk wrestled with the problem of collectively deliberating on the unknown. A commentary on comparative environmental law tried to make sense of the very notion of legality in national regulatory systems with very different commitments to formal law.

I had known before I came to Berlin that part of the year would be spent trying to work through some ideas about science, technology, and constitutional change. Of all my

article-length projects, this one turned out to be the most daunting, as well as in some respects the most rewarding. After some struggle, I was able to find words for the intuitive insight that science and technology, no less than law, both enable and constrain human possibility: they are, in this sense, constitutional. Thanks to conversations with Dieter Grimm and some browsing in the Fellow Library, I found ways to describe more precisely the forums in which and the processes by which debates about science and technology are working to form the constitutional order of an emerging global polity. The article took my work on law and science in entirely new directions. I hope a monograph will eventually grow from it.

There were three longer projects that occupied me during the year. I rethought and rewrote the introduction to an essay collection on the concept of co-production in science and technology studies (STS). This extended reflection not only informs much of the other work that I have been doing lately; it is also intended to serve two additional functions: first, to provide a theoretical framework, or idiom, for people wishing to explore the links between natural and social order or between science and politics; and, second, to build bridges between STS and neighboring social science disciplines, including anthropology, political science, and sociology. A second edited volume explores the persistence, even the resurgence, of local environmental knowledges and politics in an era of globalization. In writing the introduction and conclusion to this collection, I was able to develop, in a more topical context, some of the ideas about the politics of globalization that I had also touched on in the article on science and constitutionalism. Both projects gained, in ways too varied to mention, from my being in Europe in a year when talk of constitutions was much in the air and the relationship of national to supranational politics was at the forefront of many people's consciousness.

The third book project, provisionally titled *Designs on Nature*, is a study of the political reception of biotechnology in Germany, Britain, and the United States over the past two decades. It compares the public deliberations that unfolded in each country on a number of issues, including the release of genetically modified organisms into the environment, cloning, and research with embryonic stem cells. The book carries forward my earlier work on comparative politics and political culture by systematically examining how public knowledge is formed and deployed in different national settings. The idea of "civic epistemology", with which I attempt to capture this dimension of contemporary knowledge societies, is at the core of the book's theoretical contributions. I would have liked to leave Berlin with a draft of the book in hand – that would have made the year truly nonpareil –

but this, alas, proved to be an unrealizable dream. I had to content myself with a raft of new insights that had radically transformed the book's central thrust and the hope that a draft would be completed by the turn of the year. In the meantime, the chance to observe at first hand the key German debates on stem cells offered some consolation for the disappointment of leaving with a still unfinished project.

Grunewald, we soon discovered, was far removed even from the restless heart of Berlin, let alone from the so-called real world. Yet, thanks to our standing invitation to make the Kolleg an intellectual as well as a physical home, it was possible to attract many people to our safe haven in the course of the year. One of my most rewarding ventures was a colloquium series on "STS and Its Publics." It was a collaborative project at many levels. I was extremely fortunate to have Jens Lachmund of the University of Maastricht as co-organizer and to have support from both the Max Planck Institute for the History of Science, through Lorraine Daston and Hans-Jörg Rheinberger, and the Wissenschaftszentrum, through Bernward Joerges. The series drew distinguished speakers from Berlin and from other European research centers. It also generated, at least for a year, a sense of community among a group of younger STS scholars working in and around Berlin; I have no doubt that I will see many of them again on their future passages through Cambridge.

With Christine von Arnim's gracious and unflagging help, I was also able to host a workshop on "Science and Democracy" at the Kolleg in late June. Somewhat to our surprise, around 30 younger scholars attended, from 8–10 countries. There was not enough time to do justice to all of their ideas and energy in the course of a very full weekend, but the event offered stunning proof that this field of research is emerging, after long neglect, as a site of vigorous intellectual engagement. Many expressed the hope that this would become an annual gathering, supporting and supported by a growing research network. If this wish bears fruit, then one reason will surely be that the seeds were planted in the fertile soil of the Wissenschaftskolleg.

The year was by no means all work, and even the most demanding parts were often spiced with elements of play. There were numerous lecture trips around Europe at the surprisingly many locations, from Vienna to Reykjavik, that welcomed both me, an STS scholar, and my husband, an Indo-Europeanist. There was an unforgettable family vacation in Russia in mid-June, where the excitement of observing a nation in transition more than repaid the annoying hours we had spent queuing for tourist visas at the back door of the sprawling embassy on Unter den Linden.

But it was Berlin itself that most insistently claimed our attention and most intensely colored our impressions of the year. The city is a cornucopia, and as the year progressed we happily sampled its many museums and concert halls, restaurants and markets, monuments and neighborhoods. It is also an unparalleled site of memory. No other city I know offers such a complex palimpsest of the 20th century. None other is so ambitiously or so self-consciously engaged in knitting together its diverse fractured pasts into something resembling a coherent, meaningful present. To sample Berlin, the once and future metropolis, in this phase of its history is to form a kind of addiction. We left knowing that the city would tempt us to return. We hope we can do so, early and often.