

Speakers at the conference

Strengthening civil society! Models for the democratic re-use of buildings of criminal groups

Humboldt University Berlin, 11 November 2016

(in alphabetic order)

Dipl.-Ing. Rainer Bohne

Studied urban and regional planning in Berlin in the 1970ies. For the past twenty years he has been the managing director of the Association for Urban and Regional Planning (SRL) and publishes the journal "Planerin" (the planner) as the responsible editor. He has been a member of the board of directors of the Berlin Chamber of Architects for more than ten years. Since the foundation, he has provided key support to ASAP, the accreditation group for architecture and planning courses.

Consigliere Dott. Arturo Bova

He studied law at the University of Messina, and was admitted as a criminal defense lawyer. He is Member of the Regional Parliament of Calabria, elected on the list "Democrats and Progressives". He is chairman of the anti-'ndrangheta committee since 10.11.2015, and since February 2016 also secretary of the committee for institutional reforms. In 1994, he was elected to the city council of Amaroni and became chairman of the PDS group. After re-election in 2000, he became responsible for public works and chair of the DS Group; re-election in 2004. In 2009 he was elected mayor of Amaroni, re-election in 2014 with 94.6% of the votes. He is member of the board of the Partito Democratico of the Province of Catanzaro. As mayor of Amaroni he was awarded the "Tom Benetollo" prize of the Province of Rome in the category "participatory democracy" in 2010, and in 2014 he was appointed UNICEF Ambassador.

Dott. Claudio Cordova

Journalist, lives in Reggio Calabria. After studying modern literature he worked as a criminal and court reporter for local newspapers. Since April 2012 he is director of the online newspaper "Il dispaccio". In 2010 publication of an investigative book on the traffic of toxic and radioactive waste "Terra Venduta - così uccidono la Calabria" (Sold country – that's how they kill Calabria – journey of a young reporter to venomous places) and in 2013 "Il sistema Reggio" (The Reggio-System), a book on the structures between business and Mafia in Reggio Calabria. Appointed as External Adviser to the Parliamentary Anti-Mafia Committee in Rome 2014. He was the only Calabrian spokesman in the last two editions of the International Journalism Festival in Perugia. In 2010 he awarded the prize Anassilaos Young and in 2016 the prize "Journalism in trenches" of the National Anti-Mafia Coordination Riferimenti. Over the years, he has received a variety of threats and warnings for his journalistic activity in an environment with a very high mafia presence.

Dr. Johannes Fechner

Member of the SPD (Social Democratic Party of Germany) since 1990, member of the Bundestag (German Federal Parliament) since 2013, constituency Emmendingen, Baden-Württemberg, in the South-West of Germany. After studying law and being awarded his doctorate in 2001, he worked as a lawyer in Freiburg (Breisgau). Deputy chairman of the Bundestag subcommittee European Law, Chairman of the SPD group in the Law Committee, spokesperson of the SPD parliamentary group on Law and Legal policy.

Prof. Dr. Martin Heger

He studied law at Tübingen University, where he received his doctorate in 2002 and presented his habilitation in 2005 on the topic of "The Europeanization of German environmental penal law". Since 2005, he holds the Chair of Criminal Law, Criminal Procedural Law, European Criminal Law and Modern Legal History at the Humboldt University of Berlin. He is a member of the Academic Council and Academic Senate of Humboldt University, of the Faculty Council and is spokesperson of the legal department. Numerous books, textbooks, commentaries and editorships, especially in the field of environmental criminal law and criminal procedural law.

Karen Larisch, MdL

She was elected member of the state parliament of Mecklenburg-Vorpommern for DIE LINKE in 2016 and is spokeswoman for migration, anti-racism, democracy and diversity. In her hometown Güstrow, Karen Larisch founded Villa Kunterbündnis, a meeting place for self-organized groups, regardless of age or origin. Villa Kunterbündnis offers child care, family events, consultations, language courses as well as music and theater projects. For years the building in the centre of Güstrow has been a target of attacks and vandalism by Nazis. In 2015 she was awarded the Johannes Stelling Prize of the SPD parliamentary group of Mecklenburg-Vorpommern for her long-term social and civil society work in Güstrow and the district of Rostock.

Monika Lazar

She comes from Leipzig, has been a member of the Green Party since 1993 and has been a member of the German Federal Parliament, the Bundestag since 2005. For the past ten years she has been the parliamentary group's spokeswoman for strategies against right-wing extremism; currently she also holds the portfolio of women's policy. In the name of the Green Party parliamentary group, Monika Lazar presented a written request for information to the Federal Government in May 2015 with the theme of "confiscation and civil society reuse of real estate used by right-wing groups and criminal networks" (BT Druckache 18/4819, answer of the Federal Government Druckache BT 18/4995).

Benno Plassmann

Founder and President of the Berlin-based association *Echolot – projects for democratic culture, against mafias*, senior researcher in the project *Creating public spaces*. After studying history, Italian studies and theatre studies in Edinburgh, Bologna and Malta he worked as theatre director, project developer and freelance cultural politician in several countries. Since 2006 he is based in Berlin, working amongst other functions as head of the Berlin participatory arts fund (Projektfonds Kulturelle Bildung), and as co-founder and first spokesman of the democratic grassroots alliance *Vorpommern: weltoffen, demokratisch, bunt!*. Together with the alliance he received the Johannes Stelling Award of the SPD parliamentary group in the state council of Mecklenburg-Vorpommern in 2013 for his committed work in support of courage and democratic culture.

Timo Reinfrank

He studied political and social Sciences in Berlin and Bonn. In his function as coordinator of Amadeu Antonio Foundation, he provides consultancy to civil society initiatives. He advises politicians and federal ministries, such as the Ministry for Family, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth, or the Ministry of Justice on topics of right wing extremism and support for democratic culture. Since 2007, he is director of the "Verein für demokratische Kultur in Berlin e.V" (association for democratic culture Berlin), since 2010 one of the speakers of the Federal working group development of democracy (BAGD). He is an active member in a range of parliamentary advisory boards. Since 2015 he is a member of the editorial board of the journal "Demokratie gegen Menschenfeindlichkeit" (democracy against human enmity).

Jürgen Roth

Since the 1970s he has been publishing his freelance investigative work in books and television. One of the main focusses of his work is international organized crime and corruption. A selection of his publications in this field include (translation of the German titles, not available in English): *A criminal holding company. United Europe in the grip of the Mafia*, 1993; *Investigation prohibited. Why police has abandoned the fight against crime*, 2004; *The Germany Clan. The unscrupulous network of politicians, top managers and lawyers*, 2007; *Mafialand Germany*, 2009; *The deep state: the subversion of democracy by secret services, political complices, and the rightwing mob*, 2016; and his latest work *Dirty Democracy - hollowed out - exploited - deleted?*.

Dipl.-Psych. Heike Scharpff

Psychologist and theater director, she is co-founder of the Waggonhalle Marburg, worked as assistant director at the state theatre of Darmstadt and as freelance director (including Schauspiel Leipzig, Theater Oberhausen, TAT Frankfurt, Künstlerhaus Mousonturm, Pumphaus, LOFFT, German Stage Service, Ballhaus Ost Berlin). Since 2010, she has been the project manager and coach of the Foundation TANZ - Transition Center Deutschland, and is member of the Executive Board of the German Federation of free performance arts (BFDK) since 2013. In parallel, she continues working on her own free theater projects (Scharpff & Team, Kanaltheater Eberswalde).