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1 “Negrín’s Hidden Trove: Opening the Last Spanish Republican Prime Minister’s Private Archive,” by Jonathan Sherry

2 In Review

3 “Catholicism and The Cold War,” by Stephanie Makin

4 Coming UP

5 ESC Spotlight:
Eva Albertsson



Photo courtesy of Wiki Commons

The above statue of Juan Negrín, the last Prime Minister of Republican Spain, stands in his hometown of Las Palmas in the Canary Islands.

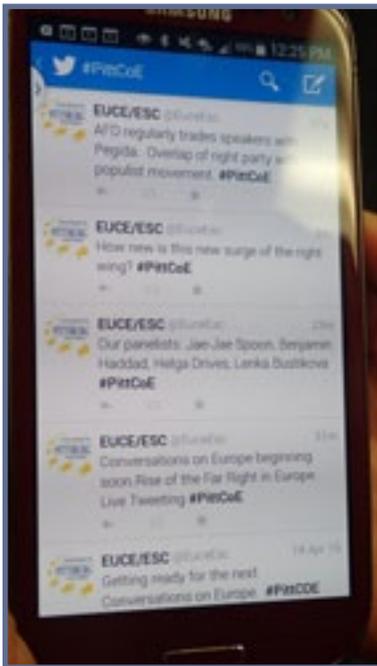
NEGRÍN’S HIDDEN TROVE: OPENING THE LAST SPANISH REPUBLICAN PRIME MINISTER’S PRIVATE ARCHIVE

by **Jonathan Sherry, PhD Candidate**
Department of History, University of Pittsburgh

Despite being one of the most pivotal events between Europe’s World Wars, the Spanish Civil War (1936-1939) has been shrouded in mystery for decades. It was collectively ignored as a result of the infamous Spanish *Pacto del Olvido* (The Pact of Forgetting) compromise, an effort to repress the memory and trauma of the Civil War for the sake of Spain’s transition from authoritarian Francoism to a parliamentary democratic monarchy. Moreover, documentation generated by the most enigmatic actor of the conflict – the Soviet Union – was in closed archives until that country’s collapse in 1991. The opening of these collections and the recent Spanish disavowal of the Pacto have presented scholars with a chance to examine one of Europe’s most pivotal events from last century. Questions continue to linger about the war, though, and a reason for this is the archive of Juan Negrín, the last Prime Minister of Republican Spain, was transferred to his hometown of Las Palmas in the Canary Islands.

Continued on Page 4

IN REVIEW

CONVERSATIONS ON EUROPE

The European Studies Center's award-winning virtual roundtable series, *Conversations on Europe*, continued to engage the most pressing issues facing Europe (and its foremost ally, the US). On Nov. 17 the *Conversation* was devoted to "Rescue and Prevent: Responses to Europe's Migration Crisis." More than 70 attendees filled two overflow rooms at Pitt, one of which is pictured above to the right, with other students joining remotely from Florida International University. December's *Conversation* focused on "The Climate for Climate Change Negotiations" and in January "The Rise of the Right: Comparing the American and European Political Landscapes" (pictured below). Students reacted positively. "The *Conversation* introduced me to political trends within Western Europe which are seldom reported on in the United States," said Pitt student Jared Muehlbauer. "In particular, I was surprised to learn of the rise of far right political parties in Eastern Europe and Poland, countries which are relatively unaffected by the recent migrant crisis." Three Duquesne University students attended the *Conversation*, one of whom was Natalie Lemmo. "The opinions we heard from different scholars were all informing and thought-provoking," she said. "I learned a lot about the correlation between the current political climates in Europe and the United States. This *Conversation* made me think about all of the current global issues contributing to the rise of right wing political parties all over the west in a new perspective." *Conversations* can be followed on Twitter live (@EuceEsc) and are posted on the Centers website: <http://www.ucis.pitt.edu/esc/content/join-us-our-next-conversations-europe-videoconference>.



CATHOLICISM AND THE COLD WAR

by **Stephanie Makin, PhD Candidate**
 Department of History, University of Pittsburgh

My dissertation examines how religion influenced German and American relations following World War II. Specifically, my research uncovers the multiple attempts of U.S. occupation forces in Germany and the American Catholic Church to forge a sense of Western solidarity between American and German Catholics. Secondly, I gauge German Catholic reactions to and participation in these attempts. I argue that Catholic-based transatlantic connections were an important element in cultivating a unified Western identity in America and Germany in the immediate postwar period. My research has taken me to archives in the U.S. and Germany, and I am grateful to the ESC for funding that allowed me to complete my American-based research.

Many political and religious leaders in Western Europe and North America saw the Cold War conflict in religious terms: a Christian “West” in battle with an atheistic “East.” However, the idea of a Christian West in which the U.S. and Germany were close Cold War allies did not appear with the end of hostilities in 1945. The war was too recent a memory, and the physical destruction of Germany served as an acute daily reminder to Germans. The well-oiled Nazi propaganda machine, which drew from pre-existing biases, had also left lingering negative stereotypes about America. In the eyes of many Germans, America was a cold capitalist behemoth. German Catholics, who comprised about half of the Western German population, saw America more as a secularized danger than a Christian comrade.

However, policy makers in the American occupation and church officials on both sides of the Atlantic believed building Catholic solidarity was an essential strategy in the emerging Cold War. This belief led to a series of measures, undertaken cooperatively by American and German Catholics, meant to foster friendship between the two nations. Beginning in 1945, the Religious Affairs Branch (RAB) of the American occupation headed the initiatives. It is important to point out, however, that the American Catholic Church was intimately involved with the RAB, and in the occupation of Germany in general – a point overlooked in current scholarship. The American zone of occupation overlapped with tradition-

ally Catholic regions of Germany. As such, American occupation officials sought out the help of the American Catholic hierarchy to nominate American Catholics, who were informed on Church doctrine and could serve as occupation officials in the American zone. The American Catholic influence in Germany grew even more direct in 1948 when American Catholic bishops established an Office of Cultural Affairs in Frankfurt, Germany. This office, for which there was no precedent, was originally aimed to help Catholic Germans take advantage of the many programs that the American occupation offered, such as study trips to the United States, and funding for community projects. It was through the RAB Branch and the Office of Cultural Affairs that connections between German and American Catholics were fostered.

The stories of individuals – from high ranking Catholics, to local priests, to teenage exchange students – form my dissertation’s backbone. My research has uncovered a wealth of information on such individuals. Walter Adlhoch, a German priest from Wiesbaden who was active in charity and youth work, is one of these people. Before 1945, Adlhoch had no connection to the States; he had never traveled there, had no American relatives, and commanded only a rudimentary knowledge of the English language. Beginning in 1949, however, he developed a close working relationship with the American occupation forces and with American Catholics. This relationship began with a trip to the States, paid for by the State Department and organized by American Catholics, in which he researched American Catholic youth organizations. Upon returning to Germany, Adlhoch drew heavily from his experience. He delivered multiple speeches about his American tour to fellow Germans, speaking mainly on American youth. In the spring of 1950, he successfully applied for funding from the American government to help build a Catholic youth home in Wiesbaden, Germany. The idea for a “Boys Town” was inspired by a similar youth home that he had encountered in the United States. American supporters of the home lauded it for its ability to teach democratic principles to the homeless youth and provide them with “moral and cultural stability.” This moral and cultural stability referred to a culture that was Christian, democratic, and most certainly anti-communist. Adlhoch and his youth work serves as just one example of the types of personal transatlantic Catholic connections that I believe were central in the formation of an increasingly unified West during the Cold War. €

COMING UP

DESPITE THE HOLOCAUST. JEWISH LIFE IN GERMANY AFTER 1945

Andrea Sinn, DAAD Visiting Assistant Professor of History, UC Berkeley, will discuss the various forms of isolation and stigmatization experienced by Jewish communities in Germany in the postwar period and seeks to explore the process of redefining Jewish existence in “the land of the perpetrators.” Competing and conflicting German, Jewish, and international conceptions of Jewish life in Germany that were voiced during the early postwar years play an important role in understanding the process of development within individual Jewish communities in the Federal Republic and the position that German-Jewish organizations occupy within the German as well as the Jewish environment today. **12:00pm, 4130 Posvar Hall, March 24.**

THE FUTURE OF THE TRANSATLANTIC SECURITY COMMUNITY

Magnus Petersson is a Professor of Modern History and Head of the Centre for Transatlantic Studies at the Norwegian Institute for Defense Studies in Oslo, Norway. His lecture will examine how Europe is under hard military and societal pressure from several directions; from the refugee crisis and the Syria Conflict in the South to the Russian revisionist behavior in the East and North-East. What kind of consequences can that have for the Transatlantic Security Community? **12:00pm, 4217 Posvar Hall, March 30.**

RIGHT-WING EXTREMISM IN GERMANY

When PEGIDA began its weekly protests in 2014, many were blindsided by its steady outpouring of support. From a mere 350 followers on October 25, 2014, the numbers grew to between 17,000 and 25,000 on January 12, 2015. Helga Druxes, Professor of German, Williams College, analyzes the rhetoric and ideological affinities of PEGIDA with other right populist groups, both past and present. **12:00pm, 4130 Posvar Hall, March 31.**

Continued from Page 1

Thanks to support from the European Studies Center, I had the privilege of going to the Fundación Juan Negrín in Las Palmas and being one of the first scholars to conduct research in this vast and unorganized collection, to uncover documents not seen for 75 years, and to be at the forefront of the most important development in the field since the opening of Soviet archives. I also had the pleasure of hearing the story of the archive over several meetings with Carmen Negrín Fetter, Negrín’s granddaughter, who warmly reminisced about childhood memories of her grandfather over hot espresso on a busy street in the Las Palmas old city of Vegueta.

“As a young girl, I always cherished the time I spent with my grandfather, especially when I was in his care in Paris,” she said. Carmen moved in with Negrín and his partner of 30 years when her birthmother was disabled by multiple sclerosis. Carmen remembers her grandfather as an honest and kind man who, in the face of scathing denunciations for his ostensible “crypto-communism” and his eventual isolation from the Spanish Republican exile community, never abandoned his vision of a democratic socialist Spain. It was only later in her life that she understood how intimately tied her grandfather’s life was with the hope and eventual tragedy of the Spanish Republic. Her commitment to clearing his name has guided the effort to open the papers to researchers.

After Negrín’s death in 1956, his eldest son inherited the archive and refused to allow anyone to consult the massive trove until the very end of his life. In 2000, the collection was turned over to Carmen, who comple-

Continued on Page 7

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ESC SPOTLIGHT: EVA ALBERTSSON



This month, ESC Newsletter Editor Gavin Jenkins interviewed **Eva Albertsson**, a Swedish lecturer in Pitt's Less-Commonly-Taught-Languages Center. Students working toward a West European Studies Certificate can take Swedish for credit, and thanks to Albertsson, it has become popular. Born in Kristianstad, Sweden, Albertsson attended Gustavus Adolphus College in Minnesota. She received a teaching certificate for upper secondary education and a Master's degree in Languages Education from Lund University. At Pitt, Albertsson has introduced Level 5 and 6 courses, which was previously not taught here. She also has worked part-time as Assistant Administrator for the Linguistics Department, and she has worked with the LCTL Director Claude Mauk with Faculty Support. She is helping students create a 'Fika-klubb,' which would help undergraduates learn more about Scandinavia and Scandinavian cultures and languages.

Q: What got you interested in teaching Swedish?

A: I was always interested in languages, starting with my upper secondary education back in Sweden. I focused on languages (German, French, English, Latin and Italian besides Swedish), but I always thought I would end up in law or journalism. I received a scholarship from the Swedish-American Foundation and went to Gustavus Adolphus College in Minnesota to study journalism. As part of the scholarship, I had to represent Sweden and visit Swedish classes and Scandinavian groups. The whole experience made me interested in teaching.

Q: Pitt offers 13 options in the Less Commonly Taught Languages Center, but Swedish has become popular. Why is it important to have these options, and to what do you attribute the popularity of Swedish?

A: We are very fortunate at Pitt to have the Less Commonly Taught Languages Center. In today's competitive job market, speaking a LCTL might be the one thing that sets you apart. I think there are a number of reasons why Swedish has become more popular. Many Swedish musicians have made it big over here, and in so managed to make Sweden better known. ABBA started back in the 1970s, but today Swedish House Mafia, Avicii, Icona Pop and Tove Lo can be heard all over the world. Swedish fiction is one of the 10 most translated languages in the world, particularly thanks to crime writers like Stieg Larsson and Henning Mankell.

As for the language itself, Swedish is consistently ranked among the easiest languages to learn for an English speaker and I think that is one of the reasons it is fairly popular. Rules for pronunciation are consistent with only occasional exceptions, and once you've mastered our four extra vowels (y, å, ä, ö) and the famous 'sje-sound', it's fairly easy for an English-speaker to mimic the sing-songy qualities of Swedish and quickly sound 'native'.

When it comes to grammar, many people think that because Swedish is a Germanic language it has to be difficult to learn. On the contrary! I like to call Swedish 'German Light.' Yes, there used to be many similarities with German, but when it comes to grammar, syntax, and vocabulary today, it resembles English more than German. The syntax is familiar with a subject-verb-object order (with the exception of when we start a sentence with something beside the subject – a mantra my students can recite in their sleep!) and verb conjugations pretty much follow the same rules and patterns as in English. Verbs are uninflected with no conjugation for number or person so once you learn the present tense form *arbetar*, it doesn't matter if I, he or we do it – it is always *arbetar*.

When it comes to vocabulary, we share many cognates with English. Modern Swedish borrows heavily from English and we frequently take English words and just add Swedish endings to them. There is no new writing system to master. Our Arabic, Hindi and Farsi instructors, for example, spend the first six weeks and more of level 1 teaching the new alphabet, etc., whereas the

Continued on Page 6

Continued from Page 5

similarities between English and Swedish allow my students to know enough Swedish to write a comic book in that time.

Q: How do you turn Christmas into a learning experience for your students?

A: It's very easy to feel stressed for time in a language class, especially only meeting twice a week. You want to teach your students to say so much in just a semester, but at the same time you want to teach them about the country and the culture that the language is spoken within. We try to speak as much Swedish as possible in the classroom, but sometimes you have to revert to English to explain why and how we do things. By the time we approach Christmas time in Level 1, we have actually learned so much that I let the students teach each other about how we celebrate this holiday. Every semester, LCTL students are required to complete two language projects outside of class, and I let Christmas traditions be our second project. Instead of me talking, the students all get various traditions that they get to present to the rest of the class in Swedish. Not only do we make this into a language project, but it opens up to great discussions in class about changes in society and traditions. It also makes them reflect on how and why they celebrate or do certain things. This is one of my favorite things to do with the students as it inevitably turns into a learning experience for us all. Every year, someone manages to question something I have always taken for granted and it forces me to look at my culture and my traditions with fresh eyes. Also, it's a great opportunity for me to share some of our Christmas goodies with my students before we finish with a tour of the Swedish classroom in the Cathedral.

Q: Recently a new standardized text for Swedish was introduced. What has your experience been like teaching it?

A: This semester, I started using a new textbook in which themes and grammatical procession are based on the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages. Using this framework ensures my students learn the same things and are expected to know the same things as students learning Swedish in other places. For students, it means an easier way to determine language proficiency when applying to schools or for jobs. For an instructor,

it means I have a shared framework on which to base my courses and exams around. Many instructors of Less Commonly Taught Languages are the only ones teaching the language at their schools. Sharing this framework, teaching the same themes at the same levels, means instructors of different languages can more easily work together and develop materials together. But this is a huge step for instructors that traditionally have worked individually, since, without a common framework of references, all textbooks have been different.

Q: What's Sweden's role in the European Union?

A: I think I would have had an easier time answering that question a few months ago... I feel we like to think we play a bigger role than we do. We tend to view ourselves and Sweden as a neutral peace broker that steps in and helps solve world problems. That may have been correct 50 years ago but is now an outdated picture. I feel we are viewed very favorably for our humanitarian work, our work with environmental and equality issues, and open immigration policies, but not being part of NATO or the EU currency union, we run the risk of being a little bit marginalized. The way Sweden managed to handle the recent economic crisis and still come out with one of the stronger economies helped us grow in the eyes of the other members.

However, in light of the recent refugee crisis, Sweden has really made the news and has become a country the other EU states are watching closely. Second only to Germany, Sweden (with a population of 9.8 million) has received a huge number of asylum seekers: 80,000 have arrived in the last two months alone and some predict the final number will be as high as 190,000. The country is now facing immeasurable problems. Short term, finding shelters and processing everyone. Long term, housing and employment. Amidst it all, a sense of injustice grows as Swedish politicians call for other EU member states to do more. Within the country, support is growing for the right-wing, anti-immigration Sweden Democrats (now the third largest political party) and a wave of arson attempts on asylum centers.

Due to our open immigration policies, there are voices now criticizing us for adding to the crisis and the perception of Sweden might be changing. Yes, we have all eyes on us, and we certainly get more noticed in the EU – but not in the way we had wished for. €

Continued from Page 4

mented it with a stash of documents she had found in the basement of the Negrín house in Paris. Carmen oversaw the partial cataloguing of the documents, and Gabriel Jackson, the great historian of Spain, assisted her in interpreting them. Before the crates of documents were moved to Las Palmas in winter 2013-2014, a few of the world's top specialists on the Spanish Civil War were granted access, among them Paul Preston, Helen Graham, Enrique Moradiellos, and Ángel Viñas. I first accessed the archive after taking residence in Las Palmas in May, 2014, several months after the archive was formally opened to researchers. Among the documents in the collection are daily military reports, letters to and from Stalin, and correspondence at the highest levels of government and judicial administration, all found in between old pictures of Negrín's life, papers from his medical career, and personal letters.

Negrín's Premiership from May 1937 to March 1939 remains mired in controversy. His proponents saw him as Republican Spain's great hope for a seemingly impossible victory against the aligned fascist forces of 1930s Europe – a Spanish Churchill, as he has been called. His detractors ranged from right-wing Francoists to the far left anarchists and Trotskyists who, despite disagreeing on everything else, could agree that Negrín was a Stalinist puppet, a Soviet dupe responsible for the Republic's defeat. Negrín was perhaps neither of those things. He was a pragmatic man horrified by the direction in which his country was going, and a professor of physiology until the conflicts of the Spanish Republic pulled him into politics. He was a man of action, whose relationship with the Communists in Spain was born out of necessity, not preference, and whose dedication to the Spanish Republic outweighed the difficulties of working with Soviet advisors.

My research looks at the relationship between Ne-

grín, Soviet advisors in Spain, and the Republican judicial system by examining the repression and “show trial” of the Partido Obrero de Unificación Marxista (POUM). The plight of the POUM is central to the Cold War mythology of Soviet hegemony in the Spanish Republic, the supposed attempt to create a “Peoples Republic” in Spain akin to those of post-WWII Eastern Europe, and Negrín



Photo Courtesy of Carmen Negrín

Negrín speaks to Spanish troops in 1938.

is a key player in that hackneyed narrative. The POUM, a relatively marginal dissident Marxist amalgamation of primarily Catalan communists, was thrown into the international limelight in summer 1937 when its leadership was arrested and its political secretary, the brilliant Marxist theoretician Andreu Nin, was assassinated by Soviet NKVD operatives. The illegal arrests and murder are typically laid at Negrín's feet, since he had come to power a month earlier. However, what is clear from documents in Negrín's archive is that neither Negrín nor anyone within his appointed government ordered the police actions. The government was in fact outraged by the news, and Negrín's Justice Ministry quickly took control of the protection and legal prosecution of the POUM leadership over the

next 16 months. The role of Negrín in this process, previously shrouded in mystery, is becoming clearer. What emerges from the documents is a careful balancing act maintained by Negrín: to preserve an uneasy coalition of Communists, Socialists, and Republicans in a single government, and to maintain judicial impartiality in the prosecution of the POUM leaders while also not upsetting the Republic's only ally, the USSR, which wished to see its “Trotskyist” enemies eliminated.

It is significant that although Negrín apparently planned to write memoirs, very few of his reflections exist on the war; the few that do deal with the murder of Nin and other illegal killings. It is clear that the issue weighed on his conscience. In an unpublished manuscript uncov-

Continued on Page 8

Continued from Page 7

ered in the archive, Negrín wrote of when he heard news of Nin's disappearance: "I felt alarm, heightened by the fear that my sedative proposals would be spoiled... I gave categorical instructions that the Director General of Security clarify using all the means available what had happened, figure out Nin's whereabouts, and keep him under surveillance, with every kind of precaution and safeguard so that this game would not happen again." Negrín went on to ask, "Is it strange that, in a Spain torn by a war, after 10 months in which the state apparatus had been shattered, during which the actions of incompetent committees... had generated anarchy, made more chaotic still by the internecine struggles of parties and organizations that resolved their issues with violence... it was not possible to find out the truth of what happened, when the new Government had been in power for so few weeks and had hardly been able to begin to deal with the upheaval created?"

But the importance of Negrín's archive reaches far beyond my project on the POUM affair; it is one of the last great repositories of Civil War Spain not yet fully



Photo Courtesy of Carmen Negrín
Negrín (center, black jacket) with Spanish military in 1938.

investigated, a treasure trove for historians of Spain, the Soviet Union, Europe, and the broader Spanish diaspora in Latin America. It sheds light on a crucial episode in the story of the global twentieth century and is sure to change how historians understand the broader role of Spain in the modern world. €

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