



R. SINGER (Lausanne 1976)

Verzeichnis der wichtigsten Publikationen von R. SINGER

(zusammengestellt von M. MOSER und E. HORÁK)

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1926

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Glancing back

Martha SINGER

When the editors of the present volume, our friends MOSER and HORAK, suggested to write a few words about our life together — its being mushroom-dominated goes without saying — I really welcomed this invitation. But limiting it to “a few words“ and with the constant changes in our lives, with the many lovely people we have met and places we have seen, I am afraid I have forgotten a large part. This in lieu of an introduction.

Rolf SINGER was born on June 23, 1906 in Schliersee (Bavaria, Germany) as the only son of the painter Albert SINGER and his wife Eva HENNICKE.

He went to school first in Schliersee, then to the Gymnasium in Pasing and later in Amberg. From 1925 to 1927 he studied Chemistry at the University of Munich with WILLSTAETTER and WIELAND, then transferred to the University of Vienna and got his Ph. D. under Richard WETTSTEIN in 1931. In Vienna he was in close contact with Prof. SCHIFFNER and Heinrich LOHWAG.

When I met my husband in 1933 he had just come to Vienna across the Alps on skis since he had to leave his native Germany after HITLER came to power. It was this event which shattered Europe for years to come — it also shattered his career as a scientist in his own country. But his name was already well enough known for Professor BRAUN-BLANQUET and Professor R. MAIRE to recommend him, and for Professor P. FONT QUER to invite him to be Assistant Professor at the Autonomous University of Barcelona. Thus, by necessity our friendship and courtship were short and I soon followed him to Barcelona where he was eagerly working with Catalanian material. From there I accompanied him to the Pyrenées, trips we also enjoyed from a touristic point of view since this part of Spain was then still unspoiled and hardly known to international tourism. We stayed in country hotels and in peasant huts where our meals were cooked in iron pots hanging from the ceiling over an open fire.

ROLF's collections from Cataluña and the Pyrenées were extensive but unfortunately many of the results of his work were achieved under great hardship and were not published before 1950 because the persecution from Nazi Germany now reached across borders. In October 1934 ROLF was arrested by the Spanish authorities on an

extradition demand by the German government. After many a day I succeeded in obtaining a hearing with the then governor of Cataluña to plead ROLF's case. But when he laughingly told me that the authorities could do with their political prisoners as they pleased, disregarding international laws that would protect, I was so overcome with indignation that I slapped his face. Fortunately this incident had no bad consequences and finally ROLF was released to France.

In Montpellier BRAUN-BLANQUET received us with open arms, handed us a sum of money which French mycologists had collected for us, and we were on our way to Paris. P. ALLORGE was then the director of the Museum National d'Histoire Naturelle. He gave ROLF a laboratory to work in and R. HEIM obtained a "petit bourse" for him. Needless to say, as so often has happened, ROLF who always liked to work late, one night was locked also in this Museum but was finally freed at the small hours by the combined efforts of Dr. HEIM, M. YEN and myself.

While we were looking for a furnished room to rent in the Quartier Latin, we met a Spaniard who offered us one on the sixth floor of his own building. Pretty soon, by glimpses through open doors, we had to realize that the first two floors were occupied by "une Maison", run by our landlord's wife. This amused both of us and R. HEIM, who came to visit us there.

But we knew that the time we could spend in Paris must be limited — the "petit bourse" was really very petit and only for a limited time and we foresaw that a war had to start soon. Besides, I was pregnant and Rolf felt he had to provide us with a more stable income. The famous geneticist N. I. VAVILOV was instrumental in obtaining for ROLF a research job at the Botanical Garden of the Academy of Sciences of the USSR. I followed him some weeks later in the middle of winter and arrived at Leningrad only days before our daughter was born.

ROLF's work in the USSR was extremely fruitful, he went on long and successful excursions to Siberia, the Altai Mountains, Karelia, etc. Once, when looking for sleeping quarters in the Altai region, a peasant woman took him in for the night with the words "that my husband has died of typhus only yesterday, permits me to offer you his bed" One of his most ardent students who often accompanied him, LJUBOV N. VASILIEVA, is now professor at Vladivostok and author of valuable books on Far-eastern agarics. Close collaboration with B. A. BONDARZEV led to an important step ahead in polypore systematics.

Also for me this time was interesting. I worked as an X-ray technician with NEMENOV and ROCHLIN, the fathers of Russian radiology, became close friends with Mme SHIRSHOVA, the wife of the famous

polar scientist who spent several months on a drifting ice floe in the Arctic with the PAPANIN expedition. Generally, the Arctic is ever-present in the minds and lives of the people of that "Palmyra of the North"

The collections of the Ermitage influenced me greatly, I became well acquainted with the castles and palaces of PETER and CATHARINA, both the Great, with the shallow beaches of the Baltic sea — visiting the island of Kronstadt on foot was a standing joke — and the forests where we went to collect. An unforgettable experience was the night of June 21, when people gather in the gardens of Peterhof to greet the rising midnight sun with shouts of joy, music and dancing. I liked to walk through the extensive Orangeries in the Botanical Garden with AMPARO HEIDI in my arms, showing her the luxurious tropical plants there of which, a few years later, we were going to see so much. W. H. TRANZSCHEL, the great rust specialist, was our good friend during that time and since he had three daughters, he was my trusted adviser in matters of child care.

When the Nazis occupied my native Austria in 1938, my parents and family were forced to leave our home and eventually we emigrated to the USA.

ROLF reached Hawaii and the shores of California in January of 1941. It was a very short time before HITLER's invasion of the USSR, and the famous 900 days siege of Leningrad during which TRANZSCHEL died of hunger and cold, and BONDARZEW earned the highest medal of the country for organizing potato planting in the parks of Peter's city.

In the meantime I had tried to get a place to work for ROLF — unsuccessfully; but soon after his arrival Dr. D. A. LINDER and Dr. MERRILL offered him a job at Harvard University which for the first year was financed by a grant from the Oberländer Trust. We stayed for over seven years in Cambridge, Mass. At Harvard ROLF also prepared his *Crinipellis* monography, working late hours at the Farlow Herbarium. One evening a friend of mine telephoned and to her question, where ROLF was, I answered "oh, he is with his *Crinipellis*" There was a shocked silence and then she said in a disapproving tone: "And you permit that?" He also finished his "Agaricales in Modern Taxonomy" during his stay at Harvard.

1942/43 we spent a year in Florida, collecting around Sebring, Gainesville, Coral Gables, etc. and the book "*Boletineae* of Florida" is one of the results of the Florida studies. But here ROLF, who has never been afraid of any wild animal or insects, made his painful acquaintance with redbugs and was once bitten by a spider and incapable of working for two days.

During the Harvard time ROLF taught two summers at the Mountain Lake Station of the University of Virginia where not only

rattlesnakes but also mushrooms abound in the woods. Once there was a group of students unsuccessfully trying to identify an object, when our little daughter piped up with "why, this is a myxomycete". It was.

In 1946 D. LINDER died and ROLF became Acting Director of the Farlow Herbarium. In 1948, the president of the Universidad Nacional de Tucumán, Dr. H. DESCOLE, himself a botanist, came to visit Harvard University and being a man filled with ambition for his university, offered ROLF a professorship there. He, for his part, saw a chance to continue the work on subtropical fungi begun in Florida and was also impressed that the salary offered him would be "higher than a general's", after the seven lean years at Harvard an enticing prospect; so he accepted.

After we had looked up "Tucumán" in an old German encyclopedia from about the year 1880, where it said that the inhabitants of Tucumán distinguished themselves by their intelligence, proof of which was "that they had participated in every single revolution of the country," we sold our home, complete with Charlie our cat, our furnishings, etc. and were on our way to Buenos Aires. From there, after recovering our car from the clutches of the customs we went on the long drive to the Northwest although in Buenos Aires we had been warned against such a risky, dangerous journey through the salt deserts, on dirty roads, with temperatures up to 45° C and no Service station for hundreds of kilometers. All this was mostly true but we drove on happily. In the cactus desert north of Jesus Maria — ROLF quipped, the town was called thus because the traveler, when he came to the end of the pavement and saw the ankle deep dust on the road ahead, threw his hands up in despair and cried "Jesús Maria!" — we were so enchanted by the magnificent flowers of the various cactus species that HEIDI and I, not heeding ROLF's warnings, could not resist touching them — with the result that we were busy for hours pulling the tiny spines from our hands. Here I saw *Battarrea guicciardiana*, the tall desert mushroom, for the first time.

At that time there was quite an assemblage of outstanding foreign botanists at the Instituto Miguel Lillo, HUECK, SLEUMER, SPARRE, BARKLEY, just to name a few. The very good library — whose director I eventually became — the ambiance of serious research work, eager and gifted students, and the active benevolence of the authorities made work there very pleasant for the first few years. Here the first edition of the "Agaricales" was published, with me editing the manuscript and proofreading. From here ROLF was delegated to the Botanical Congresses in Stockholm, Paris, Montreal, Edinburgh, and on countless collecting expeditions within Argentina, to Chile, Bolivia, Brazil, Columbia, Paraguay, Peru, Uruguay.

Collecting was always rewarding and since Tucumán lies at the

foot of the Aconquija, we could get in our jeep and drive up San Javier to 1200 meters in less than an hour when the temperature became unbearable below. The university owned several fine chalets up there, the remnants of the once planned University City, which the scientists could use as headquarters for collecting excursions, seminars and courses with the students. For instance, Dr. ROLFI, as he was affectionately called by the employees of the Instituto Lillo, once invited Dr. B. LOWY from Baton Rouge for such a course. It was also there that we took WALTER GIESEKING, the pianist, on his butterfly-hunting excursions during his several visits to Tucumán. We also loved going to Tafi del Valle, a village in the Calchaquies valleys at about 2000 meters. Starting from the canefields one went up gradually through the rain forest and through the subalpine alderwoods to the alpine zone and the Infernillo pass at 3000 meters. Another village in the Calchaquies that we often visited was Cafayate, famous for its aromatic wines and colorful carnival. But generally, traveling in the Northwest of Argentina was still rather hazardous and many were the times when we had to detour hundreds of kilometers because of the "crescientes", the flash-floods which are caused by sudden heavy rainfalls in the high mountains. The entire bed of the rivers was changed in minutes, roads washed away and one was lucky if one was not stranded between two crescientes. When traveling on horseback, I always admired how cannily the horses found shallow and safe footing in the fastest and the muddiest streams. Often they simply refused to cross a stream shortly after a heavy rain, apparently knowing that the floods had not yet subsided sufficiently. After waiting one or two hours, they crossed willingly.

The fungi of the alpine zone of the Andes were very little known, consequently frequent trips to the alpine zone were made. For instance, we took the train from Salta to San Antonio de los Cobres, a village situated at about 4000 meters. The train, equipped with an engine at either end, went zigzagging up the pink slopes of the Andes until we reached our destination at midnight, in icy cold but with the most gorgeous starry sky. Next morning, after a night spent in our clothes buried under seven horse blankets and still shivering with the cold, we woke up to a pink and beige world, where 6000 meters high mountains seemed like hills and a sun so powerful that I soon sought refuge in the dark of a hut.

Another favorite collecting spot was in the province of Jujuy, especially the lower part of the famous Quebrada de Humahuaca, the lakes of Yala with their interesting alderwoods, the fairyland *Polylepis* and *Podocarpus* woods where collecting is rewarding but difficult and even dangerous because of the rocky ground these trees grow on. To the *Podocarpus*-zone, now half destroyed by wood cutting, we usually traveled on horseback. It was in Jujuy that ROLF found a unique and

practical way of drying his collections, namely in the fermenting ovens of the tobacco plantations. The smell of the drying leaves was so omnipresent and powerful that I can remember it even now. These plantations were worked almost exclusively by Bolivians. ROLF was quite familiar with their ways since he had spent three months collecting in the Bolivian Yungas, the Oriente, along the Beni and the Madre de Dios rivers.

But sometimes conditions were rather disagreeable. I remember days and days of the Zonda, the fallwind, blowing without a moment's peace to re-gather one's shattered nerves; high temperatures, endless rains, mosquitos and, worse, blackflies, horseflies, redbugs — we had them all. In the North sometimes a large, dark violet cloud came towards us with great speed — and we were in a locust swarm that darkened the sun like the Egyptian plague. They squished under the wheels of the car, thumping on the roof and against the windshield, big fat things out of the mountain deserts of Bolivia that did terrible damage to the crops of Northwestern Argentina, but have been more or less controlled since about fifteen years.

Once we had a blow-out in the midday sun when it had 45° C in the shade. Rolf pointed to the only tree in sight, an Algarrobo, which was about 200 meters away and sent me and HEIDI there where we shared the tiny bit of shade with several cows and innumerable biting and stinging insects while he changed the tire in that broiling sun, the sandy soil making it especially difficult to jack up the car.

Or the time when we were crossing a river as we always used to, but it must have rained heavily in the mountains. The spot where we forded, had changed and suddenly water was streaming in one side of the jeep and out the other and we sat deep in the water with the motor dead. We waded ashore and finally procured the services of a horse and a long lasso and pulled the car out. Of course, this was not the only time a botanist's motor vehicle has been salvaged by horses or oxen.

Or the time when we drove through the driest, western part of the province of Catamarca, crossing the breakneck Zapato-pass, our jeep lost water and the motor began to heat up severely. But — a miracle in the desert! — just a few yards further on there was the only water, a sudden short flashflood, for miles. I always traveled with a wide-brimmed hat against the sun, so with this hat ROLF filled our water tank and tied a towel around the leaky rubber hose connection of the radiator, so we could reach our destination, dusty, fly-ridden, beautiful Fiambalá.

Bridges are spanning the streams now, most of the roads are paved and the adventure has gone out of collecting in the Northwest of Argentina.

In the village of Belém, also in Catamarca, I had wandered off to an archeological site and ROLF could not find me. He inquired for me of an elderly man on the street, and when he described me as a middle-aged woman, the man said soothingly: "Don't worry, you'll find her; after forty they don't get lost" This has become a standing quote with us since then.

A large part of the year 1960 was spent in Holland, ROLF working at the Rijksmuseum and I proofreading the second edition of the "Agaricales" There we met or met again our dear friends "RIEN" and UDA DONK, the SLEUMERS, Drs. MAAS GESTERANUS, BAS, VAN BRUMMELEN, LENHOUTS, and others.

During a stay in the Pitztal in the Tyrolean Alps we accompanied M. MOSER and E. HORAK to the Tiefental to their mycorrhiza-inoculated alpine conifer plantation. The plan for the invitation of these two scientists to Argentina was hatched there in St. Leonhard; MOSER for studying the *Cortinarius*-flora of South America and HORAK to impart his knowledge about micorrhiza. This plan was realized during the years 1962 and 1963, finally resulting in the book "*Cortinarius* FRIES und nahe verwandte Gattungen in Südamerika" (1975), dedicated to my husband in recognition of his part in this project by its authors.

ROLF had been invited by the Consejo Nacional de Pesquisas to work with our dear friends A. CASTELLANOS who taught in Rio de Janeiro and L. EMYGDIO DE MELLO FILHO, to teach courses at the Museu Nacional de Bôa Vista in Rio de Janeiro. We went on several extensive collecting trips with Don ALBERTO and apparently the students liked ROLF's course because when it ended, they gave me some raw amethysts as a souvenir. At these occasions we also met some of the outstanding Brazilian botanists, MILANÉS, PABST, STRANG, LABOURIAU and many others and some long-lasting friendships resulted.

Unforgettable are the times we spent in Recife at the Instituto de Micologia with ROLF's collaborator, our good and true friend A. CHAVES BATISTA and his wife ALGECIRA. We went on long collecting trips to the Interior, to João Pessoa, the easternmost tip of the continent and often I lazed for hours at the beach of Recife, one of the nicest I know.

In 1961 ROLF accepted a professorship at the Universidad de Buenos Aires, then perhaps the best of Latin America, and although he often returned to his old collecting grounds in the North and North-west, he became increasingly interested in the fungus flora of the southern part of the country and several journeys to the provinces Rio Negro und Neuquén and neighboring Chile resulted. In the region of Bariloche, province of Rio Negro, ROLF initiated his work on the ecology of mycorrhiza and especially sociology and natural succession of the ectotroph forests. The Brazo Tristeza of the Lake Nahuel Huapi,

where several forest fires had raged in the past seemed well suited to these studies because the exact dates of the fires were known to the National Park authorities. I cannot remember how often we went south, in spring, summer and fall, with students, with assistants, with other botanists. We traveled in halftrucks, station wagons, or whatever we could get. In one day we raced to Gral. Acha in La Pampa, where the pavement ended and then continued on the dusty road called "La Japonesa", which became impassable after one of the rare rains in the ordinarily dry, low-shrub vegetation of Patagonia. But reaching the Rio Negro valley the landscape became friendlier and crossing the river Limay on a rope-pulled ferry near the end of the xerophytic region, we were approaching the extensive *Austrocedrus* and *Nothofagus* woods of the East slope of the Andes. The lake region of Patagonia in fall offers the most beautiful aspect with the evergreen of "coibe" (*Nothofagus dombergii*) followed by the bright red of the "lengas" (*N. pumilio*) which further passes into the pure white snow zone under a deep blue sky.

Since the main fruiting of South temperate fungi occurs in late fall and early winter, we went forth every morning, often in rain and snow, swathed in plastic from head to toe, to count tiny white mycenae and collybias for hours and hours in ROLF's three-meter squares. It was my work to annotate every fungus found in the squares. Only part of the results of this work has been published so far.

Once, at Puerto Blest, I went alone walking through the woods when on an embankment bordering the path I saw a strange looking fungus such as I had never seen before. It stuck out of the embankment just too high up for me to reach and knowing that within a short time the boat from Bariloche was due to tie up at the jetty and the tourists would swarm up this path — one might spot my discovery! — I raced back the two kilometers to the hotel, convinced Rolf that it would be worth to hurry back to my locality — and the result is *Austrogaster marthae*, a new genus and species!

From San Martin de los Andes we once went west to Hua Hum where we had planned to stay for some days with the Russian prince in exile SHAKHOVSKOY, an eminently pleasant person who lives completely alone with his dog on his peninsula, employed as an entomologist by the National Park Administration. When ROLF told him that "smorchki" (morels) were growing nearby, he became very enthusiastic. He had not tasted them since he had left Russia in 1919. We gathered enough for a meal and prince SHAKHOVSKOY prepared them in the Russian manner on his smoking stove.

One of our trips south nearly ended badly. We had gone with two other botanists crossing over the Futolaufquén pass to Chile. From La Union we went up the coastal range in Southwest Chile to the

"Pelada" and did our work there. When it was time to return, an exceptionally early winter and heavy snowfalls had rendered the higher stretches impassable, and we were turned back by the patrouillant gendarmes since the pass was under several feet of snow. This meant returning hundreds of kilometers further south and taking the lake route! There we had to get lake transportation for our station wagon — it turned out to be nearly impossible. After long and difficult discussions by shortwave radio we were promised a motor boat from Peulla to fetch us and the car. Well, it was sent, but it was a small passenger boat and I still admire ROLF's incredible skill in maneuvering the car onto the deck of this boat where we lashed it down and then, after crossing Todos los Santos Lake getting it off unto a slippery, icy pier which sloped into the stormy lake. We succeeded in getting a few working men from the harbor to hold ropes tied to the car — this in case it should slide into the lake — and ROLF performed the miracle of backing the car onto the pier. Loud handclapping by all bystanders rewarded him for his skill.

We crossed Lake Nahuel Huapi with the car lashed on a tiny raft, in darkness, wind and snow. For two hours we sat inside the car, trembling with cold and fear, with the high waves splashing against the windows. When we landed in Bariloche, we learned that the Shah of Iran and Queen Farah had been scheduled to go to Quetrituhé that evening — of course in a seaworthy ship — but their trip had been canceled because of "dangerous conditions" on the lake!

It had taken us nine days to return from La Union to Bariloche — a trip that normally would have taken three and we were lucky at that. Dozens of cars got surprised by the snow on the mountain passes and the passengers had to be rescued by the gendarmes and the army.

For some years ROLF had become active in the study of fungi from the Antarctic since he had published an account on the first fungus indigenous in the Antarctic and subsequently he attended the First Congress on Antarctic Biology in Paris in 1964. He had been offered a voyage to the Argentine Antarctic by Admiral PANZERINI, Head of the Antarctic Institute in Buenos Aires but lacking the time for such an extensive journey, he proposed E. HORAK to travel instead; this substitution was accepted by Admiral Panzerini and resulted in HORAK's voyage to the Antarctic and the collection of the then southernmost native fungus — a record soon broken by another visitor to the South, the hepaticologist SCHUSTER.

During ROLF's stay at the University of Buenos Aires, his official connection with Flora Neotropica began and while he was Chairman of the Biology Department, he helped shape this organization and was Scientific Director until his final return to the United States.

ROLF had dedicated the year 1957/58 in Mexico and the United States to the hallucinogenic mushrooms and on his return trip to

Argentina we met in Lima — I coming from Tucumán — for the III South American Botanical Congress.

Thanks to the unselfish dedication of Dr. VELARDE who, sadly, is no more with us, this meeting was very interesting and agreeable. We stayed in sunny Huampaní and were whisked hither and thither to archeologically and/or botanically interesting places, and sophisticated dinners. At that time gentlemen in Peru did not yet drive their cars themselves, and so ROLF volunteered to drive VELARDE's halftruck — we were short of a chauffeur — with a group of Peruvian friends and Argentine botanists from Lima, at sea level, up to a pass more than 5000 meters high, a truly unique experience. Some of our passengers suffered brief bouts of mountain sickness but in spite of this everybody collected or tried to, at the foot of the Pasco glacier.

It was also from Lima that we went to Cuzco and from there to the legendary Inca town Machu Picchu. In Cuzco I had an attack of puna, the mountain sickness, and quickly learned to appreciate the curative properties of coca. Machu Picchu of course lies in a tropical mountain wilderness with epiphytes, orchids, Bambuseae, etc. Dr. VELARDE found a lovely green orchid which he presented to me and which I could keep alive for several years in Argentina.

In 1964, after the International Botanical Congress in Edinburgh had ended, Dr. MOSER invited us to accompany him to southern Sweden where we spent several weeks collecting. MOSER had arranged for us in Femsjö to stay at the same locality in which ELIAS FRIES was born and had started studying the fungi, an incomparable thrill! The woods were frequently rather unchanged since FRIES's time. We rarely met anyone and had all the wild raspberries to ourselves. From Femsjö we went to Denmark and visited Morten LANGE at his house at the beach which was quite a change after the stillness of the Swedish woods. Botanists, friends, students, everybody was welcome at this hospitable house, and ROLF and MOSER had the pleasure to collect in the hunting grounds of JAKOB E. LANGE, MORTEN's father.

Years later I accompanied ROLF on his second trip to Mexico. The Universidad Nacional de Mexico was very generous with putting vehicles at our disposal and accompanied by Dr. T. HERRERA and other botanists and students we re-visited Huautla de Jimenez. Already a jeep road went up from Teotitlán, whereas when ROLF had been there the first time he still had to fly in on a small plane. His friendship with Don ISAURO and other locally important Mazatecs was very useful to us and we could obtain truly firsthand competent information about the ancient use of the hallucinogenic mushrooms, and a session with Doña María Sabina provided us with some insight as to the effect of the mushrooms, *Psilocybe caerulescens*, in this case. We also visited and collected extensively in the States of Michoacán, Guerrero, Oaxaca, Veracruz, Tabasco and Chiapas.

In 1967 Rolf was invited by Dr. G. MOSTNY, Director of the Museo Nacional de Historia Natural in Santiago and Dr. C. MUÑOZ, then the leading botanist in Chile, to spend a year in Santiago. There, E. Sierra, who as a young man had worked at the Museum in Barcelona, came forward to greet my husband. He had left Spain, his own country, after 1938, when FONT QUER had been condemned to many years in prison, and worked in Chile as botanical illustrator for Carlos Muñoz. We became close friends with Don EUGENIO, which brightened our stay in Santiago.

While there, we repeated our trips to the "Pelada", nickname for the Station that the University of Valdivia maintained on the Cordillera de la Costa. Usually we stayed there for three weeks, which meant we had to take our groceries from Valdivia, but about halfway up we used to stop at the "Chivería" where a goatherder lived with his numerous family. From him we bought one or two "cabritos", goat kids, which represented our meat supply. But we also liked to collect around there and have a meal at the hut of Don MIGUEL, a very intelligent and pleasant man. Fitzroyas were growing to respectable height and thickness in that region, reminding one of the California Sequoias, but the owners of the land mercilessly cut them down by the hundreds. "Soon there won't be a tree left to cover a roof over a man's head", was what our friend, the goatherder said. In Southern Chile the wood of the *Fitzroya* slit into thin slats is used for this purpose. We also traveled further south to Puerto Montt and north along the scenic Pacific coast, inland to Chuquicamata and San Pedro de Atacama.

On our way back to the States in 1968 we spent two or three months in Columbia, mostly in the company of the meritorious botanist J. IDROBO who can collect fruits and flowers by throwing his machete high up to a branch of a giant tree. We spent about a month at a woodcutter's camp of the Cartón de Colombia Company north of Buenaventura at the Calima river where I had the distinction of being the first white woman to visit the region and to stay at the camp. Here the rain forest is the most exuberant I had ever seen, with tremendous evaporation, full of unpleasant insects and home of the dangerous fer de lance. Also the region around Cali yielded interesting material.

Since 1968 ROLF has been teaching at the University of Illinois at Chicago Circle but finds time to continue with his research at the Field Museum. He was working on identifying fungi that MICHELI had described in "Nova Plantarum Genera" (1729) when he found a locality indicated as "Isla de Boboli". He was rather worried when he could not find this island anywhere in the seven seas on the map — but when we visited Florence soon afterwards, there, in the garden of the Palazzo Pitti was the so ardently searched for Isla de Boboli in the ornamental pond!

While in Italy we also visited UGO di VALLEPIANA, president of the Alpine Club, in Milano with whom and others ROLF had traveled and collected in the Caucasus as a young man and with whom he had first ascended the difficult 4475 meters high peak Gultschi. VALLEPIANA had news: only recently had he received a communication from the Soviet government informing him — and asking him to inform the other participants of the first ascent — that finally, after about 40 years, a Russian mountaineer team had achieved the second ascent on Gultschi where they had found the message left by the first team. Understandably, this pleased ROLF no end.

As for narratives on the achievements and adventures of these expedition I refer to ROLF's own publications ¹⁾).

Part of the year 1971 was spent in Lausanne at the Institut de Botanique in close collaboration with H. CLÉMENTON. ROLF was a guest several times of the Academy of Sciences of Czechoslovakia, times he remembers fondly, and where we formed lasting friendships with all the charming Czech mycologists. Both in Switzerland and Czechoslovakia I accompanied him during his collecting trips from the Montblanc to the Tatra.

In 1973 we went to Ecuador, collecting around Quito and on the western slope near Santo Domingo de los Colorados where the woman of the Colorado Indians haven't changed their topless fashion since olden times. From Baños we traveled down the Eastern slope to Puyo and beyond. ROLF was a guest of the Texas Oil Co., who has been drilling extensively in the Amazon region. He collected there, transported daily by small planes and picked up by them in the afternoon. Thus he could cover a large area which otherwise would have been impossible in that region.

Following an invitation by Dr. F. EHRENDORFER, ROLF recently taught a semester at the University of Vienna. He was happy about this opportunity, somehow he felt a circle had been closed when he could return as Visiting Professor to his old Alma mater where he had been studying under Prof. WETTSTEIN. It also provided the opportunity of meeting our old friends again, K. H. RECHINGER, E. BRODA, and making new ones, L. SANDMANN, K. MADER and wife and all the other members of the Mykologische Gesellschaft. It also gave me the opportunity to show HEIDI AMPARO who had come from Argentina to be with her father on his 70th birthday, my native city in her baroque glory. And although the waters of the Danube are even less blue now they were in my youth, her shores are still among the most beautiful I know.

¹⁾ SINGER, Rolf. Roaming Russia's Caucasus. *The National Geographic*, 82: 91—122, July 1942. Washington.

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Digitale Literatur/Digital Literature

Zeitschrift/Journal: [Sydowia Beihefte](#)

Jahr/Year: 1977

Band/Volume: [8](#)

Autor(en)/Author(s): Moser Meinhard Michael, Horak Egon

Artikel/Article: [Verzeichnis der wichtigsten Publikationen von R. SINGER 1-25](#)