

**THE DEPARTMENTS OF KAS  
ACADEMY IN BERLIN**

**KNOW YOUR PAST – SHAPE YOUR FUTURE**

“ZUKUNFTSBLICHE” – PERSPECTIVES BEYOND THE ORDINARY

“AKADEMIELESUNGEN” – READINGS IN THE ACADEMY

BERLIN AS METROPOLIS

THE KAS YOUNG ACADEMY

CONTEMPORARY HISTORY

PROJECT “FIFTY YEARS SINCE THE BUILDING OF THE WALL”

EXHIBITIONS

NEIGHBOURHOOD DISCUSSIONS IN BERLIN

CIVIC EDUCATION OFFICE IN BERLIN

*The links in this PDF will take you to further and primarily German-language information from the Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung.*

## KNOW YOUR PAST – SHAPE YOUR FUTURE

The Academy is the forum and venue of the Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung (KAS) in Germany's capital Berlin. It takes on fundamental and topical political issues, promoting debates on issues concerning the future and discussions that confront contemporary history. It also provides a range of opportunities for dialogue between politics, science, economy and society.

The four central themes of the foundation – the future of the mass political parties, integration and social cohesion, the Social Market Economy and sustainable growth, and the future of Europe – were reflected in the content of both the one-off events and the established programme series of the Academy.

In addition to major events such as the [Day of the KAS](#), the [second State of Europe speech](#) and the [KAS Youth Congress](#), the Academy's profile in 2011 was characterised in particular by programmatic events such as the [ZukunftsBlicke](#) (Perspectives Beyond the Ordinary), the readings in the Academy, the Berlin Neighbourhood Debates as well as the comprehensive project to mark the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the erection of the Berlin Wall.

The Academy took on current events such as the "Arabellion" – a reference to the Arab Spring – in lecture and discussion evenings. The situation in Tunisia was dealt with in a performance of the play "Amnesia" by the Tunisian director Fadhel Jaibi. It anticipated current events which were discussed by Jaibi and others experts.

There was also a scintillating discussion evening on the theme of citizens taking political responsibility where the former prime minister of the states of Rhineland-Palatinate and Thuringia and honorary chairman of the KAS, Professor Bernhard Vogel, and the former GDR civil rights activist, national commissioner for the Stasi archives Joachim Gauck, who was elected German President in March 2012, debated civic engagement and its importance for social cohesion as well as the credibility and grounding in values that are needed in politics. Three young representatives from the church, business, and civil society joined the debate. The evening was held as a tribute to the politician and democrat [Hanna-Renate Laurien](#) who died in 2010.

For the project [Stadtgespräch Berlin](#) (Berlin City Talks) which the Academy had a major role in initiating and supporting, prominent figures came together from various spheres to strengthen the civil discourse on important issues concerning Berlin's future. Their desire has always been to motivate citizens to actively participate in selected projects for the good of their city. Overall, 65 individual initiatives in various neighbourhoods and districts participated in a city-wide day of action on the issues of Berlin's quality of life, image and hospitality in 2011.

### "ZUKUNFTSBLICHE" (PERSPECTIVES BEYOND THE ORDINARY)

Following on from 2010, the Academy continued with the key topic of education focussing on the question of why Bavaria, Saxony and other German states continue to be ranked far above Berlin on the OECD's [PISA](#) educational assessment scale. In the view of the panel, the key to Bavaria's success story was, above all else, centrally set exams, strict supervision of schools, evaluation and analysis of the quality of teaching, continuous further training for teachers as well as supporting teachers' abilities to diagnose pupils' educational difficulties. At another event, Lloyd McKell, who



*In March 2011 the KAS commemorated [Hanna-Renate Laurien](#), the former president of the Berlin state parliament and co-founder of the association "Against Oblivion – For Democracy" with an evening of discussion and debate.*

spent several decades working for the Toronto District School Board, discussed the successful **model of integration through education** in use there with state minister Professor Maria Böhmer, who underlined its model character for Germany.

In the second half of the year, the *ZukunftsBlicke* concentrated at the topic of mobility. Experts from Germany and abroad discussed how an integrated timetable with synchronised services at regular intervals and a timetable-based infrastructure plan for a more efficient rail system can significantly help easing traffic congestion.

#### “AKADEMIELESUNGEN” (READINGS IN THE ACADEMY)

The winner of the KAS Literary Award in 1996, Günter de Bruyn, opened the 2011 series of readings in the Academy to a full house with an **introduction to his new book** “Die Zeit der schweren Not. Schicksale aus dem Kulturleben Berlins 1807-1815” (A time of Hardship. Stories from Berlin’s Cultural Life 1807-1815). Taking the examples of the poets Heinrich von Kleist and Adelbert von Chamisso, the Prussian military theorist and commander Carl von Clausewitz and other important figures of the period, he describes the years following Napoleon’s victory over Prussia, which were a time of difficulty and crisis but also heralded the modern era and ushered in an extremely flourishing cultural period.

He was followed by the Swiss Peter Stamm, and the Austrians **Josef Winkler** and **Josef Haslinger**, who were the first ever foreign writers to participate in these readings of current works.

#### BERLIN AS METROPOLIS

The opportunities and risks associated with the development of urban areas cannot be better illustrated in Germany than in its capital. The *Metropole Berlin* series of events provides a forum to participants in modern urban planning where planners and architects, “neighbourhood managers” and urban developers come together to debate strategies to deal with the challenges that face them. In 2011, the opening event focussed on the question of the development potential and scenarios for the city centre districts, Berlin’s *Kieze* or neighbourhoods, and other boroughs located inside the central area bounded by the circle line of Berlin’s S-Bahn suburban railway. At this event, it was shown how economic dynamism, climate protection and efficient use of resources can go hand in hand with an improvement in housing conditions and general quality of life, with a strengthening of stable social ties and improving of disadvantaged city neighbourhoods.

The starting point of the second event was the consensus that Berlin continues to lack a vision. Intensive, effective involvement of the citizens could, however, contribute to the development of a new vision for the city as a whole. While initiatives and politicians consider the cooperation within certain individual districts to often be positive, there is an overarching need to improve the generally slow pace of cooperation across district boundaries and with the city’s central administration.

#### THE KAS YOUNG ACADEMY

The Academy managed to increase its appeal to younger generations by offering particular topics and event formats such as *Jugendpolitiktage* (Youth Politics Days) or role plays or simulation exercises.

Because young people are more attracted to tackling political topics through practical and artistic work than through talks and discussions, an artistic-aesthetic approach was chosen for the **youth politics day** “Integration in Berlin”, for example. Sixty school students examined this topic in six work groups (writing workshop, film, art, comic, dance, and poetry slam). They introduced their own



At a sold-out event in the forum of the KAS Academy in February 2011, Günter de Bruyn presented his new book.



experiences and ideas, and entered into a lively debate. The results could be seen as well as heard. The pieces from the writing workshop appeared across a whole page of the newspaper *Berliner Zeitung*.

250 young people from Berlin and other German states examined the issue of international terrorism and the associated security policy issues at the BERMUN (Berlin Model United Nations) 2011 conference where they simulated the work of UN bodies in an authentic manner.

In the autumn, fifteen teams from German universities competed in the national finals of the **EXIST-priME Cup** held at the Academy. After a hundred local and regional preliminary rounds this was the deciding stage to find the German management and entrepreneurial team of the year for 2011.

The importance of language for the integration of young people with an immigrant background was underlined by a project day inspired by a famous advertising slogan rearranged to carry the title "Lebst du schon oder schweigst du noch? – Warum Sprache mehr ist als Grammatik und Vokabellernen" ("Are You Already Alive or Do You Still Have Nothing to Say? Why There is More to Language Than Learning Vocabulary and Grammar"). The collaboration with various Berlin secondary schools where experts gave talks on a great variety of topics and had lively discussions with pupils was continued in 2011.

#### CONTEMPORARY HISTORY

Groups from all over Germany with several hundred participants in total took part in the **2010 DenkT@g (Day of Reflection) competition**. The jury selected twelve of the projects and those were recognised at an event at the Academy in January 2011 in the presence of Professor Norbert Lammert, president of the Bundestag and patron of the project. In their contributions, all participants had looked into ways to confront the history of Nazi dictatorship and the Holocaust as well as address the new recurrences and challenges posed by right-wing extremism, xenophobia and anti-Semitism.

Shortly thereafter, the renowned historian Saul Friedländer presented the new edition of his much-discussed book about Pius XII and the Third Reich.

Civic education also took place in historic locations. In June, **Klaus von Dohnanyi and Rainer Eppelmann** joined 180 students from Berlin to compare National Socialism and the repressive East German regime as well as forms of resistance against both dictatorships in the Berlin courtroom where judge Roland Freisler had sentenced many resistance fighters after August 1944. Both witnesses to history called for vigilance and moral courage in the fight for liberty, justice and human dignity, within democratic societies as well.

"Legacy and Responsibility" – that was the title of an evening organised in cooperation with the Canisius-Kolleg high school in November in the Maria Regina Martyrum church in Berlin. It featured reading of excerpts from the last letters of Freya und Helmuth James Graf von Moltke and a piano recital by the internationally well-known pianist Veronica Jochum von Moltke.

The historical film series of the Academy presents documentaries and feature films on contemporary topics while offering in-depth discussions of those with the participation of witnesses to history and experts. In 2011 the series focused on Stalinist terror in East Germany (*Die Waldheimprozesse*, on the Waldheim trials of 1952), the consequences of political detention in East Germany (*Jeder schweigt von etwas anderem – Last to Know*) and the persecution of intellectuals critical of the Ceaușescu regime in Romania (*An den Rand geschrieben. Schriftsteller im Fadenkreuz der Securitate*).



*The winners of the  
DenkT@g (TH!NK@Day)  
competition 2010.*

The role of intellectuals – artists, journalists and academics – during last century's totalitarian regimes in Germany and their widespread support of the systems was the topic of discussion of the 4<sup>th</sup> Hohenschönhausen Forum.

Over the course of the year, book presentations by Ulrich Schacht (*Vereister Sommer* – on his search for his Russian father), Roman Grafe (*Die Schuld der Mitläufer*) and Heike Otto (*Beim Leben meiner Enkel*) also offered an authentic and enlightening perspective on the East German regime and the many facets of socialist repression.

Multiple aspects of German history, politics and culture during the latter half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century were evoked when former Bavarian education minister Professor Hans Maier presented his autobiography *Böse Jahre – Gute Jahre* in October.

#### PROJECT "FIFTY YEARS SINCE THE BUILDING OF THE WALL"

During an event organised in collaboration with the Hanns-Seidel-Stiftung, writer Durs Grünbein, film director Freya Klier and political scientists Professor Beate Neuss and Professor Klaus Schroeder debated the construction of the Berlin wall as a symbol of repression and failure and its geopolitical importance. A fascinating panel discussion with Hasso Herschel, who had helped people escape from East Germany, along with former East German refugees Doris and Peter Strelzyk as well as the brothers Egbert und Ingo Bethke focused on the courage and creativity people needed to successfully cross the wall and its death strip. Burkhart Veigel, one of the most successful border crossing helpers in the 1960s presented his new book *Wege durch die Mauer (Ways Through the Wall)*.

During a special event for young people, two school groups participated in a guided bike tour along the traces of the wall. In a role play, another group experienced a course in local studies as taught in technical colleges of East Germany; it was an opportunity to learn about earlier teaching methods and educational goals but also the perfidious mechanisms of a dictatorship. At the end, Freya Klier read from her book on Michael Gartenschläger who had fallen into a trap and was shot by a special Stasi commando in 1976 when he tried to expose the East German regime by dismantling spring-gun mines.

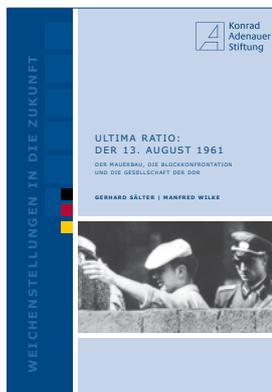
The multi-faceted conference "Divided Sky – Divided Country," organised in collaboration with the *Autorenkreis der Bundesrepublik* (an independent writers' group) and the association *Deutsche Gesellschaft*, focused on the perspective of writers from East and West on the wall and forced separation.

To commemorate the events of 13 August 1961, a gigantic banner inscribed with the words "Construction of the Wall – Symbol of Failure and Repression" in German and displaying a photo of what happened that day was hung in August from the facade of the Academy.

#### EXHIBITIONS

Extraordinary views and depressing insights were what was on offer at the exhibit *Grenzfälle* (Border Incidents) organised at the Academy before the summer break. It showed ninety photos of the inner German border and the Berlin wall taken by six photographers at the beginning of the 1990s to preserve the memory of the disappearance of the border fortification.

The stirring and thought-provoking photo exhibit "Ich krieg dich – Children Affected by War," on show at the Academy in the autumn, aimed to immerse the viewer in the situation of children in war situations through real stories and specific themes. The goal was first and foremost to stir empathy for such suffering and push people to action.



One of the books the KAS published on the construction of the wall was "Ultima Ratio: 13 August 1961" (*Ultima Ratio: Der 13. August 1961*) by Gerhard Sälter and Manfred Wilke .

## NEIGHBOURHOOD DISCUSSIONS IN BERLIN

In 2011, diverse neighbourhood discussions focused on such topics as internal security, education and integration. During the **discussion in Lichtenberg on "Leftist Violence – Berlin After the Events of 1 May,"** Frank Henkel, president of the parliamentary group of the Berlin CDU and regional party president, regretted the absence of a clear message by the regional government about the violence that day and called for a condemnation of violence by society as a whole.

Discussing security, order and cleanliness issues in the context of the Biesdorf Castle Conference series, Rainer Wendt, president of the German police union, stressed that all **Berlin residents had the right to a clean, secure and orderly city.** The question of **security in public transportation** was the focus of the Friedrichshain-Kreuzberg discussion in June. During an evening of presentations and debates, a discussion in Pankow addressed a more stable and sustainable **education policy for Berlin.**

In Steglitz-Zehlendorf, former state minister Armin Laschet talked about **integration and social cohesion** and debated the issue with lawyer Burkard Dregger, who wrote a well-regarded position paper of the CDU party in Berlin on integration. In the fall, Karsten Grabow, coordinator for political analysis and party research at the KAS, considered the question of "What is a Mass Party Today and Tomorrow?"

## CIVIC EDUCATION OFFICE IN BERLIN

In 2011, the Civic Education Office organised a series of debates to explore the concept of trust and how it relates to the fundamentals of democracy, as well as the question of the future and development of Europe.

"**Time Management and Work-Life Balance for Parents**" was the title of a successful seminar for families where childcare was available. The seminar analysed the complex challenges confronting parents today and offered tips on how to best deal with them.

The new series of after-work seminars targets young professionals who have strong social or political interests and offers them the possibility to work on developing both professional and personal skills after work.

In addition, the Civic Education Office helped the participants of 38 seminars from all over Germany gain insights into German politics and the history of the capital. The conference organised for the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the construction of the wall was of particular interest thanks to discussions with border crossing helpers, the visit to memorials of the Berlin wall, a tour where the wall used to stand and lectures on the separation of the city.



*Participants in the family seminar "Time Management and Work-Life-Balance for Parents", which took place in September 2011 in Boitzenburg Castle.*

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