

Annual Report 2013

The Institute (IFGK) had 2013 ten active and six inactive members. The active members are: Martin Arnold, Anne Dietrich, Reinhard Eismann, Albert Fuchs, Mirjam Mahler, Gudrun Knittel, Barbara Müller, Achim Schmitz, Christine Schweitzer and Roland Vogt. The inactive are: Detlef Beck, Christoph Besemer, Björn Kunter, Giovanni Scotto, Uli Wohland und Oliver Wolleh.

Research, teaching, events

Martin Arnold continued to make his research results on „Gütekraft“ (Satyagraha) known through publications among others in „Sicherheit und Frieden“ (S+F) and at the Federation for Social Defence, by talks and in workshops, and also supported the implementation of the concept through his participation in various issues. He participated *inter alia* at the conference on “Arabellion” in the Jugendhof Vlotho, at the presentation of the Gandhi Price to schools in Düsseldorf and Willich, at the Transition-Town-groups in Essen and Düsseldorf, at the conference of the Northern German Network Peace Pedagogy in Ratzeburg, at the Cologne project „alleweltonair“ (talk and radio), at the openTransferCAMP in Cologne, at the Pax Christi Diocesan assembly in Freiburg, at a TEDx-Konferenz („Gun or Gandhi“)and at the protestant community Berlin-Karlshorst. He sought to implement the concept as well by working for the right to refuse war taxes (Network Peace Taxes, Weimar), for the abolition of nuclear weapons (PubQuiz in Essen, International fast and workshop in Büchel), for the improvement of public transport in the middle Ruhr area and against the escalation of the war in Syria (online petition, media reports).

Anne Dietrich is currently working as a peace expert for the GIZ in Ethiopia, but used a holiday to participate at the study day of IFGK in Aachen.

Reinhard Eismann supported the general management of IFGK as much as his work situation allowed. His training as a certified educator for kindergartens he finished successfully in October 2013.

Albert Fuchs presented a Working Paper with the title „Zu 9/11 – nur politisch-mediale Konstruktionen?“ („On 9/11 – a meta-critical attempt“) that discusses the issue of conflicting facts regarding the terror attacks in the USA on the 11th of September 2011 (<http://www.ifgk.de/publikationen/arbeitspapiere>). He also continued to discuss and monitor the ambivalent role of religion in violent conflicts (for example in FriedensForum 6/2013, pp. 43-44) and worked on issues of peace ethics. He coordinated an “Impulse for a new orientation of peace ethics” of the Commission Peace Politics of Pax Christi (available under <http://paxchristi.de/material/material.impulse/index.html>). This paper is a basic paper for a conference planned by Pax Christi in 2015 on peace ethics that will focus on „ethics of nonviolence“ (Robert L. Holmes). In the place he lives, together with the peace alliance Bonn, Albert Fuchs was active in regard to the conflict in Syria, and engaged in protests against German arms exports in the context of the campaign “Outcry”.

Mirjam Mahler has started in March 2013 to work as Executive Secretary for the German FOR.

Barbara Müller continued to serve as treasurer for the IFGK, and to build her free-lance activities in the area of the Hunsrück (www.sapis.de).

Achim Schmitz presented topics of nonviolent conflict transformation and communication at general vocational schools and a vocational school for people with vision handicap in Stuttgart and Waiblingen. Together with Roland Vogt he represented the IFGK at the Network Peace Education Rhineland-Pfalz (<http://www.netzwerk-friedensbildung-rlp.de/>).

Christine Schweitzer continued 2013 to work on the project „Citizens prevent wars“, and finished a draft of the Working Paper. She was able to win the Scandinavian peace researcher Jørgen Johansen to contribute a chapter on the crisis between Sweden and Norway in 1905.

In addition there have been various talks and papers. Together with Andreas Buro she wrote for the magazine *Wissenschaft & Frieden* (4/2013:32-36) a paper on Syria. Her paper „What is nonviolent action?“ was published in *Sicherheit und Frieden* 3/2013: 140-144. Another focus has been the work as editor for the magazine *Friedensforum* (Peace Forum), inter alia with the editorial responsibility for the themes “Peace Education” (1/2013), “Africa in the Focus of Geopolitics” (4/2013) and “Human Rights / Human Dignity” (5/2013).

Since October 2012 Christine works as a part-time Executive Secretary for the Federation for Social Defence.

Roland Vogt worked with Achim Schmitz on the project Peace Education in Rheinland-Pfalz.

Study Days

In 2013, the IFGK organized two study days. The spring one on 13 April in Essen had the title „Perspectives of Active Nonviolence“. Four presenters talked about their peace research: Theodor Ziegler about the ‚option nonviolence‘ in school teaching, Renate Brucker on Clara Wichmann, Melanie Husser on different understandings of ‚peace‘ and Christine Schweitzer on successes peace movements had preventing or stopping wars.

The study day in autumn¹ had the title “Why not by civilian means? Can the EU, the winner of the Nobel Prize for Peace, still be stopped in its development to become a military power?”. It took place on 12 October in Aachen. Roland Vogt (IFGK), Alessandro Rossi (Nonviolent Peaceforce), Nabila Habbida (EPLO), Andrea Kolling (ENAAAT) and Bianca Percic (Attac) spoke about the positive and negative sides of the EU and networking from below by civilian initiatives.

International networking, cooperation and representation

Martin Arnold represented the IFGK at the *Arbeitsgemeinschaft für Friedens- und Konfliktforschung (AFK)* (that is the professional association of peace researchers in Germany).

Achim Schmitz and Roland Vogt represented the IFGK at the *Netzwerk Friedensbildung Rheinland-Pfalz* (network peace education).

Christine Schweitzer represented the IFGK at the Council meeting of *War Resisters' International (WRI)* in Bilbao, and is since 2012 also member of the executive of WRI. In autumn 2013 she was elected as new chair of the German support association of WRI.

Several members of IFGK participated in the annual conferences of the Federation for Social Defence in Würzburg and of the Platform Civil Conflict Transformation in Bonn. Christine furthermore supported the Platform as a member of a Finding commission looking for candidates for the speakers' council of the Platform to be elected in 2014, and was nominated by the Platform as their new representative at the Advisory Council to the German government on the Action Plan Civil Conflict Prevention. The first meeting of the Advisory Council² was on 11 November 2013.

¹ In cooperation with the Rosa Luxemburg Foundation NRW.

² The members of the Advisory Council serve a two-year term.

Management and PR

The management of the IFGK continues to be shared by several members. Barbara Müller is looking after everything having to do with finances and personnel. Achim Schmitz ensures regular reporting to the newsletters of the BSV. Christine Schweitzer took over from Achim the administration of the webpage, is responsible for the organisation of study days and manages the distribution lists and addresses, the information folder and the annual report. Other tasks like the preparation of the contents of study days are rotated. Members of the board of the IFGK continue to be Achim Schmitz and Martin Arnold; treasurer is Barbara Müller.

In February 2013 the website of IFGK was moved to the programme Typo 3; the entering of the new contents was done by Christine.

All core work of IFGK is done on an unpaid, voluntary basis.