

Dear subscribers,

Here you will find the latest news from the IPU Berlin, information on [upcoming events](#) as well as news from our [Green Office](#) and the monthly [column](#) by IPU President **Prof. Jan-Hendrik Olbertz**.

There is no room at the IPU for Antisemitism. The rise in inhumane attacks in Germany, particularly in Berlin, following the terrorist incident by Hamas on 7 October, 2023, is deemed unacceptable. The IPU strives to create a secure environment for all university members, fostering academic discussion in an informed, reflective, mutually respectful, and peaceful manner. As of recently, there is a [dedicated page](#) on our website with relevant links and statements. Thanks to the initiative of committed students and lecturers, concrete actions and education against the various forms of Antisemitism have been gaining momentum at IPU since the beginning of the year. We will continue to provide information about the activities.

All IPU lecturers are encouraged to submit nominations for outstanding Master's theses for **the 2024 Harald Leupold-Löwenthal Young Talent Award** by 15 April, 2024. **Ida di Pietro Leupold-Löwenthal** generously sponsors this annual award which is given to theses by IPU students, with topics inspired by the legacy of the Viennese psychoanalyst Harald Leupold-Löwenthal (1926-2006). Nominations for the award are accepted for works in the field of culture, language, and identity. We will inform you about the winners in this newsletter.

Recently, two notable prizes were granted to exceptional (former) IPU students. **Maya Shamsi Basha** was awarded this year's DAAD prize, while **Lou Noelle** and **Jenny Eis** were recognized for producing the two best Master's theses. Further details can be found [on our website](#).

Moreover, in November **Prof. Thomas Fuchs** delivered the Erich Fromm Lecture 2023. A recording of his lecture is now available [on the Erich Fromm Study Centre's YouTube Channel](#).

Events

22 March 2024 | 7 pm (online)

Library Talk: "Negativity in Psychoanalysis"

With Leon S. Brenner, Duane Rousselle and Mark Gerard Murphy

Register [on our website](#).

SAVE THE DATE

25 to 27 April 2024

IPU's Annual conference

Further information on our website soon.

SAVE THE DATE

11 June 2024 | 5 pm

Information session for prospective students

Further information on our website soon.

SAVE THE DATE

22 June 2024

Long Night of the Sciences at the IPU Berlin

Further information on our website soon.

News from the Green Office

Now that the semester break is just around the corner, we would like to inform you about some exciting news concerning our Green Office and share a few reflections with you.

In early December, **our university's energy-saving campaign** was launched. It focuses particularly on reducing thermal energy (heating, ventilation) and electricity (turning off devices, lights) with the aim of strengthening awareness of sustainable energy use and changing behavior. We encourage all members of the IPU to reconsider their energy consumption and take advantage of opportunities for energy savings. We appreciate your active participation and support.

Furthermore, we are pleased to announce that there is a **winner of the Green Office Ideas Competition**. **Camilla Söderberg** convinced the jury with her idea to install raised beds on the terraces of House 91b. We would like to thank all participants for their contributions and will keep you updated on the implementation.

On 18 January, a special event took place here at the IPU: **The Climate Monologues**, a documentary play by Michael Ruf, was performed. The play tells stories of people worldwide fighting against climate change and provides compelling insights into their personal experiences. Following the play, there was a discussion with Barbara Meerwein and Elisa Paulus from Psychologists for Future. The event was organized by the Green IPU and supported by the Green Office. We thank everyone who participated in the performance and appreciate the lively interest in this important topic.

We wish all students success in their exams and a relaxing lecture-free period.

Elevator Fast

The [February column](#) by IPU President **Prof. Jan-Hendrik Olbertz**

To whomever happens to see me out of breath in the next few weeks, I offer an explanation. It's relatively secular but has religious origins. I am fasting. Normally that does not cause one to be out of breath – unless one is on an elevator fast. I am not forgoing meat or milk until Easter, rather, regardless of where I am, I am refraining from using elevators. In this sense, I am giving up something having to do with convenience. Etymologically, however, the word "fasting" has nothing to do with the German word "fast" [translation: almost, nearly], rather with the German word "fest" [translation: firm, solid] in the direction of strong or decided. It is also resonates with the English word "fast", i. e. quickly.

Jesus fasted for 40 days in the desert before he began his mission. Since then, many people use this period of time after Ash Wednesday in order to find God (or, otherwise interpreted, oneself), to practice restraint, and to atone. By the way, Noah's flood lasted 40 days, the Israeli people wandered the desert for 40 years, and Moses spent 40 days on Mount Sinai before receiving the Ten Commandments from God. The number 40 holds great symbolic importance for Christianity. But of course, other religions are also familiar with times of fasting, for example, the Jewish fasts of Yom Kippur and Tisha B'Av, during which the destruction of the Jerusalem Temple is remembered, and in Islam, fasting occurs during the month of Ramadan.

Prof. Jan-Hendrik Olbertz has been president of the IPU Berlin since July 2021. Once a month, he provides commentary here on contemporary, timeless, psychoanalytic and political issues.



In my own way, I have secularized fasting. Each year, I consider anew what I can or want to go without during the 40 days until Easter. It has nothing to do with blasphemy – even if the decision for this year is somewhat surprising. I am abstaining from something that I have become used to without fundamentally needing it. "Abstaining" is, in light of the self-awareness it encourages, perhaps not the correct word, as it belongs to the paradox of fasting that there are also associated benefits. With elevator fasting it is fitness, but it also has something to do with spirituality. Turning away from something is always connected with turning towards something, for example, to others who are also making use of this time. By discussing it, it becomes easier to go without something not strictly necessary for a while...and to just take a deep breath when climbing the stairs.

