



ACADEMIC SELF-ALIGNMENT

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The Christian-Albrechts-Universität zu Kiel (CAU) allows war apologists to teach under its roof, but excludes war correspondents—this is a tradition on the Kiel Fjord.

Universities were once intended as places for the free exchange of different ways of thinking—in the spirit of scientific truthfulness. Today, professors and lecturers are more like ministering spirits used by power when it is looking for someone who can express its narratives more intelligently. At present, war propaganda in particular is seeking academic consecration—and getting it. A particularly repulsive example is provided by a university in Kiel, which had already attracted attention earlier in history by shouting hurrahs when it was a matter of talking the country to get it ready for war.

The word "escalation phobia" is new. If you type it into Google and date the search before February 11, 2023, you will find: nothing. The creator of this unattractive term is Joachim Krause, professor at the Institute for Security Policy at Christian Albrechts University (CAU) in Kiel. This word monstrosity first appeared in [an article](#) for the *Frankfurter Allgemeine* (the FAZ). Escalation phobia, he wrote, is apparently a German disease. In other words, it's a pity that the Germans don't go into battle with a hurrah, as they did back in 1914—impressively portrayed, by the way, in the Oscar-winning hit film [All Quiet on the Western Front](#).

The same commentators who provide a forum for an apologist of escalation are now rejoicing over the award for the anti-war film from German production. Germany really is a richly schizophrenic country. Also teaching at CAU, until recently, was Patrik Baab. That is, until he did something audacious—he wanted to check on location whether there might also be all quiet on the Eastern front. He went on a research trip as a journalist and came back an outlaw: You can read more about his case [here](#). If only he had poured a little oil on the fire in the FAZ. Then he would still be a lecturer in Kiel, high up in the north, where people have always been lenient with those who pander to the authorities.

From Imperial War Haven to Obedience of Authority

If you want to trace the history of Germany in the 20th century, you might as well pick up a chronicle of the CAU—preferably one that was not written on behalf of the university. There, the entire German history is depicted, with its vile and boorish affects. The university, founded by Duke Christian Albrecht of Schleswig-Holstein-Gottorf in 1665, found itself at the beginning of the century in the immediate vicinity of what was later called the primordial catastrophe of the 20th century: This refers to the First

World War. But one facet that led into it was due to the German escalation policy of those years, specifically the Fleet Act.

In particular, Rear Admiral Alfred von Tirpitz excelled as a hawk in the years leading up to the turn of the century. His goal: to rearm the German fleet so that the German Reich could advance into the circle of world powers and explicitly compete with the British fleet. The Reich was—to use Bismarck's phrase—a "saturated state;" but for some, that was not saturation enough. Until two years ago, Kiel's naval base was also called Tirpitzhafen. But even before Tirpitz's "offensive," naval facilities had settled around the Kiel Fjord—for Kiel became an imperial port of war as early as 1871. For this reason, all kinds of shipyards were built there, and the maritime armaments industry in particular shaped the city and its people.

When the First World War began, many professors at Kiel University shouted hurrah and indoctrinated the young men with patriotic romanticism. Once again, a reference to the Oscar-winning film already mentioned above, such a scene of student and professorial exuberance was staged quite well by director [Edward Berger](#). The scene is not set in Kiel, of course, for at that time universities were much the same in their national fervor throughout the Reich.

After the war, more precisely in 1920 during the [Kapp Putsch](#), Kiel University set up an anti-democratic, monarchist and militaristic student company that engaged in firefights with the protection police and workers' militia.

In his work, *Der halbe Weg: Zwischenbilanz einer Epoche* [*Halfway There: An Interim Review of an Epoch*], author Axel Eggebrecht reports on the events of that time: officers entered the university undisturbed and made it clear that "a new government had formed in Berlin"—the professors looked on. The authorities, they had learned in the city of the imperial war port, were always right—no matter who was in charge, no matter who was in charge of the armaments being manufactured on their doorstep.

The CAU and the CIA

We will gallantly skip the era of National Socialism, since of course the CAU was also aligned in thought and conviction. Universities throughout the Reich were not conspicuous in those years for their spirit of resistance; from the beginning of the movement, students belonged to those sociological groups that

showed particular closeness to the soon-to-be and subsequently new rulers. In general, it is fair to say at this point that this history up to that point was not an exclusive unique selling point of the CAU: The proximity to the armaments industry and the soldiery may explain some things, but it happened in this or a similar way in many places in Germany.

Things become interesting with the post-war order, i.e., with the Cold War. The University of Kiel, unlike many universities in the young Federal Republic, was not a place of resistance, criticism of capitalism and fascism: there was a "secret service agent" in the ranks of the professorate. Author Katia H. Backhaus, [in her study](#), "Zwei Professoren, zwei Ansätze. Die Kieler Politikwissenschaft auf dem Weg zum Pluralismus (1971 — 1998)" ["Two Professors, Two Approaches. Kiel Political Science on the Way to Pluralism (1971 - 1998)," found that the CAU faculty worked closely with German and also American intelligence services in the 1980s.

Professor Werner Kaltefleiter in particular has been proven to have been an unofficial collaborator of the [BND](#) and the CIA—with the latter he had apparently come into contact during his time at Harvard. According to Katia Backhaus, the BND also wanted to recruit students from Kiel in the 1970s. Kaltefleiter himself was a Cold Warrior who sought maximum confrontation with the Soviet Union.

He is also the founder of the Institute for Security Policy at Kiel University ([ISPK](#))—it was "annexed as an institute of the Christian-Albrechts-University of Kiel in 1983 [by decision](#) of the Schleswig-Holstein parliament." But at that time there was fierce opposition in the form of the student council. As early as 1981, [it stated](#): "We declare the most determined fight against all efforts to establish a cadre school for cold warriors at Kiel University." The Institute itself, on the other hand, declares itself today to be an objective institution: "As an independent and non-profit institution, the ISPK is not beholden to any political party, other institutions or interest groups."

War of Aggression is the Best Defense?

One must strongly doubt this neutrality sold as objectivity. Most recently, the ISPK, as already written, attracted unpleasant attention, more precisely its current director [Joachim Krause](#). The man was at odds with the Germans, with the supposedly restrained federal government as well as with the people: Germany acutely suffers from "Escalation phobia"—as discussed above.

Twenty years ago, Professor Krause apparently also suffered from escalation phobia: To the agitated voices within German society, which accused the United States under the leadership of President George W. Bush of an attack in violation of international law and which demanded that the Republican President should be brought to the International Criminal Court, he replied in a highly de-escalating manner: All these accusations, which were made against Washington at that time, were grotesque—at least that is how one can interpret his work on this.

Krause's analysis of this from 2003 can be [read here](#). In the concluding remarks, it is stated "that U.S. policy toward Iraq (including the threat of regime change by force) is extraordinarily consistent with the international order of collective security and is also necessary." And further, "The primary motive of U.S. policy is to put in its place a state that challenges the current international order like no other..." Iraq as the greatest global threat? Krause followed the scattered statements of various U.S. hawks, who already spoke unabashedly in the run-up to a possible invasion of Iraq that weapons of mass destruction were stored there. Later, U.S. Secretary of State Colin Powell presented falsified evidence to the UN Security Council.

Krause, of course, never had to justify his moral approval of a war of aggression based on lies. To this day, he has remained director of the ISPK, courted by the media as an important voice. Does the attitude of the ISPK in general testify to neutrality? Krause, at any rate, is on NATO lines; the history of his institute is a history of the Cold War: When someone from such a coterie speaks of "escalation phobia," one should be careful—especially a university that is currently pretending to be washed in the purest of moral waters, as it would like us to believe in the case of Patrik Baab. Can a moral educational institution, as CAU wants to be, finance such a security professor such as Krause?

Process of Self-Alignment

Noam Chomsky wrote at one point that perhaps the greatest worry is that "the arena of rational discourse collapses precisely where there should be hope that it will be defended." In this case, we have located such a place: a university, a place where—at least in theory—discourse should not only be nobly approved but, in a sense, should be natural and normal. The CAU may have always been a place that was not predestined for discourse: with the beginning of that sad German century that began with the founding of the Reich and that may not yet be over—take a look at foreign policy here—the CAU indulged in an unhealthy proximity to power, armaments and the military, so that openness to discourse was a difficult undertaking.

Historian Kurt Sontheimer [wrote](#) in "Antidemokratisches Denken in der Weimarer Republik" (1962) ["Antidemocratic Thought in the Weimar Republic"]:

"The political opinions and attacks of a group of publicists and intellectuals would not mean much for the political state of mind of a nation, if they remained confined only to small circles of malcontents and intellectual know-it-alls. A brief look at the political reality of the Weimar Republic, however, immediately shows that anti-democratic thinking was not a matter for esotericists. It served to ideologize numerous political groups and also parties that quite consciously worked to overcome liberal democracy."

Comparisons to Weimar are often drawn these days, for completely different reasons, and often in order to declare the AfD a revenant of the NSDAP, which is now grinding away at democracy. But the basic features of liberal democracy are not being shredded by the AfD today. It is—to use Sontheimer's phrase—the "publicists and intellectuals" who are ideologizing.

Another historian, Karl Dietrich Bracher, noted in his work, *Die deutsche Diktatur* (1969) [*The German Dictatorship*] that the self-alignment ranged from "constitutional lawyers to national economists, from historians to Germanists, from philosophers to natural scientists, from publicists to poets, musicians, visual artists."

Bracher attributes this, among other things, to the "missionary idea of the Reich." Something that can at least be guessed at today when a German foreign minister classifies the world as a field of activity for her moral vanities—and this to the applause of journalism and intellectuals, not least those who have been up to mischief at Kiel University for many decades now.

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Featured: *The Fountains*, by Hubert Robert; painted in 1787.

