

Far-right German National Party promotes Professors Münkler and Baberowski

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Humboldt University Professors Herfried Münkler and Jörg Baberowski are receiving support from the far-right and fascist German National Democratic Party (NPD). The current issue of the NPD party newspaper *Deutsche Stimme* (*German Voice*) contains an article titled, “Nazi alarm in the auditorium,” which declares, “left-wing extremists are carrying out a campaign of denunciations at Berlin’s Humboldt University against well-known scholars such as Herfried Münkler and Jörg Baberowski.”

The article sings the praises of Münkler and Baberowski from a fascist perspective. The NPD, founded in 1964, is an openly racist and extreme right-wing party, which refers positively to National Socialism (Nazism) and is officially regarded as unconstitutional. The Bundesrat (upper chamber of parliament) tabled a resolution in December 2013 stating that the NPD’s programme is “largely identical with the teachings of the historical German National Socialism.”

The author of the article is senior NPD functionary Arne Schimmer, who is a member of the party’s federal executive, and sat in the Saxony state parliament from 2009 to 2014. In addition to his work as a journalist for the *Deutsche Stimme* and as a frequent contributor to the right-wing newspaper *Junge Freiheit*, he is editor of *Hier & Jetzt*, a radical right-wing publication published by the pro-NPD foundation Educational Institute for Homeland and National Identity.

Schimmer refers to Münkler and Baberowski as “renowned professors” and praises their work to the skies. He declares that Münkler’s book, *Die Deutschen und ihre Mythen* (*The Germans and their Myths*) shows “what a mobilising-motivating force myths continue to possess to this day. Schimmer has clearly taken a liking

to Baberowski and his work. He calls Baberowski’s book *Verbrannte Erde* (*Scorched Earth*) an “excellent work.”

Schimmer leaves no doubt that he is defending the two Humboldt professors against their left-wing critics because of their right-wing politics. For example, Münkler is an “acknowledged representative of a firm school of *realpolitik*,” who not only recites Carl Schmitt, the crown jurist of the Third Reich, but is also “interested in power-oriented (and thus also realistic) political concepts.”

Schimmer praises Baberowski especially for his anti-communism. He writes that Baberowski “classifies Stalinism as a power system oriented on the ‘model of the Mafia,’ which had arisen from the ‘pre-modern violent dreams of empire.’” Moreover, he adds, Baberowski dared “to address the scale of the victims of the communist programme of world redemption.”

The fact that the neo-fascist NPD solidifies itself with Münkler and Baberowski confirms everything that the Partei für Soziale Gleichheit (PSG, Socialist Equality Party) and International Youth and Students for Social Equality (IYSSE) have said and written about the two Humboldt professors in recent months. The PSG and IYSSE have systematically demonstrated the right-wing agenda the two professors pursue, and the role they play in the efforts of the ruling elites to revive German militarism.

The foreword to the book *Scholarship or War Propaganda?*, which provides an overview of the PSG’s campaign against historical falsification, declares that Münkler “is among the most avid proponents of a more aggressive German foreign policy. He openly advocates that Germany assume the role of Europe’s hegemon, aspiring to become its ‘disciplinarian’ rather than its ‘paymaster.’” In

addition, he denies that “Germany bore prime responsibility for the outbreak of World War I.”

For his part, Baberowski has “taken on the more difficult task of downplaying the Nazis’ war crimes.” He “bases himself on Ernst Nolte, who provoked the ‘Historians’ Dispute’ (Historikerstreit) in 1986 and is the best-known Nazi apologist among German historians.” Baberowski’s work on Stalinism contains one of “Nolte’s central theses: the claim that Hitler’s crimes were provoked by Bolshevism and were aimed at self-defence.”

Münkler and Baberowski may not be members of the NPD, but their agenda of whitewashing the crimes of German imperialism, in order to return to an aggressive foreign policy, is shared by the fascists. The Wikipedia entry for the NPD notes that the party “strives for a revision of the historiography of the period of National Socialism.”

Unsurprisingly, then, the NPD also expresses its support for Nolte, who has orbited its periphery for a long time. In late 2013, just a few weeks before Baberowski declared in *Der Spiegel*, “Hitler was no psychopath, and he wasn’t vicious,” Nolte gave the NPD newspaper *Hier & Jetzt* an extensive interview, in which he called for “the application of greater understanding of the historical manifestations of fascism.” The interview was conducted by none other than Arne Schimmer.

Münkler’s efforts to whitewash the role of German imperialism in World War I have been applauded in ultra-right circles for some time. Around the same time that *Der Spiegel* quoted Baberowski’s statements, *Junge Freiheit*, in an article titled “Emerge from the Shadows,” expressed the hope that the year 2014 could “count as a turning point in the politics of German history, where the nearly fifty years of left and left-liberal monopoly of interpretation begins to erode, and the recovery of the national psyche, which has been pathologised by a permanent moralism of shame, begins.”

Junge Freiheit identifies Herfried Münkler as a trailblazer for this awaited “turning point.” In an interview with the *Süddeutsche Zeitung* in January 2014, he bemoaned the “fatal role” that the “thesis of sole German guilt put into the world by the Entente powers...still plays today.” In the interview, Münkler also declared, “There can hardly be a responsible

policy operating in Europe when one has the idea: It was all our fault. With regard to 1914, that is a legend.”

Since then, Baberowski and Münkler have moved ever further to the right in relation to current political issues. The sharpest expression is found in their present smear campaign against refugees. While Münkler declares, “Multiculturalism will not work,” Baberowski goes a step farther and calls for the practical abolition of the right of asylum. His arguments are fully in line with the fascists; so much so that the Neuruppin NPD has approvingly published and linked to his “words of warning” on its Facebook page.



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