



CHANGE OF PLANS
INES G. ŽUPANOV

Ines G. Županov was born in Zagreb, Croatia. After graduating in Comparative Literature and Indology at the University of Zagreb, she completed her Ph.D. in History at the University of California at Berkeley. Currently employed as Research Fellow at the Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique in Paris, she also taught Early Modern History at the University of California at Berkeley, at Jawaharlal Nehru University in New Delhi, and at the École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales in Paris. She is author of *Disputed Mission: Jesuit Experiments and Brahmanical Knowledge in Seventeenth-Century India* (1999). Her book *Missionary Tropics* is in press with Michigan University Press. Her articles in English, French, Portuguese, Italian, and Croatian are published in edited books and journals (*Annales*, *Representations*, *Etnosistemi*, *Studies in History*, *Indian Economic and Social History Journal*, *Archives de sciences sociales des religions*, etc.) – Address: Research Fellow in History, CEIAS-EHESS, CNRS, 54 boulevard Raspail, 75006 Paris, France. E-mail: zupanov@ehess.fr; website: ineszupanov.com.

From one point of view, my stay at the Wissenschaftskolleg in Berlin was a disaster. I came with a project of working on the early modern medical encounters between European and Indian medical systems and with a chapter of a book to complete. The intensity of the interactions with my fellow travelers in Wiko and especially on the Cultural Mobility bandwagon redirected most of my energies into fields and research topics that had little to do with mine. It was an immense and terrific fun learning about Zionism and Jewish history, about Puritans and Shakespeare, about the swerve of the atom in Lucretius, about the gendered brain, the Chinese in Budapest, about mermaids and elephants, Shanghai prostitutes,

about Walter Benjamin and Bulgarian businessmen. Not to mention the bees, wasps, and ants and some other scientific *arcana*.

If I naively expected to find a refuge or a spiritual grotto in the Wissenschaftskolleg, away from the busy, structured, and stifling everyday life of a *chercheuse* in Paris, it was because I failed to read the former Yearbook reports with due attention. Between cocktails, dinners, seminars, conferences, and formal and informal discussions, the only thing that was scarce during the year was time, especially time to read the books that kept piling up on my shelves thanks to the discreet but efficient staff in the library. I wish I were as successful in actually reading those hundreds of volumes that the librarians, Gesine, Anja, Marianne, Kirsten and Gudrun, so dedicatedly hunted down for me. My apologies for the heavy bags of books the two Matthiases had to schlep up and down the staircase, in and out of the library, and my big thanks for having xeroxed hundreds and hundreds of pages for me. These are now on my shelves in Paris as a reminder of my incorrigible paper avarice.

It was nobody's fault that Berlin was not an archival paradise for my research. To my compulsive whining about the lack of documents and sunshine in Berlin, Christine von Arnim tactfully, but firmly inquired, "Why did you come to Berlin instead of going to Lisbon or Rome?" Her sobering remark had an effect of pushing me through the glass door. From then on Berlin became my present, and my attachment to Grunewald grew. A piece of wisdom and truth does well to disoriented Fellows! But, let me follow my obsession with the archives to the end, because there is a happy ending here. In the whole year, I had spent only two weeks in the Staatsbibliothek unter den Linden in order to read a seventeenth-century hagiography of an insignificant Jesuit missionary in Asia with a perfectly seductive name of Marcello Mastrilli. The *Rari* department in the StaBi, a pet name of the Staatsbibliothek, made me nostalgic. Its odor of slowly putrefying paper and begrimed shelves combined with the sweet aroma of sweaty humanity in nylon shirts inebriated my olfactory sense and brought me way back to similar forgotten places, such as Sveučilišna Knjižnica (University Library) in Zagreb. In a word, it smelled like some lost homeland one worked so hard not to remember.

Beyond odors and architectural mess – the StaBi had an enormous wound in the middle of the building in which bulldozers hummed their hymn of progress, re-construction, and reunification – using the library was easy. There were no sadist or paranoid librarians who try to hide their treasures under red tape, impossible rules, or short working hours. Every moment spent in the StaBi was enjoyable and, as usual for historians, marvelous things happened in the archives. The insignificant Jesuit *vita* that caught my attention turned out

to be immensely important, like a grain of gold. Its prophetic texture combined with the incredibly mobile (and moving) real life of this failed saint made me start a new research project on the role of prophecy as a strategy of globalization. Gil Anidjar suggested that I should write a book about it entitled *La fable prophétique*. Inch'Allah!

Coming from the archives was, therefore, the initial impulse to go back and revisit some of my old research haunts, such as the relation between the religious and the political. I was lucky that my colleague and friend in Wiko, Heike Paul, joined me in organizing a workshop entitled *Mobility and Religion in Political Landscapes: (16th–18th Centuries)* in June 2004. The two days of the workshop were the highest moments of my year in Wiko. All the disparate parts of an intense year of learning and reflection fell into their proper place. Although such a perfect ending had not been prophesied, I still wonder about the work of providence. It certainly favored our workshop, as did Britta Cusack, its guardian angel in Wiko.

The same is true about the Cultural Mobility Focus Group that started out with a fanfare, got stuck in mud and fog of the Berlin winter, and was reincarnated as a colorful butterfly in spring. The gang of five, Heike, Pál, Rossitza, Stephen, and myself, did not understand each other at all times. But what is remarkable is that nobody gave up on anybody (in spite of temptations). I suspect that the feeling of security and the best possible living and working conditions provided by the Wiko made us patient with each other's whims, moods, idiosyncrasies, underground pressures, and intellectual discomforts. By the end of the term, as in a kind of apotheosis (at least for me), we came very close to actually believing in our project. And, lo and behold, we continue to do so.

Since most of what I did or how I oriented my actions was based on various beliefs (some of them completely wrong, as it turned out), I was in for some good and some bad surprises. I certainly did not believe it when I was told in the beginning that the staff at Wiko would do "the best" they could to make our stay agreeable. Well, they did miraculously well, without ever losing their tempers with the spoiled or distracted Fellows. I locked myself out of the house (no metaphor here!) at least three times and there was always somebody to help. On one occasion, Reinhart Meyer-Kalkus left his dinner party and generously accompanied me on a late night quest in search of a key. Herr Riedel and Herr Domnick were also victims of my forgetfulness.

I also regret the cozy situation of having Gregor Pickert fix or solve any glitch I had with my computer in my office or at home. It was a pleasure, and I mean it literally, being under the constant surveillance of the computer services staff. Thanks to their firewall, at least

for a year we engaged in protected conversation and exchange with the outside world. Apologies for all the frivolous requests, like when I was not able to find a full stop on the keyboard! In the course of the time, I even managed to use PowerPoint in my conference. Christian Schmitz, with the eye of an eagle, made sure, however, that I didn't mess up.

If I continue to speak a barbaric German, it was not Marita Ringleb's fault. She courageously struggled through the 17th-century *Kräuterbuch* that I imposed on her in an excess of ambition. I am delighted that at least somebody in the family learned German. My ten-year-old son Ante fell in love with Berlin, with Wiko, with German and, unfortunately, with German sausages. All through the year he thought of himself as a "young" Fellow, and he was treated as such. His dream now is to go back to Berlin one day, perhaps as a big Fellow. My husband Christophe enjoyed, for a change, the role of a spouse. Not an easy one, but he did very well. He was delighted and grateful to find scholars like Rudolf and Pál who helped him understand better how to approach issues in Chinese demography.

Probably the most patient and calm victims of the Fellows' appetites were Christine Klöhn and Katarzyna Speder. Between vegetarians with fish, without fish, no cholesterol, *sans porc*, omnivores, sophisticated connoisseurs, and those with a sweet tooth or trash and junk cravings, it was a titanic project to satisfy them all.

From a different cuisine in the Weisse Villa, what I appreciated immensely was the linguistic help provided by Mitch Cohen. He edited for the press the whole manuscript of the book that I finished in Berlin – *Missionary Tropics: The Catholic Frontier in India (16th–17th Centuries)* – to be published by the University of Michigan Press. In the same building, Martin Garstecki was there to listen to and advise on all the intricacies of moving in and moving out of Berlin. He was merciless with the French administration that tried to delay (*ad infinitum*) all the forms (social security, health insurance, etc.) needed for a French scholar in expatriation. Monika, Daniela, and Ines are witnesses of my various panic attacks and I thank them for absorbing with grace some of my foolish fears and complaints.

The Friday afternoon yoga classes with Monica Wapnewski and my Yoga *Geschwister* (Gudrun, Christine, and Rossitza) proved the meaning of the old classical proverb, *mens sana in corpore sano*.

With *meine Deutsche Vita* behind me, what I now know that I regret is that I never even tried to break the spell of an expatriate, international sociability created at Wiko, oblivious about the pulse of the city. Of course, my family and I, we consumed Berlin with the passion of urban *flâneurs*. Weekends were reserved for pilgrimages to the Gemäldegalerie, to the Pergamon, to the Ethnographische Museum or we simply strolled into Grunewald

forest or walked or cycled around the lakes. We almost wished we could grow our roots into the soil.

But, most of the time, it was work that consumed us. I felt just fine cocooned in my office with a view of overgrown thick branches of trees. The delightful green leaves, the birds and the distant sounds of passers-by were enough of a distraction for me not to venture out. It was too good to be lulled into a perfect autarchy of a small illustrious community. If I closed the door to Berlin, many other doors opened. And I can picture the faces of the inhabitants of our beehive on Koenigsallee. I remember the laughter of Ronit and Nono on the upper floor, the soft voice at night of baby Arthur, the excited voices of the young fellows, Alex, Andrew, Luc, and Rebecca in the garden behind the building, and the wonderful Uma's early morning singsong.

There is no limit to memory, and to avoid a pathetic ending, yes, my intellectual plans were muddled in Wiko, but now it seems clear that that was the point.