

Three Photos

BY JÁNOS MÁTYÁS KOVÁCS

Personal Good-Bye Reflections on Future Friends



Susanne Fröschl



Cornelia Klingner



Dieter Simon

Three photos, three smiling faces, three former leaders of the Institute for Human Sciences. Cornelia Klingner was a co-founder of the IWM in 1982 and a Permanent Fellow for about three decades before becoming the Institute's interim Rector in 2013. Susanne Fröschl joined the IWM in 2000, serving as the Institute's Executive Director from 2002 onwards. Dieter Simon guided the affairs of the IWM association (*Verein*) as its President since 2001. They all resigned some weeks ago, happy in the knowledge that they were handing over the Institute to their successors in good order. Shalini Randeria and Knut Neumayer took office as Rector and Executive Director, respectively, early this year, and the new President will be elected by the Board of the association soon. Those on the photos have worked hard to ensure continuity.

To a few people in Vienna and beyond, this smooth transition seemed hardly possible when the founding Rector of the IWM, Krzysztof Michalski, passed away in February 2013. With sincere anxiety or sheer gloat, they envisioned a potential decline of the Institute as well as a fall in its intellectual quality and social prestige. The "Michalski Institute", they thought, may be helpless without a new Michalski.

Why conceal the fact that as a long-time insider, I also could not entirely free myself from such worries, although it was clear to me that

under Krzysztof's more than thirty-year-long rectorship, he created a *modus operandi* that could not have been eradicated easily even if someone had wanted to do so. Actually, with the help of his close associates, he had built up not only an institute but also an institution.

Otherwise Cornelia would not have embarked, I suppose, upon this two-year long mission to connect the past with the future. True, witnessing for three decades how her partner Krzysztof directed the IWM, and forging cooperation with Austrian academic institutions, she must have learned the art of leadership. Nevertheless, I did not think that she would be ready to take over the rector's job, and manage the Institute for two minutes, not for two years. A woman of letters, a professor in Tübingen, she enjoyed discussing burning problems in philosophy, aesthetics and gender studies rather than negotiating with politicians or foundation officials during the day and eating out with journalists in the evening. These are regular activities of an academic administrator, which she pursued—a little reluctantly—with Krzysztof together if he asked her to do so. However, I hold another image of Cornelia in my mind. Our offices were next to each other for more than two decades but with the exception of the past two years, we barely met each other in the building. When we did, she always carried a minimum of three books under her arm. The IWM li-

brary, admired by so many in the Viennese social sciences and humanities community, was her brainchild. Who can remember better than I—guilty of keeping books in my office for far too long—Cornelia's witty disciplinary instructions? Normally, however, she read and wrote behind her closed door all the time. By the way, this is exactly how Krzysztof would have liked to spend his time as well.

Joining the IWM back in 1987, I saw a delicately reserved young woman regarded by some a walking paradox—a scholar not particularly interested in Eastern European matters in an Institute whose origin was closely related to that very region. Undoubtedly, Cornelia's occasional sarcastic remarks made in the small circle of Permanent Fellows about Polishness misled me, too, but only for a moment. Her irony was actually complementing Krzysztof's self-mocking Polish patriotism. As a matter of fact, she would probably have contributed to the development of the Institute less if she had turned her research interests exclusively towards Eastern Europe than she did by reinforcing the "universal" pillars of the IWM's academic endeavors. Initiating a long-term research program in philosophy, which followed an unprecedented road leading from inquiries into romanticism and the avant-garde through gender studies to research on social inequality, Cornelia created a home for prominent visiting scholars from all over

the world, including also the ex-communist countries, of course. All in all, I liked her acumen and sense of humor but considered her unapproachable, and did not insist on developing my sympathy into friendship.

When Cornelia agreed, in deep grief but with a clear mind, to serve as an interim Rector of the IWM, she set two simple conditions: 1. an interim must not become permanent (therefore she started looking for an apartment in her favorite city, Hamburg, before entering office); 2. a Co-Rector of world fame needed to be invited to retain the internal position of the Institute (she therefore convinced an old friend of the Institute, Michael Sandel to share the rectorship with her). In other words, Cornelia resisted the attraction of power that just fell in her lap, and began to relax the hierarchy created by Krzysztof during the 1980s. She remained a *primus* (more exactly, *prima*) *inter pares* in her relationship with the Permanent Fellows and the staff but reduced power distance to her colleagues, and increased the number of consensual decisions. More importantly, she started searching for her successor from the first minute of rectorship. No one could have blamed her if she had left Vienna right after the death of her partner ...

She took the thankless task of a caretaker seriously, accepted the role of the "lame duck", and did not take major decisions that would constrain her successor's room for ma-

neuver. At the same time, she did her best during the transitional period to protect the identity of the IWM as an independent institute for advanced study, a non-partisan place of reflection, a home for many disciplines and regions with a resolute commitment toward Eastern Europe, which, despite all temptations, avoids turning into a political think-tank.

Cornelia would not have been able to accomplish all this if she had not received strong support from Susanne and Dieter. The former resisted the enticement of the managerial labor market that would have snatched her up right away if she had sent out an "I am free" signal. The latter, just recovered from an operation, also provided the two Co-Rectors with the solid backing of authority from the very start. The four of them could not expect to enjoy much of the "bearable lightness" of power and fame, not to mention other rewards. On the contrary, they had to be prepared for carrying the burden of risk and responsibility for some time.

Encountering Susanne one and a half decades ago, my first impression was her girlish smile. Instead of fake *Gemüthlichkeit*, she radiated sincere curiosity. I was amazed to learn that she was the mother of an adolescent boy, and in her early thirties already had a long educational history and professional career behind her. She studied journalism, political science and cultural management in Salzburg, Ohio and Vi-

cma, spoke English like her mother tongue, *Oberösterreichisch*, and developed her management and advisory skills in NGOs, an international organization and in the field of party politics. Although she possessed the necessary knowledge and experience to influence academic life within the Institute, she preferred to ask questions; questions that were often smarter than our answers. Her friendly manner made her popular among the Visiting Fellows and the staff; and the prudent finances of the Institute earned wide recognition among the funders and auditors. Without much ado, she became the “Austrian voice” of the IWM, a master in communicating with members of the Viennese cultural and political elite. However, what I as an inhabitant of *Spitzelauer Lände 3* appreciated equally was that for fifteen years no sound of cry or scream emerged from the staff offices, just laughter. (Here I keep generously silent about the cigarette smoke covering Susanne’s smile every now and then—a surprising habit for a dedicated biker, rower and mountaineer.)

Dieter is a renowned scholar of the history of law, an expert on Byzantium, former chairman of the *Wissenschaftsrat* of Germany, a long-time President of the Brandenburg Academy of Science, and a member of a whole series of national academics and honorary professor of numerous universities. We saw each other at the meetings of the Board every year. Before our first encounter, I expected to meet an old-fashioned, pedantic scholar who bores one with circumstantial legal argument. Instead, I got to know a cheerful, energetic man with a self-ironic *Spitzler* ego, wearing impertinently colorful ties and telling semi-profane jokes. Although we both study intellectual history, we managed to set a world record in *not* exchanging a single word about our research for fifteen years. Rather, we swapped ironic anecdotes of our lives from time to time. This man, close to eighty, did not think it below his dignity to be involved with minor administrative decisions, or to represent the Institute in negotiations with Austrian dignitaries—doing all these by commuting between Berlin and Vienna. (For those who may want to know how one can talk about law and science (as well as hospitals) with a sharp mind and a fine humor, I suggest to read his blog: www.mops-block.de/de-tagebuch.html).

A Rector, an Executive Director and a President. Currently, all of them live in Germany. Hamburg, Freiburg, Berlin—isn’t it a nice triangle in which one may try to expand the IWM microcosm? All the more so because Cornelia decided to remain a member of the Board of the IWM association. In saying good-bye to them, I (an inexcusable *Spitzmeister*) realize with regret that I have missed a great many chances for converting our amicable acquaintance into veritable friendship. Three photos, three former colleagues, three future friends. <

János Mátyás Kovács
Permanent Fellow, IWM

Welcome to the IWM

THREE NEW COLLEAGUES

The Institute for Human Sciences is pleased to announce that three new colleagues have joined the Institute.



Carl Henrik Fredriksson



Ludger Hagedorn



Knut Neumayer

Florian Hattaras Wurz, IWM, Markus Schwarze

In April 2015, Carl Henrik Fredriksson joined the IWM as Head of Publications. “The IWM is today one of Europe’s most interesting and exciting intellectual institutions,” says Fredriksson. “It has this position not least because it manages to combine the features of a research institute with those of a truly public space, where discourses of many different types meet, and informed opinions and theories about the world are put to the test. The ambitions of the Institute have always gone way beyond just disseminating research results. I look forward very much to getting the chance to develop this further.”

Fredriksson comes to the IWM from *Europe*, which he co-founded in 1998. In 2001, he left the Swedish cultural journal *Ord&Bild* to become the organization’s first editor-in-chief. Since then, the *Europe* network, which has its editorial office in Vienna, has expanded from six founding magazines—including the IWM’s journal *Transit*—to almost 100 partner journals and associated publications in over 30 countries. Fredriksson will remain President of the *Europe* Association.

In 2014, Carl Henrik Fredriksson was a Visiting Fellow at the IWM, working on the project “Vienna Has Fallen!” Diverging Historical Narratives and the Prospects of a European Public Sphere”. He is a Permanent Fellow at the Institute for Media and Communication in Berlin and writes regularly on literature, media and politics for international newspapers and magazines. <

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Ludger Hagedorn is the new Head of the IWM’s Patočka Archive and the related Research Focus. He has taken over from Klaus Nellen, who was in charge of the archive since the Institute’s inception in 1982. This change comes with a thematic shift. While research on and publication of Patočka’s work will remain a key element, the new program will also focus on the philosophical idea of Europe and its meaning in today’s globalized (post-European) world.

Hagedorn has contributed significantly to the development of the IWM’s Patočka-Archive into a place for research and exchange with international renown. Since the 1990s, he has been involved in several IWM projects related to Patočka’s thought, acting as Research Associate and later Research Director. He took his doctorate from the Technical University Berlin in 2002. From 2005 to 2009, he was a Purkyně Fellow at the Czech Academy of Sciences and in 2010 a Guest Professor at Södertörns Högskola, Stockholm. His research interests include phenomenology, political philosophy, modernity and secularization. He has taught at the Gutenberg-University of Mainz, the Charles University of Prague and more recently at NYU Berlin. <

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Knut Neumayer, former Program Director of ERSTE Foundation, joined the IWM as new Executive Director on March 1, 2015. He takes over the management of the Institute from Susanne Fröschl, who was with the IWM for 13 years. “Finding unconventional solutions for complex processes at the interface between science, art and communications is a challenge I have welcomed throughout my professional career,” says Neumayer. “I look forward to building on this experience in what will be an inspiring collaboration with the new Rector and the IWM team.”

After studying management at the Vienna University of Business and Economics, Neumayer led the newly founded *Österreichische Kulturservice OKS* (as head manager) and the marketing department of the *Standard Verlagsgesellschaft*. In his most recent position in the management of the ERSTE Foundation, he was responsible for two of the three programs: “Europe” and “Social Development”.

His wide experience both in the strategic and operational development of a foundation and in the conception of innovative programs is sure to provide the Institute with new stimulus. Neumayer is closely acquainted with the research activities and aims of the IWM. Since 2014, he has sat on the jury of the Milena Jesenská Fellowship Program for journalists, which is supported by the ERSTE Foundation. <

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