



INTELLECTUAL GUARDIAN ANGELS
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The year spent in Wissenschaftskolleg was, probably not only for me, a rare opportunity to be liberated from everyday commitments and to focus solely on academic work. Coming to Berlin, I had an idea to write a book (or more realistically – a substantial part of the book) that at that time was rather vaguely outlined. What I knew – it was rather an intuition based on everyday observation and some unsystematic reading – was that mutual tensions between globalization and liberal democracy, which latter historically developed within the framework of the nation state, will grow and that globalization will probably be the biggest challenge for democracy in the coming years. My feeling was that our contemporary world, liberated from “Cold War” conflicts, is approaching a dramatic alternative: either globalization will be democratized or democracy (along with the nation state) will be swallowed by globalization. I also imagined that most of the time I would use for reading and writing, the kind of solitary work that can never be properly done without leaving one’s place of permanent residence, with all its obligations and constant pressure

of calendar. I anticipated that time given to me at the Wissenschaftskolleg would create a unique opportunity to change (or more strictly – to enlarge) my field of research.

Before the fellowship, I was involved in domestic and international projects focused on transition to democracy, and I had a growing feeling that the field I'm working on is too narrow for grasping all the important factors that are shaping societies today. I hoped that getting rid of daily routine was the only realistic chance to move to a larger and more intellectually rewarding area of study. My stay at the Wissenschaftskolleg proved that my anticipation was right, although the conditions of academic work happened to exceed my expectations.

The first three months I spent "recharging" my intellectual batteries; I read, I discussed, and I absorbed an atmosphere of a unique intellectual community of Fellows, of which I had the privilege to be a member. The idea of how to make the best use of the given time began to crystallize.

Around 40% of my time I planned to devote to reading, knowing that reading has a special formative character and that it might bring results not only for my current project, but also for future intellectual endeavours that now are even hard to predict. Another 40% of my time I intended to spend on writing; 15% on discussions and interactions with other Fellows; and the remaining 5% on grasping the social and cultural atmosphere of Berlin. These were the initial plans, but life always imposes some modifications, though this time not radical. First of all, I had to clear my obligations in an ongoing international project on "Pathways to Democracy". The project is the Team Research Initiative of scholars from Poland, Germany, South Africa, South Korea, and Chile and is focused on transition to democracy in the "most different cases" of the third wave of global democratization. In the project, I was responsible for the preparation of a theoretical framework for the study. The draft version of my theoretical framework was ready after my first month at the Wissenschaftskolleg.

Then I could start to read. Here I have to express my gratitude to the library service; it is very friendly, professional, cooperative, and efficient. Reading is always a matter of selection; one cannot read all publications of potential interest. In the area of my project, I found 65,000 Internet entries directly related to the topic of my study, and the bibliography, which I compiled at the beginning of my fellowship, covered over 300 items. I couldn't read it all, that was obvious from the beginning. So I could only hope that during my intensive reading I wouldn't miss something that could have profoundly changed my way of thinking about globalization and democracy.

And then writing. Here the community of Fellows and the academic staff of the Wissenschaftskolleg were constantly in the back of my mind. They were my imaginary audience that played the role of filter for overly risky generalizations, overly haste conclusions, and overly brave hypotheses. Writing a chapter, I imagined how it would be received by all these sharp minds around; among others – by the precision of Martin Kusch, the associations of Sheila Jasanoff, the irony of Wolf Lepenies, the empiricism of Ernst Fehr and Richard Hauser, the historical memory of John Breuilly, the spontaneity of Caroline Jones, the logic of Alex Kacelnik, the Weberian criticism of Fritz Ringer, and the Oriental wisdom of Beshara Doumani and Suraiya Faroqhi (*ex Oriente lux*). I wonder how one can write anything having such a host of intellectual guardian angels. Nevertheless, I wrote something, and more precisely: I wrote a draft of six chapters of my book, planned for ten chapters (altogether, I completed nearly 170 draft pages).

The first chapter deals with the conceptualization of globalization, the second explores some antinomies of globalization, the third is focused on already visible, but also on still hidden troubles of liberal democracy in the contemporary, globalized world, and the fourth deals with democratic procedures and values – it is a search for the legitimacy of liberal democracy beyond the Euro-Atlantic cultural zone – the fifth contains reflection on the fate of the nation state facing the challenge of globalization, and the sixth chapter explores some utopian and also some more realistic attempts to democratize globalization. This is what is done so far. What needs to be done to complete the book it is to write the last four chapters: (1) on the problem of social identity and particularly on the growing tension between cosmopolitan and local frames of reference that shape essential human identities; (2) on the problem of global inequalities and what they mean to global peace, cooperation, and development; (3) on three essential responses of various local populations to the challenge of globalization: fundamentalism, populism, and pragmatism; and (4) speculations about the most likely developments in coming years in the areas that were explored in the book.

There is plenty of literature on globalization and democracy. So the legitimate question arises to what extent my project differs from all that has been said and published. The vast majority of the related literature is written from the perspective of a culture or country that is situated at the core of globalization and has enjoyed democracy for a long period of time. My book is written from another perspective, namely from the perspective of the semi-periphery of the whole process, from the point of view of new democracy after the rule of an unwanted and undeserved authoritarian regime. This point of observation gives a fairly

good insight into both the core and the periphery and allows for questioning things that are taken for granted from the core perspective.

Leaving the Wissenschaftskolleg, I hope that back in Poland all the duties that waited for me for the whole academic year will allow me to reconstruct at least some elements of the refreshing atmosphere of Wiko and that my imaginary intellectual guardian angels will be around me until the book is finished.

Or perhaps even longer?