



UNIVERSITÄT  
HEIDELBERG  
ZUKUNFT  
SEIT 1386



### Conference

## ***NATO at 70: Trust and Mistrust among Allies***

April 8-9, 2019

Heidelberg Center for American Studies

Since the foundation of the transatlantic alliance after World War II, historians and political scientists discussed whether and how the “West” is able to cooperate on security issues despite distinct national interests. Scholars have often assumed that trust provides an important resource for cooperation. However, mainstream approaches on transatlantic relations and NATO have seldom substantiated the claim on the importance of trust empirically and theoretical concepts remained vague.

We think that a focus on the aspect of trust might therefore yield new insights for the understanding of past as well as current crises within the alliance. For example, Donald Trump’s “America First” policy weakens the level of confidence European allies put in NATO’s traditional lead nation, in particular regarding the alliance’s core security provision, Article 5, which Trump repeatedly questioned. The crisis of transatlantic relations during the Kennedy era was also connected to the question of trust: whether West Germany could still rely on US security provisions and at the same time, whether Europe, and Germany in particular, were trustworthy allies of the US. Furthermore, during the 1980s, debates surrounding the dual-track decision or President Reagan’s Strategic Defense Initiative were heavily contested within the security community. Here, trust might have served as a resource that contributed to the resilience of the alliance. More recently, the dispute over the war in Iraq damaged mutual trust and harmed the legitimacy of the United States.

Our conference thus intends to systematically analyze the role of trust for transatlantic conflict management during internal crises. Against the backdrop of 70 years of transatlantic cooperation within the framework of NATO, the conference aims to tackle the following questions:

- Which role does trust play during phases of internal contestation within the transatlantic alliance?
- In terms of theory and concepts, how can the role of trust be operationalized and examined in a comparative fashion?
- What are the processes of trust-building, loss of trust and trust-repair within the transatlantic alliance and who are the actors and institutions that entertain these processes?
- What is the relationship between trust, common interests, collective identities and other types of relationships, such as friendship in international relations, fear and uncertainty?

*Florian Böller & Wilfried Mausbach (Heidelberg Center for American Studies)*

## Conference Schedule

*Monday, April 8*

- 10.00-10.15 Welcome by the Director of the HCA, *Welf Werner*
- 10.15-11.00 Trust and Mistrust Among Allies: Concepts & Approaches  
*Florian Böller & Wilfried Mausbach (University of Heidelberg)*
- 11.00-11.30 Coffee break

### **I. In NATO We Trust? Consensus and Crises during and after the Cold War**

- 11.30-12.30 Security Cooperation between NATO and Russia after the Cold War: A Failure of Trust Building?  
*Marion Messmer (King's College London)*
- 12:30-14.00 Lunch break
- 14.00-15.00 Restoring Trust: John F. Kennedy and Transatlantic Crisis Management after the Berlin Crisis (1961-1963)  
*Florian Böller (University of Heidelberg)*
- 15.00-15.30 Coffee break
- 15.30-16.30 Alliance in Decay? NATO's Ideational Universe from Obama to Trump  
*Falk Ostermann (University of Gießen)*
- 18.30 Workshop dinner

*Tuesday, April 9*

### **II. Trust and Mistrust in a Multipolar Order**

- 9.00-10.00 The US, Trump and NATO: Mistrust and Institutional Resilience  
*Mark Webber (University of Birmingham)*

- 10.00-11.00 Trust in NATO: Examining the Role of Individuals  
*Vincent Charles Keating (University of Southern Denmark, Odense) & Jan Ruzicka (Aberystwyth University)*
- 11.00-11.15 Coffee break
- 11.15-12.15 Transformative NATO? Tracing Trust between France and Germany after 1945  
*Andreas Havenclever & Lukas Kasten (University of Tübingen)*
- 12.15-14.00 Lunch break
- 14.00-15.00 Shifting Trust Within a Secure Relationship: A Discursive Comparison of US-UK and US-India Relations  
*Carina van de Wetering (University of Leiden)*
- 15.00-15.30 Coffee break
- 15.30-16.30 (Dis-)Trusting Allies? NATO, the Rise of Populism and the Erosion of Alliance Solidarity  
*Sebastian Harnisch (University of Heidelberg)*
- 16.30-17.00 Concluding discussion, next steps, publication plans
- 18.15-19.45 Roundtable Discussion: NATO at 70  
*Heiko Thoms (FRG Deputy Permanent Representative at NATO)*  
*Sudha David-Wilp (Senior Transatlantic Fellow & Deputy Director Berlin Office, German Marshall Fund of the United States)*  
*Ben Hodges LTG (Ret.) (Pershing Chair in Strategic Studies, Center for European Policy Analysis)*
- 19.45 End of conference and reception