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With Us or Against Us

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# WITH US OR AGAINST US

*Posted on February 1, 2023 by Thomas Moser*



*Anyone who does not unconditionally support the German course of war in Ukraine is declared an enemy. The treatment of NDR reporter Patrik Baab by universities and the media shows how deeply divided Germany is and how ruthless it is when militarized nationalism spreads.*

If the devil exists, he must be interviewed.

Because in September 2022 he was in the eastern Ukrainian regions occupied by Russian forces, where so-called referendums were held on the question of annexation to the Russian Federation, journalist Patrik Baab, 63 years old, employed by the North German Public Broadcaster ([NDR](#)) but traveling on his own behalf, was shown the door by two German universities. In other words, he was stripped of his teaching assignments. Reason: His presence legitimized Putin's war of aggression.

### **Baab as an Example**

This is how primitive the disputes in Germany have become. The "case" of Patrik Baab is above all an example. It shows how arbitrary and threatening things have become in this country in the last three years. And he stands in for a number of other names, such as Ulrike Guérot (University of Bonn), Jürgen Döschner (German Public Broadcaster, [WDR](#)) or Ole Skambraks (German Public Broadcaster, [SWR](#)).

Baab has been employed as an editor at NDR since 1999, and is currently in part-time early retirement. In the past, he has repeatedly reported from Russia, as have many other correspondents of the Consortium of German Public Broadcasters, [ARD](#) before and after him. He is currently writing a book on the Ukraine war, which is due to be published in the summer. He sat on the NDR staff council for several years and criticized political influence on reporting.

The war in Ukraine is taking place primarily in the Donbass regions. International law is characterized by two competing principles: The right of peoples to self-determination versus the territorial integrity of states. The Soviet Union was a forced amalgamation of many territories and states. The disintegration of the Soviet empire was accompanied by countless cases of territorial secessions or annexations, independence aspirations, separatism, regionalism and countless wars against and among each other. And everywhere, the old Soviet elites were still fighting for their former privileges against an all-consuming democratization. In the newly independent states, the old officials tried to maintain their power in a nationalistic way, as in Ukraine. And today's oligarchs are also yesterday's communists.

The Donbass regions in eastern Ukraine are the main combat zone of the war between Russia and Ukraine, and their western borderlines form the front.

### **Baab: "Russia's War of Aggression on Ukraine in Violation of International Law"**

Patrik Baab traveled to Russia and eastern Ukraine from mid-September to early October 2022 for research on his book. He did not know until shortly beforehand that so-called referendums on the question of annexation to Russia were to take place in the disputed and contested area. On site, he then observed the votes and spoke with residents. He did what a reporter has to do. Incidentally, his position on the war is unambiguous: he speaks of a "war of aggression by Russia on Ukraine in violation of international law."

So much for the back story, which would hardly be worth mentioning, if the war had not also reached Germany and created a war faction. It reinterprets everything. The main story is about it.

In September 2022, the web portal of [t-online](#) ("News for Germany") discovered the journalist Baab in eastern Ukraine and declared him a "poll watcher" for the denounced referendums. Actually, an innocuous term. But now an election-observing chronicler was declared a partisan of Putin.

The University of Media, Communication and Business (HMKW) in Berlin learned of this through t-online. Baab had repeatedly worked there as a lecturer. The university management immediately called him in eastern Ukraine. Actually, this was not a bad idea, but a war zone is not necessarily favorable terrain for settling differences, especially on the phone. Baab also explained that he was traveling privately as a journalist because he was writing a book on the war.

### **Journalistic Presence and Reality**

This was not enough for the HMKW, in the guise of the rector and chancellor. They declared the mere presence of the reporter to be a legitimization of the sham referendums and ultimately of the war; that he was a fig leaf for the aggressors; that his reports possessed a journalistic sham objectivity. In short, it was incompatible with the basic principles of their university to continue using him as a lecturer. The statement can be [read here](#).

It's worth taking a closer look. For in fact the sanction and its justification say something about the disregard for and bending of hitherto recognized democratic as well as journalistic principles, such as apparently happens in times of war.

If the presence of a journalist in an area of rule legitimizes the rulers, so the accusation goes, then the press is declared to be a party. Then its independence is denied. Strictly speaking, the position of those responsible for HMKW represents a denial of the independence of journalists. It is also an attack on the freedom of the press. In the consequence of such thinking, the ARD correspondents in Moscow, for example, would also legitimize the Russian regime. And if one would then renounce reporters in order not to run the risk of legitimizing rule, then one could no longer report on reality at all, not even on the internal victims of this regime or on opposition and resistance in the country. It would be the renunciation of presence that would spare this regime.

The powerful try to capture journalists all the time. Now, in Baab's case, the Berlin media academy is readily acknowledging this.

### **HMKW, Belligerent**

However, this has its logic, because the media academy has long since allowed itself to be appropriated: namely, it is a war party on the side of Ukraine. However, this side is not critically questioned. The fact that human rights are also violated there and war crimes are committed does not interest the war supporters at the university. They are obviously not even interested in the fact that the German armed forces are cooperating with weapons-carrying forces of the denounced Russian aggressor in the African country of Mali. On top of that, to prop up a murderous coup government, of all things.

Instead, everything is supported, including the disinformation, manipulation and obfuscation of the reality of war. If the first casualty of war is truth, then that applies to both sides. And then it is as true on the hundredth day as it was on the first. The number of casualties in the Ukrainian ranks is concealed as well as the Ukrainian shelling of residential buildings. The deportation of men to the front is kept secret, as is the persecution of Ukrainian conscientious objectors and, in contrast, the privilege of wealthy Ukrainians to buy their way out of the war. And, of course,

action must be taken against anything and anyone who brings this dark reality to light. Like Patrik Baab.

The rector and chancellor of HMKW have turned the university into a war-party; they have made it into a belligerent. And they have done so at the expense of truthfulness, freedom of opinion, research and teaching, and democratic rules.

Behind their war attitude, however, is not a conviction, for example, to defend freedom. But rather, it is pure cowardice in times of war, hot or cold, uncritical conformity to the government's actions. The dissociation from their lecturer Baab is a reaction of fear of a sanctions-regime to which they themselves belong, in which they participate and which could affect them.

### **Back Then, on Alexanderplatz**

A disastrous system, for which, above all, the chancellor of HMKW stands, and in an almost historical dimension. He was once an adapted GDR citizen who liked SED socialism. Then came the time of change with the mass demonstrations and the fellow traveler changed roles: now he stood up for democracy and invoked the new freedoms. But this took the turncoat all the way to the top. He was one of the speakers at the big rally on Alexanderplatz on November 4, 1989, which heralded the beginning of the end of the SED and the Stasi. ([See here](#), from 2:31:40 to 2:33:50 minutes).

In 2022, this man obviously forgot what was so sacred to him in 1989. Now he mutates again into a turncoat and fellow traveler in yet another matter. In the meantime, the GDR past sends its greetings to the University of Göttingen: because Baab's book [Recherchieren](#) may no longer be used by teaching staff. The dissident is once again the enemy who must be eradicated and destroyed.

On the part of the HMKW, there is no reaction to the request for answers to numerous questions.

Patrik Baab has worked for six years as a lecturer at the Berlin Media University. However, the teaching contract for the winter semester 2022/23 had not yet been drawn up and signed last September. Baab thus has no legal recourse to take action against the revocation of this non-contract.

### **Russian Citizens are Held Liable for the Russian Regime**

This is different in the second case. In Kiel, at the Christian-Albrechts-University (CAU), the journalist Patrik Baab has even been repeatedly hired for a teaching assignment for 20 years. One week after his expulsion in Berlin, at the beginning of October 2022, his teaching assignment was also withdrawn in Kiel. The reason given was similar to that in Berlin: he had lent the appearance of legitimacy to the sham referendums through his presence in the areas in question. In Kiel, and specifically at the Institute of Social Sciences, where Baab taught, they did not even think it necessary to contact him, but executed his expulsion without any inquiry. Bizarrely, the three professors in the institute's management responsible for this, justified it by saying that there was "imminent danger." If they had not reacted immediately, even without hearing the sanctioned person, the university would have been threatened with a loss of reputation and its "ability to function" would have been impaired.

Quite incidentally, but appropriately, CAU has also suspended student exchanges and scientific cooperation with Russia. Russian citizens are held liable for the Russian regime. A war nationalism that equates everyone: perpetrators as well as victims, belligerents as well as

deniers.

Baab, with his lawyer, objected to the withdrawal of his teaching assignment at CAU. The president of the university rejected the objection, and the matter is now before the administrative court in Kiel.

Regardless, the escalation has reached the next stage and produced the next victim. It concerns 86-year-old U.S. professor emeritus of politics, Robert Harkavy, a friend and colleague of Baab's who [also co-authored a book](#) with him on intelligence services, subtitled, *Why were Olof Palme, Uwe Barschel and William Colby Murdered?* Thus, the assumption of murder in the case of German politician Uwe Barschel and former CIA-director William Colby..

### **Sippenhaft—Kinship-Guilt**

Harkavy was associated with Kiel University for 40 years, was there several times as a visiting professor, and whenever he visited, accommodation was available for him at the university's International Meeting Center. In 2023, however, that no longer applies. In the summer, Harkavy wanted to come back to Kiel. But now his request for accommodation has been turned down. With reference to his relationship with Baab, Harkavy has now also become "persona non grata," an undesirable person. You could also call this contact guilt or Sippenhaft (kinship-guilt)..

The university does not want to answer questions, citing the ongoing legal proceedings. However, its dealings with the US professor Harkavy have nothing to do with the ongoing proceedings.

In the ghost army of German intellectuals, however, one contributor is still missing: the chairman of the German Journalists' Association (DJV), after all an interest group representing journalists. He is also one of the lecturers at the HMKW Media University in Berlin. However, he does not see any reason to take the initiative in the Baab case and stand up for a fellow journalist. "I'm staying out of it," he says by e-mail. But in the next sentence, the lobbyist summarily declares his colleague a non-journalist: "Propaganda for a war criminal is by definition not a journalistic activity." War requires making up one's mind, and the DJV chief has made up his mind. No matter what the truth is. As it happens, he has thus made his office pointless.

We still have one question: Would these adjustments to the government's war policy also have taken place in such a stupidly blind manner if there had not been the run-up to the Covid regime, which likewise demanded unquestioning submission and threatened exclusion?

### **Starring Roles**

Rector of the Berlin School of Media, Communication and Business: **Klaus-Dieter Schulz**

Chancellor of the HMKW: **Ronald Freytag**

President of the Christian-Albrechts-Universität Kiel: **Simone Fulda**

Institute for Social Sciences of the CAU, Director: **Robert Seyfert**

Deputy Director: **Christian Martin**

Joint Committee: **Dirk Nabers**

Faculty of Economics and Social Sciences: **Wilhelm Knelangen**

Chairman of the German Journalists' Association (DJV): **Frank Überall**

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