

Dear scholarship holders, alumni, partners and friends of KAAD,

The weeks before Christmas form Advent: a period of time whose special theme is the future. The future? Usually we see it as a chance to prove oneself, because people are jointly responsible for the future and are supposed to prove themselves in it. In this view, the success or failure of the future depends on the commitment, strength and ability of today's people. This view is not wrong, but at the same time it is not the whole truth, the Christian understanding of Advent asserts. It adds: the future is also something that comes of itself; it simply comes. And is determined by someone who is coming: Jesus Christ. What does that mean?



Karl Rahner, the Jesuit theologian, made a distinction in a fine essay on the subject of the future. He speaks of the future as what one foresees and what one brings about oneself through active action. Such a future actually already belongs to the present (even if it can still be thwarted). There is also talk of a future that is "the non-volatile, the non-planned", in "incomprehensibility and infinity". The author calls this future the unavailable, "which does not live from our power, but has power itself". It is not subject to man, it comes of itself, belongs to time.

Rahner deepens this thought even more. This arriving, 'true future' is silent, one cannot say anything to it by oneself. But one must relate to it. What would happen if someone were to meet this future with confidence and consider it to be the 'future to come for us' - if it were to be understood positively as the 'hope of the future'? Man would then accept the 'knowledge of his not-knowing' as his destiny - but precisely trustingly and not fearfully. In his trust, he assumes that this future, despite its present darkness, will be something very good, 'a blinding brightness'.

We have a responsibility for the future. At the same time, however, the future comes of its own accord. Advent is a reminder of this. In the Christian tradition, it is also a time of festive preparation, but above all the time of a biographical theme: the practice of trust in the One who comes as the future.

'Responsibility for the future' - this is also a good way of describing KAAD's tasks. With this newsletter we would like to give you a brief overview of our activities in the second half of the year.

I wish you a hopeful time and a blessed Christmas.

Yours

P. Dr. Hans Langendörfer SJ
Präsident des KAAD e. V.

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RENEWAL OF THE COOPERATION WITH THE DIOCESE OF MÜNSTER

In September, KAAD was able to renew its long-standing cooperation with the Diocese of Münster, through which young academics from Ghana are given the opportunity to complete a Master's degree. This cooperation has already existed since 2004 for students from the ecclesiastical province of Tamale in northern Ghana, with which the Diocese of Münster maintains a diocesan partnership. In five phases of this partnership so far, 37 students have been sponsored – either for Master's programmes at the Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology (KNUST) in Kumasi/Ghana or at various universities in Germany. The new and sixth funding phase is intended to enable approximately 21 students to study for a Master's degree in Ghana.



NEW LAUNCH OF THE REFUGEE PROGRAMME



The continuation of the scholarship programme to support refugee students in the Middle East was approved by the *Katholische Zentralstelle für Entwicklungshilfe e. V.* (KZE) and thus enters its third funding period (until 2026). Through this project, refugees and sector experts in Lebanon and Jordan will be supported to pursue a Master's degree. In addition to financial assistance, the scholarship also includes inmaterial support through workshops, personal mentoring and integration into the KAAD network. The refugees are mostly from Syria and Iraq. So far, 65 young people have been able to complete a Master's degree in Jordan or Lebanon thanks to a scholarship from this programme.

„SYNODAL PATH – GLOBAL CHURCH PERSPECTIVES” PROJECT

Together with the *Institut für Weltkirche und Mission* (IWM), KAAD is conducting a study on the topic “Synodal Path - Global Church Perspectives”. In the empirical phase, believers from various churches around the world were interviewed on the topics which dominate the German reform debate. In a second phase several focus groups will now examine the findings in greater depth. At the end of this first stage, a press release and summary of the results can be found on our homepage.

New Liaison Lecturers in Frankfurt am Main and Berlin

The team of honorary liaison lecturers is enriched by two new faces:



Prof Dr Viera Pirker



Prof Dr Günther Wassiloswky

In Frankfurt am Main, we were able to recruit *Prof Dr Viera Pirker* for the office of KAAD's liaison lecturer. She has been a professor of religious education and media didactics at Goethe University since 2020. *Viera Pirker* conducts research on religious education in the horizon of the digital, visual religious cultures, identity and plurality. In addition, the development of teaching methodology as media didactics is the focus of her work and projects. Her academic posts have included Tübingen, Jerusalem and Vienna. *Viera Pirker* succeeds our long-time trusted lecturer *Prof. Dr. Thomas Schreijäck*, who has been Professor of Pastoral Theology, Religious Education and Kerygmatics in the Department of Catholic Theology at Goethe University Frankfurt since 1995 and has since become emeritus professor. Having already welcomed *Prof Dr Tanja A. Börzel* as a liaison lecturer at *Freie Universität* in the summer of 2022, we are now delighted to welcome our new liaison lecturer at *Humboldt University*: *Prof Dr Günther Wassiloswky*. He has been Professor of Historical Theology at the newly founded *Central Institute for Catholic Theology* since 2020. Previously, he held professorships in Linz, Innsbruck and Frankfurt am Main.

NETWORKING IN OUR FOCUS COUNTRIES

This year – after a longer break – all focus regions could be visited again and activities could be carried out:

Accompanied by the Head of the Latin America Department, *Dr Thomas Krüggeler*, and welcomed by numerous alumni, KAAD President *Fr Dr Hans Langendörfer SJ* visited Guatemala, our focus country in Central America, from 18 to 25 October. In addition to numerous conversations at our partner university *Rafael Landívar* (URL), the focus of the trip was a seminar in Antigua Guatemala from 21st to 23rd October, which was attended by alumni as well as scholarship holders who are completing the master programme "Social Pedagogy and Inclusion" at the URL. In general, the KAAD President was impressed by the cohesion of the alumni group and the diverse professional activities of the individual participants. This ranges from teaching activities (at various universities) to engagements in the private sector to employment in church institutions such as Caritas or the Human Rights Office of the Archdiocese of Guatemala. At the university *Rafael Landívar*, *Fr Langendörfer* spoke with the Rector, *Fr Miquel Cortés Bofill SJ* and other representatives of the university and gave a talk entitled "The Current Status and Possible Contributions of the Synodal Way of the Church in Germany". ("El estado actual y los posibles aportes del Camino Sinodal de la Iglesia en Alemania"). The topic was well received by more than eighty lecturers and students. In mid-October, a seminar on "Indigenous Peoples in Colombia: Possibilities of Intercultural Dialogue in Times of Socio-Ecological Transformation" took place in Bogota, also under the direction of *Thomas Krüggeler*.



Fr Langendörfer and Thomas Krüggeler with alumnae and alumni at the seminar in Antigua Guatemala



Fr Langendörfer and Thomas Krüggeler together with KAAD alumnae and alumni on the URL campus



The leadership of the Ghanaian KAAD network KASWA with Dr Marko Kuhn during the visit of the new Bishop of Yendi and the leadership team of the Yendi Peace Centre.

Marko Kuhn, Head of the Africa Department, travelled to Addis Ababa in November, where he organised a seminar together with the Ethiopian scholarship holders' association KASHA (*KAAD Association from the Horn of Africa*) on the issue of faith sharing in the family. Two scholarship holders from Kenya and Zimbabwe, who are currently living and working in Ethiopia, also participated in this event. *Nakai Munikwa* (Zimbabwe) talked about her work in the war zone of Tigray, where she works for UNICEF. *Argaw Fantu* from the *Catholic Near East Welfare Association (CNEWA)* and *Father Groum Tesfaye SJ*, long-time spiritual director of KASHA, also contributed to the discussions and talks, which were overshadowed by the difficult social situation in Ethiopia. However,

the disarmament and ceasefire agreement concluded in November gives hope for peace. Following the seminar in Ethiopia, *Marko Kuhn* travelled to West Africa to participate in the transnational "Joint Conference" organised by the *KAAD Association of Scholars in West Africa (KASWA)*, which took place in Yendi (Ghana) and in Kara (Togo).

In November 2022, *Dr Anselm Feldmann*, Head of the Asia Department since May 2022, also set off on an official and inaugural trip to Southeast Asia. He visited the partner committees and alumni associations in Jakarta and Manila and also the partners at *Assumption University* in Bangkok and the scholarship holders there. Finally, *Anselm Feldmann* went to Chiang Mai in northern Thailand to find out about the situation of Myanmar students who had fled their home country. Furthermore, the networking was strengthened through meetings with various representatives of German institutions on site as well as with representatives of various universities.



Warm welcome and exchange at the University Santo Tomas, Manila

The extremely fruitful discussions highlighted the challenges for future endeavours, especially in relation to Myanmar, but also set the course for a trusting and successful future cooperation between KAAD and its partners in Asia. The commitment of these partners and partner committees, scholarship holders and alumni to KAAD as well as to voluntary projects on the ground is a sign of the consistency of the work of the worldwide KAAD community.



KAAD partners in Bethlehem with Nils Fischer: f. l. Rev. Dr. I. Twal, N. Fischer, Dr. H. Marzouqa and Prof. Dr. G. Handal

In mid-November, *Nils Fischer* – Head of the Middle East Department since June 2022 – visited the Middle East, met with current and former KAAD scholarship holders in Jordan, Israel and the Palestinian Territories, as well as with KAAD's partners, such as the heads of local universities like the *American University of Madaba (AUM)*, the *German Jordanian University (GJU)* and *Bethlehem University (BU)*, representatives of important national and international institutions, including the *Jesuit Refugee Service (JRS)* and the *Konrad Adenauer Foundation (KAS)*, and representatives of local churches. The highlight of his visit was the seminar with the scholarship holders in Amman, which dealt with education in Jordan in comparison to Germany. *Nils Fischer* gathered important insights from the visits and discussions on the

difficult situation of the Christian communities in the Holy Land. Central problems are the high costs for the academic training of experts in the region and the so-called 'brain drain', i. e. the migration of academically qualified people.

You can read more about the trips and activities in our Annual Report 2022, which will be published in spring 2023.

EDUCATIONAL EVENTS IN GERMANY

The educational events for our scholarship holders in Germany were dedicated, among other things, to the culture of memory, whether at the seminar in Berlin "Learning from German History – Reconciling and Remembering" or at the event "Culture of Memory and Identity in Latin America" in Münster. Other seminars dealt with mental health, the education system in various states in the Middle East and leadership traditions in African countries. A workshop for doctoral students in turn presented strategies for avoiding, reducing and resolving the various crisis phenomena during a doctorate as well as the history of the doctoral system in Germany. For the first time, a multi-day hike took place, during which the participating scholarship holders learned about the history of hiking while trekking through the 'World Heritage Middle Rhine Valley'.



Scholarship holders with Cardinal P. Turkson (middle) in Rome

The highlight for our scholarship holders was certainly the annual trip to the 'Eternal City' of Rome at the beginning of September and under the leadership of our two spiritual advisors *P. Prof. Dr. Ulrich Engel OP* and *P. Prof. Dr. Thomas Eggersperger OP*. In addition to the daily common prayers and services in one of the main churches or in the catacombs, our group, consisting of twenty people, was allowed to visit the Vatican and was received there for a conversation with *Cardinal P. Turkson*, head of the Pontifical Academy of Sciences. Further talks – with *Msgr. Lahl* of the German Embassy to the Holy See or with the Master of the Dominican Order, *Fr. Gerard F.*

Timoner III OP – introduced the group to the various dimensions of the Global Church. Scholarship holders were also given the opportunity to take part in an audience with Pope Francis.

Local KAAD Meetings at German Universities

In order to support our scholarship holders locally and to exchange ideas with the liaison lecturers as well as with the chaplains of the university parishes, numerous meetings at the university locations of our scholarship holders were organised, e. g. in Karlsruhe, Münster or Hamburg. You can find more about this in our annual report.

PERSPECTIVES FOR 2023

Annual Academy

The Annual Academy 2023 with the working title "The Future of our Planet - Global Perspectives in Caring for the 'Common House'" takes up various seminar proposals from the scholarship holders, which deal, among other things, with the technical-scientific and humanities aspects of coping with climate change and its consequences. The aim of this annual academy is to present approaches and possibilities for shaping the necessary multi-dimensional transformation process. One of KAAD's focal points – both in scholarship and network activities – is dedicated to the preservation of creation and the shaping of a holistic socio-ecological transformation. Scholarship holders as well as alumni are involved in countless research and networking institutions in this thematic field; KAAD is also a member of the papal *Laudato Si'* - Platform for Action. The Annual Academy therefore does not want to dwell on describing the problems, but rather to ask about our possibilities for shaping this transformation, as well as to present possible measures and initiate others.

The Winner of the Award of KAAD Foundation Peter Hünermann 2023



The 12th Prize of the *KAAD Foundation Peter Hünermann* will be awarded in 2023 to the Indian KAAD alumnus *Prof Dr Babu Thaliath* for his outstanding academic achievements in the intersection of German studies and philosophy – including a focus on the phenomenological-biographical dimension of memory and cognition.

International KAAD Academy in Poland 2023

Every year, KAAD organises an academy in one of the focus regions, which is attended by scholarship holders, alumni and partners of the host country as well as guests from neighbouring countries and other continents. In June 2023, the academy will take place in Lublin, Poland. The first part of the event will deal with reconciliation processes and the culture of memory, while the second part will focus on the further development of KAAD.