



EURO EXCHANGE

The Newsletter of the Institute for European Studies

SPRING 2017

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DIRECTOR'S NOTE

Brett Bowles, Director



The 2016-17 academic year, my first as director of the Institute for European Studies (EURO), has been an eventful one, echoing the state of the continent itself.

As usual, we hosted a lively series of lectures by IU faculty and graduate students on a wide range of topics in the social sciences and humanities: the Turkish community in northeast France (Ferah Baskin, Anthropology); Ukrainian egg donors as migrant laborers (Polina Vlasenko, Anthropology); the phenomenon of textual accretion and misinterpretation in modern editions of Italian medieval texts (Wayne Storey, French & Italian); book design and publishing strategies employed by late nineteenth-century French poets to compete with the daily illustrated press (Nicolas Valazza, French & Italian); the recent rise in anti-Semitism across Europe and its links to the refugee crisis (Gunther Jikeli, Jewish Studies); lace production, collecting, and women's lives in late imperial Russia (Andrea Rusnock, Art History & Gender Studies, IU South Bend).

EURO also had the pleasure of hosting Jennifer Riccardi, Senior Trade Advisor for the EU Delegation to the US. In addition to delivering a lecture and leading a discussion on US international trade policy under the Trump administration, she participated in a roundtable on Euroscepticism and the populist Right, joined by Tim Hellwig (Political Science), Elizabeth Dunn (International Studies), Peter Kreko (CEUS affiliate and Fulbright Scholar from the Political Capital Institute in Budapest).

EURO's capstone event for the year was the annual Midwest Model European Union, a three-day simulation in which seventeen different colleges and universities from across the country sent delegations representing twenty-four of the twenty-eight EU member states. Supported by our recent Jean Monnet Centre of Excellence grant from the EU, this year the event also included a workshop for faculty advisors to discuss best practices for using simulations as a learning tool. Our keynote speaker was Dr. Daniel Hamilton, a longtime member of the Department of State who worked throughout Europe in various capacities before assuming his current position as Director for the Center for Transatlantic Relations at Johns Hopkins University's Washington, D.C. campus.

In his address, Dr. Hamilton stressed that the EU is the most important international organization to which the United States does not belong, and that it is therefore all the more crucial to fostering peace, prosperity, and security abroad, whether or not its policies align exactly with ours. He also reminded us of the many shared interests and deep economic ties between Europe and the US, noting that BMW is the highest-valued exporter of cars built in America.

Thus far 2017 has brought several notable developments to European politics. The first was the Dutch legislative elections in March, triggered by the completion of a four-year term by Prime Minister Mark Rutte, who presided over a coalition of his own People's Party for Freedom and Democracy (VVD) with the Labor Party (PVDA). Though concerns that the populist, anti-EU Freedom Party (PVV) led by Geert Wilders might realize strong gains and prompt a shift to the Right proved unfounded, PVV did gain five seats, while the VVD lost eight and the PVDA lost twenty-nine as voters defected to other smaller parties of the center and left. In general terms, the elections were a case study in electoral fragmentation, a growing

phenomenon across Europe that makes effective governance by coalition more difficult.

In the first round of the French presidential elections, held on April 23, voters split almost equally among four candidates. Independent centrist Emmanuel Macron, former economic advisor to President Hollande, scored 24%, followed by far-Right opponent Marine Le Pen (21%); traditional conservative François Fillon (20%); and non-conformist, neo-Marxist Jean-Luc Mélenchon (19.5%). Notably, Socialist Party candidate Benoît Hamon received less than 7% of the vote, confirming the electorate's disillusionment with the current Hollande administration.

Assuming that voter turnout remains stable in the second round at around 70%, most French polls and political commentators concur that in the second-round run-off (May 7) Le Pen will be hard pressed to surpass 30-35%, likely replicating on a slightly lesser scale the 2002 scenario in which her father made it to the second round against Jacques Chirac but garnered only 18% of the vote, by far the worst result since the founding of the Fifth Republic in 1958.

Despite being the presumptive favorite, Macron's policy positions are still largely unknown, since he flouted French political conventions by founding his own optimistically, ambiguously-titled party (En Marche), and by refusing to publish a detailed program of policy principles and positions. The fate of a Macron administration will ultimately hinge on the French legislative elections slated for June. The pan-European tendency toward fragmentation could significantly undermine his ability to govern, particularly if he names a prime minister without strong coalition support in the National Assembly. In the wake of France's most recent terror attack on April 20, security will also be a paramount concern for the new administration, as will the decision whether to push renewing the official state of emergency, exceptional policing powers, and suspension of constitutional protections in effect since November 2015.

The vote in France will set the stage for legislative elections in Germany (September 24) and Italy (by no later than May 2018), which together will weigh significantly on the future of Europe alongside the ongoing battle over Brexit in the United Kingdom. As part of her program to withdraw from the EU, Prime Minister Theresa May recently proposed the so-called Great Repeal Bill, which would give her power to repeal all European agreements without the approval of Parliament and pass domestic policy on security, immigration, and social benefits by executive order. Likened to Henry VIII by Labour Party opponents, she is determined to see the fight to its end, with the result still uncertain.

The Brexit case is only one illustration of the ongoing struggle between liberalism and illiberalism taking place across Europe. While the traditional powers such as the UK, France, Germany, the Netherlands, and Italy remain the economic and political pillars of the EU, we should not discount smaller members' potential for leadership in the fields of human rights and social equality, as demonstrated by Malta's ban on gay conversion "therapy"

in December 2016, a pioneering move likely to be adopted by other member states in the near future.

Returning to IU, this semester EURO was both proud and disappointed to disburse the last of the Mellon Travel & Research Grant funds originally received in 1987. In all, we were able to support four IU faculty and eight graduate students for projects ranging from fieldwork in Spanish sociolinguistics, medieval Italian manuscript consultation, and translation research in Slovakia to paper presentations in France, Canada, the US, and Germany.

I am especially pleased to recognize EURO's graduating M.A. students and wish them well as they matriculate into PhD programs or begin new jobs outside academia: Amy Aiyubusi (thesis on gender and ethnicity in German rap music); Sarah Crane (thesis on the post-war prosecution of Nazi war crimes); Catherine Kessler (thesis on Kafka and Cocteau's literary writings); Alberto Sostre (thesis on disability rights and policy in Romania); Anna Williams (thesis on the role of European and American investment in shaping society and politics in Turkey).

On a personal note, my first year as director was made much easier by a team of people without whom EURO could not function: Assistant Director Liese Hilgeman, Program Specialist Megan Immerzeel, and graduate assistants Alex Baker, Alberto Sostre, and Joe Thurston. Thanks also go to EURO undergraduate advisors Jennifer Ashcraft and Joeline Bergonzi, whose advice was integral to the revision of our minor and certificate requirements, and to our faculty advisory board for their input on numerous matters: Hannah Buxbaum (Law), Esther Ham (EURO / Germanic Studies), Frank Hess (EURO / Modern Greek), Carl Ipsen (History / Collins Living-Learning Center), Hildegard Keller (Germanic Studies), Josh Malitsky (Media School), Jon Risner (Spanish & Portuguese), and Scott Shackelford (Business).

Finally, I would like to invite all our readers to keep up with us by visiting our website (<https://euro.indiana.edu>) and to help us keep up with you by emailing us your news (euroinst@indiana.edu).

With best wishes for an enjoyable summer,

Butt Bowles

Associate Professor of French Studies

Director, European Studies

Eric M. MacPhail

Professor of French and Adjunct Professor of Comparative Literature, Eric M. MacPhail delivered the keynote address at the conference on The Sophistic Renaissance held at Ca' Foscari University of Venice on September 26, 2016.

Joanna Niżyńska

In addition to directing the Polish Studies Center at IU, Joanna Niżyńska (Slavic and East European Languages and Cultures) has co-edited a soon to be published volume *At Crossroads, Across Purposes: A New History of Polish Literature and Culture since 1918* (University of Toronto Press, forthcoming fall 2017). In addition to her role as co-editor of this extensive volume (with contributions of some sixty scholars and over 1500 pages in manuscript), she wrote an introduction and authored a chapter focusing on the role of affect and symbolic compensation in the formation of collective memory. Last summer she gave a public lecture on the same subject entitled "Delectatio morosa, or Modes of Affective Compensation in Polish Memory Culture" at the Giessen Center for East European Studies, University of Giessen, Germany. Joanna also published "Gender is the Real Queer: Gender Wars in Contemporary Poland" (in *Father Figures and Gender Identities in Scandinavian and Comparative Literature*, 2016) and contributed an entry on Miłosz Biłoszewski for *The Literary Encyclopedia* (online).

Christine L. Ogan

Professor of Emerita, Christine L. Ogan (School of Informatics and Computing) worked on various publications that came out in 2016 related to the use of social media and in-person contact during the 2013 Gezi Park Protests in Turkey. More broadly they relate to the use of communication online and offline in a social movement--one that sadly died in Turkey since that time. She collaborated with Prof. Leen d'Haenens and doctoral candidate Roya Imani Giglou on work done within Belgium, Germany and the Netherlands.

Giglou, R. I., Ogan, C., & d'Haenens, L. (2016). The ties that bind the diaspora to Turkey and Europe during the Gezi protests. *New Media & Society*, 1461444816675441.

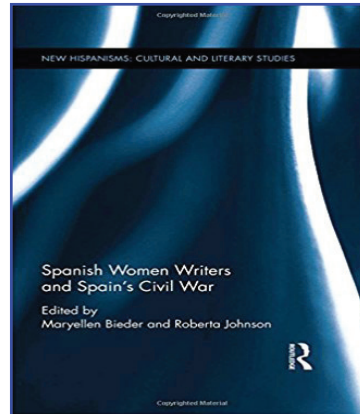
Giglou, R. I., d'Haenens, L., & Ogan, C. (2017). Turkish diasporic responses to the Taksim Square protests: Legacy media and social media uses in Belgium, the Netherlands and Germany. *Telematics and Informatics*, 34(2), 548-559.

Ogan, C., Imani Giglou, R., & d'Haenens, L. (2017). Challenges of Conducting Survey Research Related to a Social Protest Movement: Lessons Learned from a Study of Gezi Protests Involving the Turkish Diaspora in Three European Countries. *The Information Society*, 33(1).

Ogan, C., & Varol, O. (2016). What is gained and what is left to be done when content analysis is added to network analysis in the study of a social movement: Twitter use during Gezi Park. *Information, Communication & Society*, 1-19.

Ogan, C., Imani Giglou, R., & d'Haenens, L. (2016). *The Relationship between Online and Offline Participation in a Social Movement: Gezi Park Protests in the Diaspora*. In M. Rovisco, and J. Corpus Ong, (Eds.) *Taking the Square: Mediated Dissent and Occupations of Public Space*. Rowman & Littlefield International.

Vila-Belda Reyes



Associate Professor Vila-Belda Reyes (Department of Spanish and Portuguese), published a book chapter titled "The Last Battle: Fuertes and the Politics of Emotion in Her Late Civil War Poems" in a collection *Spanish Women Writers and Spain's Civil War*. Eds. Maryellen Bieder and Roberta Johnson. London: Routledge, 2016. 83-99.

*Note that one of the editors, Maryellen Bieder, is Professor emerita from the Department of Spanish and Portuguese.

Here is the link: <https://www.book2look.com/embed/9781134777167>

****All updates are self-reported. If you have an update you would like included in our next newsletter, please email us at euoinst@indiana.edu****

EURO'S Annual Valentine's Day Bake-Off



On February 14th, EURO held its Annual Valentine's Day Bake-Off.

Special thanks to our judges:
Brett Bowles, Dean Feinstein, and Frank Hess

This year's winners:
First Place: Megan Immerzeel
Second Place: Gunther Jikeli
Third Place: Danielle Magid

Don your apron and join us for next year's competition!

STUDENT & ALUMNI UPDATES



Kallan Picha - MA 2012

Kallan has recently been promoted to Director of Global Programs at Pepperdine University's Graziadio School of Business and Management. In her new role, she has had the opportunity to travel to Eastern Europe, Asia, and South America as well as to lead the school's strategic efforts in internationalization.

Ana Fumurescu - MA 2015

Ana Fumurescu is preparing to transfer to the University of Pittsburgh in the coming Fall semester to pursue a doctoral degree in European history, with a focus on eastern Europe. She has been awarded a FLAS in Russian for the coming academic year, and plans to continue her research on Romanian education and inter-ethnic relations in nineteenth- and early twentieth-century Dobruja.



Amy Aiyegbusi

Amy will be graduating from EURO this May after defending her thesis entitled: "Surrounded by Beautiful People: A Study of Cultural Affirmation in German Rap." She will soon commence online ethnography with some additional German rappers who have already agreed to be interviewed in that manner. She is excited to learn more about this research technique in the summer and will use it to complement in-person fieldwork. Amy was recently featured in the latest edition of *The Polyglot*, SWEESL's online alumni newsletter. She was also accepted as part of the IU/OSU Graduate Student Conference here at IU April 7-8, and presented on her MA research and subsequent thesis.

Here is a link for the conference:

<https://cfs.osu.edu/events/2017-iuosu-student-conference-dialogues>

FACULTY SPOTLIGHT

Frank Hess

By Alberto Sostre

Professor Frank Hess is a Senior Lecturer in the Institute for European Studies and Coordinator of the Modern Greek Program. Hailing originally from the East Coast, Professor Hess moved to Northern Indiana when he was eleven with his family. Professor Hess grew up in Goshen, Indiana, where his parents had attended the Mennonite liberal arts college, Goshen College. The town of Goshen was quite influential in his life, and he even attended Goshen College as well. Professor Hess' current research has been shaped by his hometown, which has undergone quite a renaissance since his departure.

Professor Hess states that next to Bloomington, Goshen is one of the most livable cities in Indiana, and he is curious as to why this is. According to Professor Hess, Goshen is quite an international city for its size and a blue oasis in a predominantly red state. The city's political renaissance commenced with Mexican immigration, which led to a demographic shift that in turn led to political and cultural transformations. These political and cultural transformations are what Professor Hess finds intriguing.

Professor Hess' experience abroad as an undergraduate through the Study Service Trimester (now called the Study Service Term) at Goshen College, helped influence his pursuit of a PhD in American Studies. In 1987, Professor Hess had the opportunity to travel to China for four months and was able to teach and take courses in Chinese language and culture. Professor Hess realized during his experience abroad that he was not very adept at explaining his home culture to his students. This realization spurred his interest in pursuing an advance degree in American Studies.

Professor Hess later took a trip to Greece and was intrigued by the influence that American culture had on Greek culture. He developed a plan to study the influence of American television on Greek culture and also taught himself Greek. Professor Hess was able to obtain a Fulbright Fellowship to pursue his research.



From that point on, Professor Hess states that he "went native" and became even more interested in Greek culture. His intellectual home is now Modern Greek Studies; however, with his new project, he might be momentarily returning to American Studies.

After finishing his graduate education, Professor Hess stayed in Iowa City with his wife where he worked for American Collegiate Testing (ACT). At ACT, Professor Hess developed tests of writing skills and supervised their assessment. Professor Hess worked on developing tests for most of the major post-tertiary exams, along with supervising scoring pools and how to implement rubrics. Professor Hess has also coached tennis in different capacities for the last fifteen years both at the University of Iowa and Indiana University.

As an instructor of modern Greek, Professor Hess' principal goal is to ensure that his students are learning and are satisfied. Professor Hess believes it is essential to be active mentally, conduct research, and explore new areas in order to develop new and exciting culture courses.

Moreover, Professor Hess has ambitions to publish. He currently has a project that he is working on regarding Greece. Although Professor Hess has put research to the side for now, he believes research is crucial for being intellectually engaged in his teaching and pedagogy.

Professor Hess has written on popular culture in the past and was one of the first in

Modern Greek Studies to focus on everyday culture. He wrote an article that introduced Culture Studies to the Modern Greek context. In addition, Professor Hess has written on other topics such as Greek television and music (Greek rap) and early Greek cinema.

The primary focus of Professor Hess' culture courses revolves around popular culture, cinema, and food cultures of Greece. Professor Hess will teach EURO-W 406: Food Cultures of Greece this summer as part of the Study Abroad Program. EURO-W 406 is a history and anthropology of Greek food ways from antiquity through the present. In the fall, he will teach a course that explores the representation of history in Greek cinema. Professor Hess' objective with this course is to give his students tools that they can use to think more broadly about cinema and its relationship to history.

Greece is the main focus of the course, but Professor Hess wants his students to be able to use this experience as an avenue to analyze their own culture. Professor Hess believes that when teaching culture, you are always teaching history. It is safe to assume that when teaching American culture, students should have prior knowledge of American history.

However, this is not necessarily true with Greek culture. Thus, you teach history to allow your students to develop a framework by which they can understand culture. Professor Hess feels that this learning process can be quite an illuminating experience for students. This allows student to see more consciously the relationship between history and culture.

Professor Hess is really proud of his active role in the Modern Greek Studies Association, which is the national organization that promotes the study of contemporary Greece. He has been a member of the executive board for close to a decade.

Article continues on page 7...

“Faculty Spotlight: Frank Hess” - Continued

Moreover, Professor Hess has been involved in a number of outreach initiatives that helped improve the financial future of the organization. He currently serves as a member of both the Finance and Fundraising Committee.

Professor Hess is proud of his service commitment because he believes that this organization has become more professional, and the quality of the academic work that the organization produces continues to improve. He presided over a significant transformation of the Modern Greek Studies Association over the last decade.

What Professor Hess loves about Greece is that it is complex; the language is deep and the history is very multi-layered. He is a person who enjoys tasks that allow you to learn continuously, and that you cannot reach a point where you have learned everything there is to know.

Besides his intellectual interests, Professor Hess continues to pursue tennis. He has taught tennis for nearly forty-five years and continues to learn little nuances in terms of technique. This gives Professor Hess great joy to continue to have movements of insight.

When asked about his recommendations for students, Professor Hess stated that while grades are very important, he wants students to learn for the love of learning.

This is particularly important when learning languages. Successful students are those who are passionate about learning the language, and do not allow themselves to be confined by the structure of the course and grading system. Professor Hess encourages students to explore their passions and do so with gusto.

Sometimes these moments may be serendipitous, and at other times things just tend to click after you have worked hard. Professor

Hess also observes this experience through language learning. He states that you can never fully master a language because you are always learning, including your own native language.

He loves studying Greek because it has such a long history and there are so many nuances to the language. It is a powerful experience for Professor Hess when he has a moment of insight when learning the etymology of a word and its connection to another word. The history of Greece is equally fascinating to Professor Hess, and he finds it to be an amazing domain through which to think theoretically about the world.

MIDWEST MODEL EUROPEAN UNION MARKS ITS 25th YEAR

By Liese Hilgeman



The Institute for European Studies hosted the annual Midwest Model European Union (MMEU) for the fourth time in Bloomington. With funding support from an Ostrom Grant from the College of Arts and Sciences and from a Jean Monnet European Union Centre of Excellence Grant, 165 students from seventeen universities convened to participate in the three-day simulation. As the second oldest intercollegiate simulation of the EU in North America, MMEU's goal is to help students experience and understand the challenges and complexities of how the European Union operates. 2017 marked the simulation's 25th anniversary since its founding at IUPUI.

Delegates deliberated on directives ranging from the refugee crisis to increased security concerns and the viability of economic sanctions. Daniel S. Hamilton, Executive Director of the Center for Transatlantic Relations in the School of Advanced International Studies, John Hopkins University served as the keynote speaker giving a current overview on political and economic trends facing the EU today and its strategic engagement with the United States, China, Africa and Latin America. He also underscored the importance of applying the students' knowledge of their representative countries, and noted that expertise in area studies will

serve them well in the future as they negotiate real life roles in an increasingly interconnected global world.

The Institute also presented a half-day “Teaching and Learning Workshop on Simulations” which enabled faculty advisors, graduate instructors and educators to learn about the benefits and challenges of hands-on simulations as experiential learning.

During the closing ceremony, delegates presented the resolutions passed in their respective councils and enthusiastically applauded those among them who received outstanding delegate awards. Awardees this year were: Austria for the European Commission's Commissioner of European Neighborhood Policy and Enlargement Negotiations; France for the Directors-General's Commissioner for Economic and Financial Affairs, Taxation and Customs; Germany for the European Council; Greece for the Economic Council; Austria for the Foreign Affairs Council; Sweden for the Environmental Council and Germany for the Justice and Home Affairs Council. Germany was voted top delegation, and the MMEU plaque will be headed to Muncie, Indiana with E. Gene Frankland, Ball State University's faculty advisor. Other award winning delegations included the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign for Slovakia; and Iowa State for France and Poland.

ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT

Ralph R. “Rick” Steinke

Obtaining a Master of Arts degree in West European Studies at Indiana University turned out to be the perfect academic foundation for me in subsequently serving the U.S. Army and our nation as a Foreign Area Officer and U.S. Department of Defense (DOD) civilian. While in the Army I was able to serve in some very interesting, fulfilling and worthwhile assignments at the top levels of the Army.

These included service as the U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command Liaison Officer to the Italian Army, where I served as the only foreign officer on the Italian Army Staff at the time, and service as the U.S. Senior Defense Representative and Defense Attaché to France, in charge of one of the largest U.S. defense attaché offices in the world. In both cases, my MA in West European Studies, and the foreign language requirements that came with it, were of tremendous benefit.

For the past several years I have served as a U.S. Department of Defense Civilian as well as Associate Dean with the George C. Marshall European Center for Security Studies, a U.S. DOD-German Ministry of Defense partnership which focuses on government to government security cooperation across a range of security challenges. In addition to focusing on the global challenges of countering terrorism, countering transnational organized crime and cyber defense, the Marshall Center also brings in over 800 government officials annually from multiple nations throughout the Eurasian landmass and beyond to focus on regional security challenges.



These include those emanating from Eastern Europe, with a focus on the Ukraine-Russia conflict specifically; from points south of Europe, including focus on migration and returning foreign fighters; as well as security issues involving the Arctic region. Again, my MA degree in West European Studies provided an excellent foundation for understanding and engaging in these challenging issues. Even when I served in Afghanistan as the U.S. Embassy Deputy for Civil-Military Cooperation, my MA in West European Studies enhanced my ability to work with senior European military officers, on almost a daily basis, in the coalition.

I use the term academic “foundation” because although the MA degree provided insights and understanding, as well as tools, for a rewarding European political-military, foreign affairs and national security career, to be effective over time, especially in these very dynamic areas, constant study, as well as foreign language training, practice and improvement, are necessary for long term relevancy and success.

If I had to it again, I would choose the same program of study at Indiana University. The staff there was very supportive and the university worked with me so that I could complete my degree in one year. This allowed me to get to an initial and crucial foreign area officer assignment in a timely manner, and to continue to effectively serve to this day, and hopefully into the future.

ICCI 2017

May 21st-24th

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HIGHLIGHT FROM THE EURO BLOG

RUSSIAN HACKING CAUSING FEARS THROUGHOUT UPCOMING EUROPEAN ELECTIONS

By Joe Thurston



A declassified report, released by the United States intelligence community in January disclosed that Russian-backed hackers meddled with the US elections and stated that this tactic to hack and influence elections and politics is not a new tactic. Subsequently, this report has put Europe on high alert as many important countries including the Netherlands, France, and Germany all have upcoming elections.

The strategy to delegitimize governments through disinformation, to increase its sphere of influence is not new to Russia. In fact, this approach has transcended the Cold War to today; additionally, one could make the argument that social media and the internet have allowed the Russians to become much more aggressive on this front. The name of the game is disinformation, and Russia is one of the best at this game.

In the Netherlands, the fear of Russian hacking in their upcoming elections have spread so far that the Dutch, an incredibly tech-savvy country, have decided to scale back the use of computers to count votes and will rely instead on a manual count system. Leading this decision was Interior Minister Ronald Plasterk who stated: "I don't want a shadow of doubt over the result in a political climate like the one we know today." Despite these precautions, the argument could be made that this is exactly what Russia wants: disinformation throughout a targeted country which in turn leads to those questioning the political stability and legitimacy of said country.

In France, it was found that Marie La Pen, the leader of a far-right national party, had taken a €11 million loan from a Russian bank to

support her campaign. Like President Trump, who, along with many of his staff members has business ties in Russia, she is at the risk of being blackmailed by Russia to promote friendlier policies towards Russia. Another French politician, Emmanuel Macron, is a target of Russia's "fake news." His campaign has received thousands of cyber attacks, and inaccurate stories of him and his past have been spread throughout Russian-backed news outlets. The personal attacks became so bad that Macron was forced to make public statements to reassure his supporters that American banks were not funding him and that he was not having an affair. These attacks, while untrue and frankly petty, have proved to be incredibly harmful to many candidates throughout the world.

In Germany, Hans-Georg Maaßen, the head of the Federal Office for Protection of the Constitution, released a two-page report, which stated that the goal of Russia is to create uncertainty in the political system in Germany and to sow seeds of doubt throughout society. Additionally, many intelligence experts agree that of the three countries briefly discussed here, Germany is the prime target, specifically Angela Merkel. Germany's position in the world, the dominant role they play in the European Union, is a prime target for Russia as delegitimizing Germany could potentially prove to be a devastating blow to the European Union.

Cyber attacks like these are hard to defend, hard to counter, thus making them a top priority for Russian officials in their goal of spreading their sphere of influence throughout regions of the world.

Joe Thurston's "Russian Hacking Causing Fears Throughout European Upcoming Elections" - Continued

1. <http://www.france24.com/en/20161230-eu-elections-2017-le-pen-fillon-wilders-immigration-france-germany-netherlands>
2. <http://www.politico.eu/article/europe-russia-hacking-elections/>
3. <http://www.usatoday.com/story/news/world/2017/01/09/russia-engineered-election-hacks-europe/96216556/>
4. <http://www.reuters.com/article/us-france-election-cyber-idUSKBN15S192>
5. <http://www.politico.eu/article/dutch-election-news-russian-hackers-netherlands/>
6. <http://www.commdiginews.com/politics-2/diplomatic-hysteria-over-hacks-hacking-over-russian-hacking-76017/>

For more news and commentary on Europe from the IU community, read the latest blog post at: <https://iuwest.wordpress.com> or <https://euro.indiana.edu/news-events/blog.html>

EURO HOSTS PANEL ON FAR-RIGHT POPULISM IN MIDST OF BUSY ELECTION YEAR

By Alex Pieter Baker

On Wednesday, April 5th, the Institute for European Studies hosted a panel titled, "The Rise of the Populist Right in Europe." The panel featured four speakers, each with a unique perspective on the phenomenon. Former director and current political science professor Tim Hellwig spoke of the difficulties facing Europe in the present, which has led to the varied success of far-right populist movements across Europe. The panel also featured Peter Kreko, who is the director of Political Capital Institute in Budapest, Hungary and a visiting Fulbright professor in Central Eurasian Studies. Kreko, whose courses have featured multiple Euro students this academic year, spoke of Marine Le Pen's political savviness leading up to the French national elections, the difficult nature of polling following Brexit, and the looming prospect of influential elections in Italy.

International Studies professor, Elizabeth Dunn, related the phenomenon to what she noticed while doing ethnographic research in Poland in the 1990's. She spoke of politician Andrej Lepper, whose life and work offer an interesting case study into the politics of today. Finally, EURO hosted esteemed guest Jennifer Riccardi, Senior Trade Advisor, European Union on the panel. Riccardi, a trade specialist, noted the political goals of many populist parties was not to win elections, rather to make marginal gains in an attempt to change the political conversation surrounding issues that concern them. Riccardi spoke a day earlier regarding European-American trade relations in the Trump presidency. Director Brett Bowles moderated. The panel was well-attended, sparked interesting discussion and debate, and occurred at an appropriate moment.

THE FUTURE AND FUNCTION OF NATO

Gene Coyle (CIA-ret)
Professor of Practice
Institute for European Studies

NATO was formed in 1949 out of legitimate fear of Stalin and the Red Army seizing most of Western Europe, as it had already done with Eastern Europe. That fear diminished in late 20th century and even the invasion of Hungary in 1956 and of Czechoslovakia in 1968 became fading memories for most citizens of the NATO states. After the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991, the fear of such a Russian action totally disappeared from the minds of the leaders and the populaces of NATO nations in Europe. Consequently, financial support to military forces significantly dropped, even in America. The so-called “peace dividend.”

The “new” members of NATO who border Russia do still worry about Russian “military solutions” to foreign policy problems. In part because of the history between their countries and Russia going back to the Czarist period and more recent events such as Russia’s military seizure of Crimea and its military involvement in eastern Ukraine. But even with those two recent Russian actions, no one in Berlin, Rome or Paris believes there is any danger today of a Russian military invasion of their countries by an ideological-driven Moscow, wanting to spread its brand of politics across the Continent.

The token and ineffective response by NATO countries to the seizure of Crimea, including by the feckless Obama Administration with little interest in foreign affairs, has no doubt created concern in the capitals of the newer NATO members who share common borders with Russia. Do the leaders of the three Baltic States, or much of their non-Russian populations, really believe that Chancellor Angela Merkel will go to war with Russia and risk destruction of German cities if the Red Army suddenly invades one of their small countries?

Aside from the question of willpower to act, there is the other issue of with what to act? Since the end of the Cold War in 1991, most NATO members have spent less and less on their militaries. Despite the NATO agreed-upon desirable spending level of 2% of GDP by each country on their military, as of 2016, only five of the twenty-eight members met that level: the USA, UK, Poland, Estonia and Greece. (Greece only spends that much because of its traditional animosity with and fear of fellow-NATO member Turkey.)



As a result of that minimal spending year after year, most of the European NATO militaries are hollow shells incapable of military action without American involvement. The European members wouldn’t even get involved in the Bosnian civil war and genocide going on in their own backyard in the early 1990s until the U.S. agreed to send troops as well. During the height of the Cold War, aside from the equipped troops stationed in Western Europe, the U.S. Army was prepared to move thousands of troops to Europe within 48 hours, where armored equipment was already pre-positioned at depots. That readiness no longer exists.

President Obama announced several years ago the shift of the focus of the American military from Europe to the Asian theater, yet many Democratic politicians and anti-Trump newspapers have wailed about how President Trump is abandoning our traditional European allies by asking them to spend the level of money they all agreed to years earlier, but have never done. That shift of emphasis began long before Donald Trump ever even entered the Republican primaries, much less since he became president.

Chancellor Merkel recently stated that it would be politically difficult to raise the level of German Defense spending as Germans are now such a pacifistic people. Perhaps that is a true statement of their peace-living ways, but it is also true that the Germans thus have tens of millions of extra Euros to spend on schools, roads, social services and generous pensions, as they spend so little on Defense. And that is true for many other European NATO members as well.

Why spend much on a credible military force when you can count on the American Army, Air Force and nuclear deterrent to protect you?

Political situations and potential threat change over time. As Lord Palmerston observed back in the 19th Century, “Nations have no permanent friends or allies, they only have permanent interests.” Perhaps it is time to re-evaluate what are American interests in Europe and not just have the knee-jerk policy of saying, “oh, they’re our traditional allies, so we have to protect them.” German, French and other NATO governments have frequently criticized U.S. foreign policy actions since September 11, 2001, but they never complain of U.S. military troops and equipment being committed to NATO, i.e., their defense.

If Germans don’t believe there is enough of a genuine Russian military threat to their national interests to spend realistic amounts of money on their own military, why should America (and U.S. taxpayers) think there is a threat and spend money to keep Germany safe? The Germans might actually be right – as long as Russia provides and controls over one third of Germany’s energy needs, President Putin already has a nice German lap dog in the realm of world politics – what would be the point of invading Germany?

The NATO structure is already there – so keep it as a nice place for “friends” to socialize in Brussels at NATO events. But perhaps it’s time to quit pretending that it is a serious military deterrent to Russian international behavior – at least not until various European members start spending enough of their own money to have REAL armies. Since President Trump’s public criticism, several European members have announced the intention to increase their Defense spending in the future. Proof will be in the pudding.

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