

STUDIES

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Intelligence in Public Media

Special Edition



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Mission The mission of *Studies in Intelligence* is to stimulate within the Intelligence Community the constructive discussion of important issues of the day, to expand knowledge of lessons learned from past experiences, to increase understanding of the history of the profession, and to provide readers with considered reviews of public media concerning intelligence.

The journal is administered by the Center for the Study of Intelligence, which also includes the CIA's History Staff, Lessons Learned Program, and the CIA Museum.

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Contents

Vol. 68, No. 4 (Review Special, December 2024)

Editor's note: This December we are publishing two editions of *Studies*. This edition, *Studies* 68. No. 4, is entirely devoted to media reviews offered us since our September issue. Soon to follow will be *Studies* 68, No. 5, an issue entirely devoted to remembrances of the passage of the Intelligence and Reform and Terrorism Prevention Act in October 2004 and its early implementation. This "Review Special" will only be available to readers digitally. No. 5 will be digitally posted and printed and delivered as usual.

Intelligence in Public Media

<i>The War for Ukraine: Strategy and Adaptation Under Fire</i> and <i>Downfall: Prigozhin, Putin and the New Fight for the Future of Russia</i>	7
Reviewed by John Ehrman	
<i>The Situation Room: The Inside Story of Presidents in Crisis</i>	13
Reviewed by Shelby Robertson	
<i>The Melting Point: High Command and War in the 21st Century</i>	15
Reviewed by Alissa M.	
<i>Nuclear War: A Scenario</i>	19
Reviewed by Michael Ard	
<i>Covert City: The Cold War and the Making of Miami</i>	23
Reviewed by Alissa M.	
<i>Intelligence in Democratic Transitions: A Comparative Analysis of Portugal, Greece, and Spain</i>	25
Reviewed by Anthony Sutton	

(Continued on following page.)

Intelligence in Public Media (continued)

<i>Keishicho koan sosakan: supai hanta no shirarezaru riaru</i> [Public Security Investigators of the Metropolitan Police] Reviewed by Stephen Mercado	29
Spymaster: The Memoirs of Gordon M. Stewart, CIA Station Chief in Cold War Germany Reviewed by Duncan P. Bare	33
CODE NAME: SPIKE: The Dawn of the Cold War, CIA & U.S. Army Special Forces Reviewed by Kevin McCall	35
<i>Cracking the Nazi Code: The Untold Story of</i> <i>Agent A12 and the Solving of the Holocaust Code</i> Reviewed by Edward L.	37
<i>The Bulldog Detective: William J. Flynn and America's First</i> <i>War Against the Mafia, Spies, and Terrorists</i> Reviewed by Heribert von Feilitzsch	39
<i>The Singularity (A Novel)</i> Reviewed by Joseph Gartin	43
Intelligence Officer's Bookshelf Compiled and written by Hayden Peake and others	45
Media Reviewed during 2024 in <i>Studies in Intelligence</i>	57



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review essay

The War for Ukraine: Strategy and Adaptation Under Fire

Mick Ryan (US Naval Institute Press, 2024), 360 pages

Downfall: Prigozhin, Putin and the New Fight for the Future of Russia

Anna Arutunyan and Mark Galeotti (Ebury, 2024), 272 pages

Essay by John Ehrman

The reviewer is a retired CIA Directorate of Analysis officer.

Editor's Note: Book reviews in Studies during the past decade-plus—most written by frequent contributor John Ehrman—have followed the growth of what he has dubbed “Putin Studies,” biographies and political analyses of the ruthless man who rose from mediocrity in the middle ranks of the KGB to become dictator of Russia.” Looking back on those reviews, a clear theme emerges: The longer Putin has been in power, the worse things have gotten for Russia, its people, his opponents, and the West. Indeed, the war in Ukraine, now nearing the end of its third year, is but one in a long line of Putin’s moves that have brought disaster to Russia and its neighbors.

The story of Putin’s rise and consolidation of power is by now well known. That is why two new books, *The War for Ukraine*, by Mick Ryan, and *Downfall*, a joint effort by Mark Galeotti and Anna Arutunyan, that examine his rule since the start of the war in February 2022, are so

welcome. In looking at the events of the past three years they emphasize different aspects of the structure of Putin’s regime. Together they provide a well-rounded analysis of the reasons for Putin’s military and political blunders.

The War for Ukraine

Ryan, a retired Australian army general and writer on military reform and strategy, has produced a concise and highly readable analysis of the war’s lessons to date. This is a comparative study, with Ryan alternating his chapters

between Moscow and Kyiv as he works his way through Russian and Ukrainian prewar strategy, how each shifted after the start of the conflict, different leadership styles, and then learning and adaptation at the operational and

a. See endnote for list of books described as “Putin Studies.”

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Review Essay: *The War for Ukraine and Downfall*

tactical levels. While aimed at an audience of military professionals and intelligence analysts, Ryan's direct and concise style make it easily accessible to the lay reader. For an intelligence audience, much of what Ryan details—that Ukrainian strategy, leadership, and learning and adaptation have been superior to that of the Russians—will be familiar. Nonetheless, *The War for Ukraine* still is a thoughtful summary of developments and their implications for future conflicts.

For the purposes of understanding Putin and the nature of his rule, moreover, Ryan has useful observations that build on what previous writers have noted. In 2022, Philip Short pointed out that because Putin surrounded himself with corrupt cronies chosen for their loyalty rather than abilities, he could rely on no one else to make decisions.^a He wound up centralizing power within himself to the point where nothing could be done without his approval. Consequently, according to Short, Putin's workload increased to the point of impossibility and, overwhelmed by the volume and details, he accomplishes little. Ryan points out that the COVID years only made this problem worse, as Putin isolated himself more and more, listening only to a smaller and smaller circle of hardline yes men. (129)

In the realms of strategic and military decision-making, this led to disaster. "Putin appears to be a good opportunist but a poor strategic thinker," says Ryan. (94) His overall strategy for Ukraine rests on a flawed, to say the least, narrative in which Ukraine is not a real nation-state, Russia is entitled to imperial greatness and, therefore, no reason exists to stop Moscow from

swallowing its neighbor whenever it decides to. (19–20) Separately, while the Russian military in the decade before 2022 had undergone a decade of reform and reorganization intended to build a smaller, more professional force with Western-style technological capabilities, the military actually was understaffed, poorly trained and equipped, and rotted by corruption. With his advisers unwilling, or perhaps unable, to tell him the truth about his army or that the Ukrainians might fight back, Putin went to war with his capabilities and strategy hopelessly mismatched.

The result was that rather than the expected quick victory, Putin found himself creating a strategic disaster. In response to the invasion, neighboring Finland and Sweden joined

NATO and, as a result, Russia no longer has neutral states on its northernwestern flank. The alliance so far has given Ukraine enough weapons, training, and financial assistance to turn the war into a brutal slog that has exposed the hollowness of Russia's conventional military forces. Despite these reversals, notes Ryan, "Putin has shown no willingness to adapt his political objectives" of subjugating Ukraine and, instead, has shown himself willing to fight on, regardless of the cost. (23) (No surprise. Short pointed out that, once in a fight, Putin has never backed down.) Ryan believes that rather than admit his errors, Putin has decided the West will eventually tire and that US and NATO exhaustion will be his path to victory. Putin may be right, or this may turn out to be another miscalculation, making it a "course of action that holds significant peril for Putin." (37, 38)



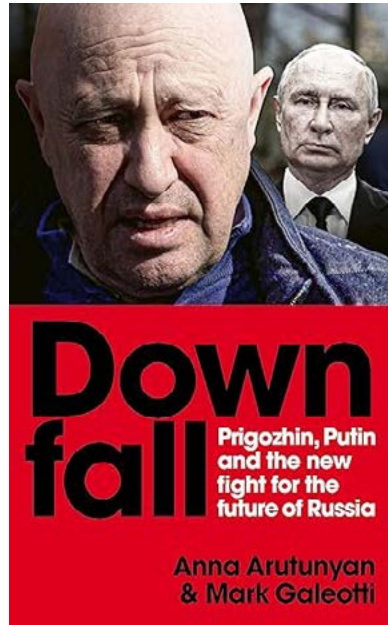
a. Philip Short, *Putin* (Henry Holt and Company, 2022).

Downfall

If Ryan gives us a strategic-level look at the consequences of the Putin regime's dysfunction, Anna Arutunyan and Mark Galeotti provide the micro-level details in *Downfall*, their biography of the late, unlamented Yevgeniy Prigozhin. Arutunyan, a Russo-American journalist, and Galeotti, a London-based historian of Russia, know how to tell a story, and Prigozhin certainly provides great material. Their well-paced and carefully documented account follows him from his youth in Leningrad through prison, his rise as a businessman in the chaos of post-Soviet St. Petersburg, and then his role as all-around servant to Putin until his fatal decision to rebel against his master.

One could almost—almost—read *Downfall* as a Greek tragedy were it not for the fact that, as high as he rose, Prigozhin never came close to fulfilling his ambitions. Born in Leningrad in 1961, Prigozhin had an unremarkable childhood but as a teenager started to run with petty criminals. In 1980, he participated in the violent robbery of a woman and soon was arrested and sentenced to 13 years in a labor camp. Prigozhin served nine years in this “serious school of life,” as he later termed it. (17) To his credit, Prigozhin did a lot of reading and became a successful small-scale entrepreneur in the black-market system of the camps. The skills he learned, along with his violent streak, prepared him well for business in post-Soviet Russia.

Returning to Leningrad in 1990, Prigozhin hustled in a number of jobs before opening a stand selling sausages in buns. The novelty of a Western-style hot dog put him on the road to success, and by the



mid-1990s he owned restaurants, grocery stores, and bars catering to newly wealthy Russians. Prigozhin made connections and became a facilitator, serving as “midwife to the emergence of a new elite,” and becoming wealthy in the process. (51) This new elite included Putin, then a rising political figure in Leningrad; the two became close associates, though not close friends.

When Putin took power in Moscow, however, Prigozhin's ambitions grew. He used his connections to turn his St. Petersburg food business into

a national operation, supplying food (often rotten, according to *Downfall*) to schools and the military. Prigozhin craved to be part of the inner circle, a power in Putin's court whose status was confirmed when Putin vacationed or played hockey with him. Still, however wealthy and connected he became, Arutunyan and Galeotti point out that Prigozhin was not part of Putin's old KGB St. Petersburg political crowd, while his criminal record, poor manners, and thuggish look meant that “he would never be good enough for the snobs of Moscow and St. Petersburg.” (82) In American terms, he was the ambitious young man from the outer boroughs, resentful of the Manhattan elite whose acceptance he craved but could not gain.

But Prigozhin was nothing if not persistent and the December 2011 protests against rigged elections gave him a new opportunity to make himself useful to Putin. He began a fresh line of business, intimidating opposition journalists and then moving on to online trolling through his new company, the Internet Research Agency (IRA). From there it was a short step to using the IRA for anti-US propaganda and

Review Essay: *The War for Ukraine and Downfall*

election meddling. The IRA was Prigozhin's initiative, according to Aruntunyan and Galleotti, but it further strengthened his alliance with Putin—"the more reviled Prigozhin was in Washington, the higher his stock in Moscow." (95)

This background explains Prigozhin's next step in his project of ingratiation, the founding of the Wagner Private Military Company (PMC). The Kremlin started using PMCs in 2012, and in 2014 called on Prigozhin to create one to help with its operations in eastern Ukraine. Wagner grew quickly and deployed to Syria and Africa, providing Putin with another useful, profitable, and deniable tool. But for Prigozhin himself, Wagner's success became fatal. In Syria, write Aruntunyan and Galleotti, "it was too much to watch someone else take the credit" for Wagner's performance. Simmering with resentment but unable to confront Putin directly, Prigozhin took out his frustration on Defense Minister Shoygu and Chief of Staff Gerasimov. (123)

Then came the invasion of Ukraine. When the Russian campaign was near collapse in the spring of 2022, it was Wagner—with Prigozhin hastily expanding its ranks by recruiting in Russian prisons—that came to the rescue. Prigozhin saw himself as having saved "the regular military ... from the war into which they had blundered." He was made a Hero of the Russian Federation and seemed to be on the verge of realizing his dreams. (159) But as the Russian army stabilized the front and began to recover from

the early disasters, Prigozhin found his usefulness declining. When his soldiers were chewed up in World War I-style assaults, Prigozhin's years of resentment exploded into a series of increasingly bitter public denunciations of Shoygu, Gerasimov, and finally and unforgivably, Putin and the war itself. The war, he said in May 2023, was started to denazify Ukraine, "but we ended up legitimizing Ukraine. We've made Ukraine into a nation known all over the world. As for demilitarization ... Fuck knows how, but we've militarized Ukraine." (174)

Prigozhin had overstepped his bounds, and his downfall was swift. In June 2023, Shoygu ordered that all mercenary forces come under Defense Ministry authority. Prigozhin knew that this would be the end of his empire, but Putin would not intervene. Prigozhin then sent Wagner forces marching toward Moscow not to depose Putin, as Aruntunyan and Galleotti point out, but instead to pressure him to rescind Shoygu's order. Putin, after initially dithering, stood firm and it was Prigozhin who had to back down and ask for a face-saving deal. But no one expected it to last. "In six months Prigozhin will either be dead or there will be a second coup," predicted investigative journalist Christo Grozev in early August.^a Grozev was off only on his timing—Prigozhin died on 23 August, two months from the date of his rebellion, when the FSB bombed the jet taking him from Moscow to St. Petersburg.

In Sum

One wishes that Aruntunyan, Galleotti, and Ryan had collaborated to write one book rather than two. As good a job as Ryan does in pointing out Putin's flaws as a strategist, Aruntunyan and Galleotti provide

a more useful framework for understanding why his regime performs so poorly overall. In their view, nothing in Russia really unfolds according to any sort of plan. Complementing Short's observations, they

a. Edward Luce, "Bellingcat's Christo Grozev: 'Prigozhin will either be dead or there will be a second coup'" in *Financial Times*, August 11, 2023 (in <https://www.ft.com/content/03f220e1-6a7e-4850-bf4e-4b0f521d8f8c>)

term Putin's regime an "adocracy," in which state functions are carried out not by established institutions run by experienced administrators, but by individuals and nonstate groups acting on spur-of-the-moment orders from the top. (112) It is, they write, a weak and disorganized regime with "scrabbling opportunists ... doing whatever the Kremlin wants doing today and trying to predict what it will need tomorrow." (208) They compete nonstop for the dictator's favor, knowing that none of them ever are secure in their positions. With subordinates like that, it's small wonder Putin is unable to formulate workable strategy.

That said, Ryan, Aruntunyan and Galleotti are too optimistic about this ramshackle system's life expectancy. Just as Ryan sees Putin as making additional, possibly fatal, miscalculations, Aruntunyan and

Galleotti argue that Prigozhin's mutiny and subsequent murder exposed the "hollowness of an aging regime that didn't believe anything," and imply it won't last much longer. (213) Maybe we'll be lucky, and this will turn out to be the case, but the examples of Cuba and North Korea show that isolated leaders atop brittle regimes can go on a lot longer than usually expected.

Putin is 72 years old as of this writing and could easily soldier on for another decade or more. As unfortunate as that would be, it means that policymakers will continue to need insightful analysis to help them understand the Russian dictator. It will be a long time before we have definitive accounts of Putin's life and rule but in the meantime, as we look for guides to dealing with him, books like *The War for Ukraine and Downfall* will be helpful contributions to such work. ■

Bibliographic Note: Following is the body of literature the author described as "Putin Studies" in the introduction—listed in order of publication:

Masha Gessen, *The Man Without a Face: The Unlikely Rise of Vladimir Putin* (Riverhead, 2012); reviewed in *Studies* 57, No. 4 (December 2013).

Fiona Hill and Clifford Gaddy, *Mr. Putin: Operative in the Kremlin* (Brookings Institution Press, 2012); reviewed in *Studies* 57, No. 4 (December 2013).

Masha Gessen, *The Future is History: How Totalitarianism Reclaimed Russia* (Riverhead, 2017); reviewed in *Studies* 62, No. 2 (June 2018).

Shaun Walker, *The Long Hangover: Putin's New Russia and the Ghosts of the Past* (Oxford, 2018); reviewed in *Studies* 62, No. 2 (June 2018).

Catherine Belton, *Putin's People: How the KGB Took Back Russia and Then Took on the West* (Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 2020); two reviews in *Studies* 64, No. 4 (2020).

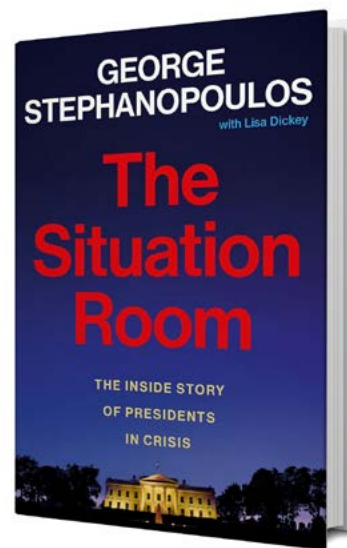
David Shimer, *Rigged: America, Russia, and One Hundred Years of Covert Electoral Interference* (Alfred A. Knopf, 2020); reviewed in *Studies* 64, No. 4 (December 2020).

Philip Short, *Putin* (Henry Holt and Company, 2022); reviewed in *Studies* 66, No. 4 (December 2022). ■

intelligence in public media

The Situation Room: The Inside Story of Presidents in Crisis

Reviewed by Shelby Robertson



Author: George Stephanopoulos with Lisa Dickey
Published By: Grand Central Publishing, 2024
Print Pages: 325
Reviewer: The reviewer is a team chief in the Office of Intelligence and Counterintelligence, Department of Energy

George Stephanopoulos's *The Situation Room* is the first book featuring the famed White House room (actually a collection of rooms) since Nerve Center in 2004. The sitroom, as it's commonly known, has been through two renovations since that publication so an updated history seems appropriate. Of course, the sitroom is often mentioned in other national security related histories and memoirs, but Stephanopoulos aims to make the sitroom itself the center of the narrative. The book is broken down by presidential administration from the sitroom's inception during the Kennedy administration through the first two years of the Biden administration. Stephanopoulos tracks how each president used the room, especially during notable events like President Obama's deliberations with

staff leading up to the raid that killed Osama bin Ladin, but he also shifts the narrative frequently from presidents and policymakers to focus on the professionals who staff the sitroom. Stories of the Abbottabad raid have been told many times, but this latter feature provides the book's uniqueness.

The Situation Room is Stephanopoulos's second book. He published *All Too Human* in 1999 about his time working for President Clinton. Stephanopoulos adds some credibility to the new book as a journalist and former White House communications director. He is clearly passionate about the subject and reveres the duty officers whose story he committed to tell, which he proves by tracking down and interviewing more than 120 former sitroom staffers.

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The Situation Room: The Inside Story of Presidents in Crisis

Yet, he does fall victim to some of the trappings of the situation room, which, unfortunately results in some likely unintended hyperbole that a more experienced national security official could have avoided. An awkward section on artificial intelligence at the end of the book is the only other minor criticism, but neither of these compromises the integrity or readability of the narrative. One notable fact Stephanopoulos captures perfectly is the apolitical commitment of the duty officers who work there. Staffers serve the office of the president, not the president himself. It cannot work any other way.

The most stirring portion comes early in the book. If the reader elects to read just one section, it should be this one. Chapter one focuses on the Kennedy administration and the sitroom's beginning. Toward the end of the chapter, Stephanopoulos recounts a conversation between duty officer Oliver Hallett and White House Press Secretary Pierre Salinger after President Kennedy was shot in November 1963. Salinger was calling for updates while enroute to Japan with Secretary of State Dean Rusk and five other cabinet members. As Stephanopoulos notes, call transcripts are rare except for presidential calls, so it is remarkable that such a document exists. Salinger calls the sitroom several times throughout the day to get updates from Hallett on Kennedy's condition, which culminates with Hallett informing Salinger that "the president is dead." Stephanopoulos shrewdly provides just enough commentary for context and publishes several excerpts of the transcript verbatim letting the conversation's text provoke the reader's emotion. This section alone is worth the price of the book.

Of course, there are many other notable stories woven throughout the text. Serious reporting on the Iran-Contra Affair details how Oliver North and John Poindexter deleted thousands of emails pertaining to the illegal operation. Turns out email has caused national security officials problems from its inception, with the first administration to use email also being the first to experience an email scandal. More light-hearted stories are also included like when President George H.W. Bush and Mrs. Bush would call the sitroom on Sunday afternoons to see if any staffers wanted to watch a movie with them, or when President Bush would call down and ask a duty officer to

send him some funny cables because he knew he had "appointed some ambassadors who are funny as hell." Lastly, there are truly inspiring moments captured. Stephanopoulos interviews Rob Hargis, senior duty officer on September 11, 2001, and details how sitroom staffers refused evacuation orders in the uncertain hours after the attacks while knowing the White House could be a target.

Perhaps there is one missed opportunity. The sitroom is a series of conference rooms and a 24/7 watch-floor staffed by duty officers from around the government. As anyone who has ever worked a watch can attest, there are stretches of seemingly endless time when it appears nothing is happening in the whole world. This is generally when antics ensue that produce some genuine, sometimes outrageous comedy. Such a chapter does not exist in the book, although understandably. It is hard to imagine former officers wanting such shenanigans on record in a popular history written by one of America's best-known journalists. Still, those would be some entertaining anecdotes and reveal how closely bonded duty officers become through moments both light and solemn.

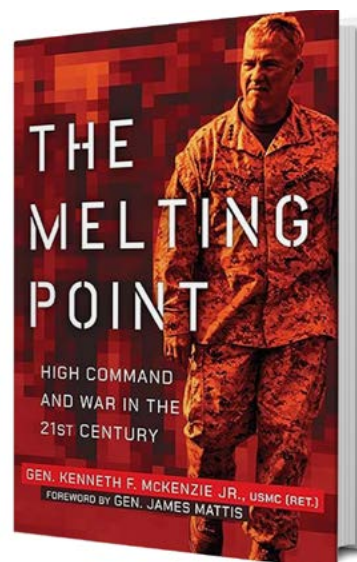
In all, *The Situation Room* hits its target and provides those little-known accounts from sitroom staffers that make the book a unique and worthwhile contribution to both popular history and the national security literature. ■

intelligence in public media

The Melting Point: High Command and War in the 21st Century

Reviewed by Alissa M.

Author: Gen. Kenneth F. McKenzie, Jr., USMC (Ret.)
Published By: Naval Institute Press, 2024
Print Pages: 360
Reviewer: The reviewer is a CIA intelligence analyst specializing in Iranian foreign policy.



A new volume by retired former commander of US Central Command Marine Gen. Kenneth McKenzie offers observations about leadership through one very particular and very important echelon of decisionmaking: the theater-level military commander.

McKenzie spent three years at the helm of CENTCOM—three years during which the United States withdrew from Afghanistan, managed a fragile deterrence against Iran, and conducted consequential strikes against an ISIS commander in Syria and an Iranian general in Iraq. Those three years also spanned the second half of the Trump administration and the early days of the Biden administration.

McKenzie's views on leadership and civilian control of the military are based on his 40 years of military service

generally, but especially on lessons he learned during his command of the Middle East theater, which he frames as a vantage point uniquely positioned to see both operations and policymaking. The fact of his first-hand observation of weighty national security decisionmaking under two administrations lends heft to his judgments. And though he walks through sometimes quite granular details of how decisions were made and how the civilian leadership guided that process under both presidents, the book is not a tick-tock of those processes, nor an excoriation of former President Trump, nor an exultation of President Biden.

By McKenzie's own accounting, the book has three themes: First is the importance of civilian control of the military; second is the unique role of the combatant commander, where the development of policy and its

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The Melting Point:

execution meet; the third is that leaders matter, as does the ability and willingness to make decisions.

The book follows the chronology of events during McKenzie's tenure as CENTCOM commander, mostly centered around the three major events of those years—the US strike that killed ISIS leader Abu Bakr al Baghdadi in October 2019, the US strike that killed Iranian IRGC-Qods Force Commander Qassem Soleimani in January 2020, and the US departure from Afghanistan in August 2021. McKenzie uses these three marking points as examples for his three themes of civilian control of the military, the juncture of policy and execution at the combatant commander's role, and the role of leadership.

The first chapter opens with Iran, but Iran plays second fiddle to Afghanistan throughout McKenzie's narrative, largely because most of the policy decisions on Iran managed to avoid cataclysmic outcomes, even after teetering frightfully close to them. Afghanistan, on the other hand, is clearly the most central and most emotionally charged set of problems McKenzie managed in his career. He calls the US departure in 2021 “wrenching” (111) and puts the moment he learned the US would leave Afghanistan in total alongside the Kennedy assassination and 9/11 as moments that live vividly and indelibly in his memory. (194) He draws a line from his own experience at the Pentagon on September 11, 2001, through the Afghanistan withdrawal in chapters 8, 11, 12, and 13, culminating with an accounting of the military and policy errors in Afghanistan policy during his tenure in Chapter 14, aptly titled “Accountability.”

Much of the book includes reflections on and anecdotes about leaders—many of whom are household names and others who are less familiar. If there's one thing we know the US military bureaucracy produces, it is intentional, deliberate leaders, so we can be fairly certain McKenzie has a reasonably nuanced view of leadership. As a leader himself, his views and assessments of other officials carry the weight of his experience and expertise.

Some leaders are revealed as exceptionally capable and upstanding, like former Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Mark Milley (“magnificent” during

January 2021 [167]) and former Secretary of Defense Mark Esper (“a good, honorable man” [147]). Others, less so. It's hard to imagine a more damning critique of a leader than his portrayal of Zalmay Khalilzad, whose style McKenzie calls “secretive, compartmentalized” (122) and whom he describes as being more committed to achieving a deal with the Taliban than ensuring accountability for Taliban adherence to it. (132, 325)

Most of the most significant decisions McKenzie discusses fell during the tenure of two national security advisors—Robert O'Brien during the Trump administration and Jake Sullivan during the Biden administration. Each are mentioned by name only a handful of times, but both are implicated in McKenzie's assessments of the interagency policy process they oversaw. Under O'Brien, McKenzie found a “lack of clear strategic guidance” and calls out “the inability of the interagency process to clearly identify and state the gaps between the vision of the White House and the dictates of [...] the NDS,” referring to the National Defense Strategy, the document that guides much of the focus and spending of the US defense infrastructure. (106) But he finds the Biden administration overcorrected from these perceived shortcomings and indulged in a policy process that was too dialectic and lacked decisiveness. (177–78, 180)

McKenzie's depiction of then-President Trump does not always comport with some popular views of his decisionmaking style as erratic—indeed McKenzie places much of the blame for what looked like unpredictable decisionmaking from the Oval Office at the feet of the most hawkish of Trump's national security advisors. (129, 151–52) At other times, McKenzie offers experiences that make Trump resemble common caricatures of him, as when McKenzie describes paring down a critical briefing to the bare minimum points, knowing from past experience that to get the key message across would require immediate engagement and repetition of the core message. (126)

To his credit, McKenzie does not shy away from laying blame at his own feet. He foreshadows this in the preface, where he promises to detail “what we did well, and where *I fell short*.” (xiii, emphasis my own). In several instances he owns his mistakes where he feels he erred and nowhere more painfully than in recount-

ing the series of missteps and failures that led to the “unalloyed tragedy” of a US Hellfire missile strike against a completely innocent man and nine family members. (258)

Intelligence is not one of *The Melting Point*’s three core themes, but it does make occasional cameo appearances, usually as the infrastructure that provides targeting and battlefield information to the warfighter on the ground, or equally importantly, the infrastructure that cannot get that information to the warfighter when policymakers indulge in what McKenzie calls a “fantasy by some senior leaders” of distant basing of intelligence and military assets when trying to conduct counterterror operations in Afghanistan. (130–31)

McKenzie clearly appreciates (in both senses—to understand and to value) the importance of physical presence for human intelligence collection for the find, fix, finish mission of parts of the US military. (189) There is less space spent on the importance of intelligence analysis in informing the policy- and decision-making happening at the White House and Pentagon.

The penultimate chapter—titled “Iran, Iraq, and Syria”—and the final chapter hypothesizing about the future of the Middle East and warfare generally already read as somewhat overtaken by events. Any book with the modern Middle East as a backdrop runs this risk, with events changing the landscape at an exhausting pace, but especially so in light of the conflict in Gaza. In this book about leadership in the CENTCOM region, HAMAS is not mentioned. This is no fault of McKenzie’s; it is merely a reflection

of how much can change between the tenure of one commander to the next in the Middle East.

McKenzie establishes his three themes in the preface and he hews to them throughout, with nary a digression or sidebar. But in sticking so closely to his aim of describing the dynamics of civilian control of the military, the meeting of policy and command in theater-level leadership, and the importance of leaders, he fails to analyze those dynamics. He does not leave us with a template for being a good leader or rubric for how to judge the performance of leaders for ourselves.

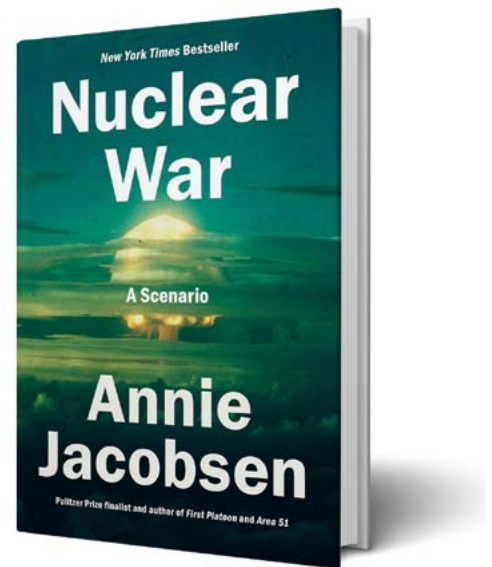
It’s not clear whether McKenzie thinks the path to better policy choices comes through better process or better leadership. The title of the book points to the latter, but much of his narrative points to the former. He finds policy-process failures in both the Trump and Biden administrations but offers us no guidance on how to correct from either of those two trajectories.

McKenzie closes with a succinct summary of his book’s scope: “In this book I have tried to describe what it means to be a commander at the highest level of war—the command of a theater—during some of the most tumultuous days in our national history.” (279) He has achieved that with an admirably dispassionate view that details the decisionmaking process and leadership underpinning significant military strategy and operational choices without commentary on politics or personality. Some guideposts for determining how to assess other leadership or advice on how to be a better leader would have only enhanced McKenzie’s reflections on his own experience. ■

intelligence in public media

Nuclear War: A Scenario

Reviewed by Michael Ard



Author: Annie Jacobsen
Published By: Dutton, 2024
Print Pages: 373
Reviewer: The reviewer is a retired CIA officer.

What if a single nuclear warhead plummeted from the sky and obliterated Washington DC? How would the United States respond? Would this mad act set in motion a general nuclear war that might spell the end of civilization?

Journalist Annie Jacobsen, the well-known author of *Area 51* and *The Pentagon's Brain*, devises a sinister and provocative scenario. With a bolt-from-the-blue surprise attack, North Korea, using one of its hard-to-find mobile launchers, fires a single Kwasong-17 intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM) with a 1-megaton thermonuclear warhead, right at our nation's capital. (15) The premise is plausible, because North Korea has the technical means to

do it, doesn't announce ballistic missile launches (37), and just might be crazy enough to try it. When the warhead explodes over Washington, it will completely destroy 100 square miles of US territory.

The narrative in *Nuclear War: A Scenario* is ruthless and relentless. Jacobsen explores the dark corners of our nuclear defense apparatus and attempts to expose the nuclear deterrence "myth" and its potential consequences. Not relying solely on open-source and declassified documents, Jacobsen conducted many interviews with top experts such as Richard Garwin and Theodore Postol, who "know what we do not" about the reality of nuclear war and the twisted logic of deterrence theory. (xxiv)

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Nuclear War: A Scenario

The book usefully details the vast array of US institutions, facilities, and procedures dedicated to fighting and surviving a nuclear war, but Jacobsen's larger purpose is to grab us by the shirt collar and shake us out of our complacency about the unstable, "second nuclear age" we live in.

Jacobsen's book has appeared at a time when taking a hard look at nuclear deterrence policy makes sense. For instance, Ukraine's recent seizure of Russian territory has challenged a key tenet of deterrence theory—that nuclear-armed states are immune from invasion. *Nuclear War* exposes other flaws in the theory. Nuclear madness may have peaked with our Single Integrated Operational Plan (SIOP) of 1960, which anticipated a response causing 600 million casualties worldwide. SIOP may seem extreme, but this book suggests that our fundamental approach to nuclear conflict has changed little since then. In her scenario, a limited nuclear attack exposes the profound vulnerability of our defenses, and the rational irrationality of our overwhelming response, with our commitment to just war, human rights, and even environmental protection thrown by the wayside.

According to Jacobsen, our missile tracking and defense system, designed to stop a single rogue missile launch, has significant flaws. As we follow an incoming ICBM missile in her narrative, the realization slowly dawns that there's not a damn thing we can do about it. We have a short five-minute window to shoot it down in its boost phase, but our space-based infrared satellite sensors lose track of it in its midcourse phase. (71) We learn the massive Sea-Based X-Band Radar station, meant to detect the missile in midcourse, is widely considered unreliable, issuing many false positives. (75) The US Missile Defense Agency is responsible for intercepting the missile, but its systems have only a 55-percent success rate under ideal conditions. (72–73) Decoys from the ICBM might decrease that even more. In the terminal phase, the warhead separates for its final minute-and-a-half descent to Washington, DC.

Miscommunication and misconceptions play prominent and plausible roles in this scenario. Uncertainty and reaction, not rational thought, predominates as policymakers are gripped by "energetically minded

groupthink." (66) No one, not even the president, is in control of events, which swiftly get out of hand. When the blast over Washington comes, potentially all life in a mile diameter is extinguished. In a matter of minutes, deterrence theory, the theoretical foundation of our nuclear weapons policy, proves to be bankrupt.

Jacobsen's scenario also exposes contradictions in our defense planning. Getting the president, with the all-important nuclear launch codes, to safety and responding to the nuclear attack at the same time proves nearly impossible. US Strategic Command is begging for the launch codes while the president's being hustled by the Secret Service aboard *Marine One* to fly to Raven Rock Mountain Complex, the underground nuclear bunker and command center in Maryland. (105)

If nuking our capital weren't bad enough, Jacobsen continues her scenario with a North Korean submarine's launch of another ballistic missile at a nuclear power plant in California. If you can't detect the sub beforehand, there is no defense against this attack, and the warhead slams into a nuclear power plant in California, "a worst-case scenario beyond measure." (126) Weaponized nuclear power now turns peaceful nuclear power into complete devastation for the region.

Having described two devastating strikes, Jacobsen asks, "Do we carry out a massive retaliation?" Our policy of launch-on-warning demands we respond to the attack with numerous ICBMs of our own. (59) A knee-jerk response—the only response possible with so much at stake and so little reaction time—threatens massive collateral damage to the world's population outside North Korea. As Jacobsen points out, "restoring deterrence," by hitting back with overwhelming force, to change our enemy's decisionmaking, is our military doctrine. (194) Moreover, our strategy regarding nuclear weapons is, "use them or lose them." (241)

The trouble is that North Korea is so small that the collateral damage to neighboring countries from nuclear fallout—including to our allies Japan and South Korea, and even nuclear-armed China—will be inevitable. (96) Moreover, due to their range issues, Minutemen III missiles must transit Russian airspace to reach their North Korean target. The silos

in F.E. Warren Air Force Base in Wyoming belch fire, sending 50 Minutemen III's carrying their 300 kiloton warheads to strike North Korea. (136)

Our response also inadvertently triggers another real danger: Will Moscow understand that the missiles overflying their territory are not a nuclear first-strike on our part against Russia? Russians have an early warning satellite system, "Tundra," which is thought to be unreliable. Will Russian leaders understand our missiles are aimed at North Korea, and not them? (154) Were the Russians to strike back, using their own deterrence logic, they will likely aim for our nuclear silos in the northern Midwest.

Based on game theory, there is no way to "win" Jacobsen's scenario. We respond to a limited if destructive attack with a devastating reprisal, gaining no geostrategic benefit. The aftermath brings about Carl Sagan's planetary "nuclear winter" of widespread

radiation poisoning, freezing cold, ozone loss, and mass starvation (22).

If nuclear deterrence cannot keep us safe, what does it even mean? Jacobsen asks. (21) Despite being a gripping and informative read, her extreme scenario approach has its drawbacks. It is fiction, after all. Her bolt-from-the-blue attack would be an intelligence failure of the highest magnitude. Nuclear War doesn't convincingly argue that deterrence theory is defunct; North Korea's leadership still seems more committed to survival than national suicide, and our defenses, though flawed, might be good enough to discourage a nuclear surprise attack. Deterrence's effectiveness can't be completely dismissed. Moreover, Jacobsen gives us little by way of solutions to avoid this doomsday scenario. Still, her sensational book raises some important and lingering questions about deterrence theory's contradictions and our own limited defense. ■

intelligence in public media

Covert City The Cold War and the Making of Miami

Reviewed by Alissa M.

Author: Vince Houghton and Eric Driggs
Published By: Public Affairs, 2024
Print Pages: 246
Reviewer: The reviewer is a CIA intelligence analyst specializing in Iranian foreign policy.



Real-life spy dramas tend to happen in European capitals or Moscow. Maybe Washington, DC, or New York City. But Miami has also had its share of intelligence drama, almost all of it focused on Cuba and the relentless pursuit of counterrevolution in Havana. Even earlier this year (February 2024), for instance, the FBI in Miami arrested a career US diplomat and former ambassador, Manuel Rocha for decades of spying for Cuba.

Feeling the need to fill a Miami-shaped hole in the non-fiction literature of intelligence derring-do, Vince Houghton and Eric Driggs have written a book that falls somewhere between journalism and popular history. It's an account of Cuban-focused and Cuban-origin clandestine operations, covert influence, and spycraft (some of it embarrassingly ham-handed), all with a Miami nexus.

The book is broken into four parts of uncertain themes, a blurriness that is itself a common issue throughout

the book. Part I opens with a step back to the earliest US-based Cuban counterrevolutionary efforts in 1891 and describes the early years of Cuban exile groups in Miami as they struggled to find cohesion, funding, and operational momentum in the first half of the 20th century. It also describes the US government's efforts to implement a coherent Cuba policy in the face of too much operational momentum.

Chapters two and three are interesting for the consideration of intelligence and policy choices. They portray Operation MONGOOSE, instituted after the failed Bay of Pigs operation, as a failure of policymakers to align proposed operational plans with the desired policy results, rather than a failure of intelligence analysis or intelligence collection. Chapter three describes a CIA in Miami that had grown exponentially from being staffed by one fellow named Justin in 1959 to an expansive establishment with hundreds of employees, thousands of

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Covert City

contacts, and a massive impact on the Miami economy, by 1964. It also describes CIA as wary of covert action to prompt regime change in Cuba and the two Kennedys, John and Robert, as reluctant to hear CIA's message over Edward Lansdale's louder claims that covert action was a can't-lose proposition to bring down Castro. (41)

Part II veers away from intelligence operations and into the policy tit-for-tat between Washington and Havana during the Cold War. It describes the Cuban government's education policy and why Cuban parents were desperate to get their kids to the United States in the 1960s—Operation Pedro Pan brought thousands of Cuban children ages 6 to 16 to the United States—and Miami's demographics started trending overwhelmingly Cuban. There is more Cold War tension and near-miss disaster in chapter five as Cuba became harder to access and Miami-based Cubans turned to hit-and-run raids on the island. The Kennedy administration, battle-scarred from the Cuban Missile Crisis, ceased sponsoring raids and clamped down on the freelancers to ensure their raids did not start World War III.

After a focus on historical covert ops in the first part and a foray into demographics and policy in the second part, Part III is a view into slightly more recent Cuban history, with a lot of focus on humanitarian crises, including Cuban citizens claiming asylum in the Peruvian embassy in Havana, boatloads of Cubans arriving in Florida—all facilitated by a Castro happy to see a potentially destabilizing force sent to his adversary's homeland.

There's not much to say about most of Part IV, which is a series of mostly short and unsatisfying chapters on a hodgepodge of topics, including Elian Gonzales, Castro's death, and the role of international crime and corruption in Miami. But chapter 11, cryptically entitled "Double Trouble," stands out as a chapter of particular interest for intelligence-minded readers, and not only because it has a reference to *Studies in*

Intelligence but because it relies heavily on a book on Cuban intelligence written by Brian Latell, a former chair of the *Studies* Editorial Board, and delves into the early struggles of and later absolute Cuban intelligence domination over CIA and the FBI. They quote (anonymously and second-hand) several CIA and FBI intelligence professionals as saying, in effect, that the Cuban services absolutely dominated the American services for the second half of the Cold War and beyond. Intelligence debacles included the sweepingly large Wasp Network of Cuban spies in the 1990s and the devastatingly effective long game the Cuban services played in developing, recruiting, and running DIA analyst Ana Montes.^a

Overall, *Covert City* reads like an extra-long-form journalism article more than a history book, for all the positives and negatives that implies. It has a somewhat irreverent tone that makes it accessible, and the covert ops anecdotes are told entertainingly, but the book lacks a story arc to anchor the reader in a narrative from chapter to chapter. Its flippant approach has other meaningful downsides. For example, none of the chapter titles or subheadings is descriptive; instead, they are punny ("Raiders of the Lost Archipelago") or merely vague ("Exporting Counterrevolution" is the most descriptive of the bunch), making them unhelpful when trying to return to a particular topic.

The authors are frank about their personal biases—both are from Miami, and Driggs' family came from Cuba—which is refreshing and does not undermine the credibility of their historical research.^b Neither has experience in intelligence operations, though both have been exposed to intel issues—Houghton as the director of the National Cryptological Museum and Driggs as US SOUTHCOM's congressional liaison. Their disassociation from sponsors of the Cold War activity they recount probably freed the two from any need to defend the operations and allows them, as outsiders, to marvel at the boldness, risk tolerance, and occasional foolhardiness of Cold War intelligence officers and the policymakers they served. ■

a. Curiously, the authors do not mention the case of Walter Kendall Myers, a retired State Department intelligence analyst who was arrested in 2009 after almost 30 years of spying for Havana; he is now serving a life sentence for espionage.

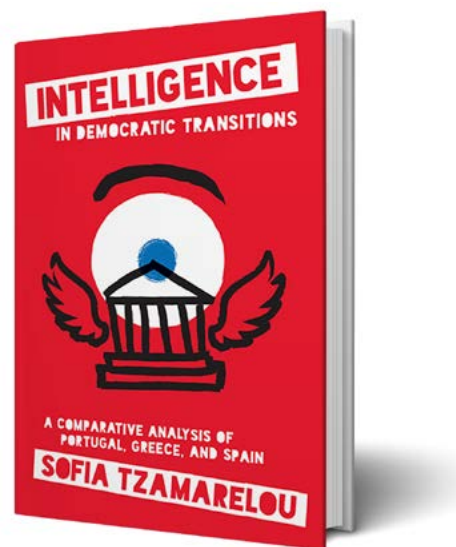
b. Houghton and Driggs's source material includes a slew of books along with contemporary news articles, documents from the George Washington University National Security Archive and the Mary Ferrell Foundation, a handful of podcast interviews, many officially released government documents, and a couple of government documents released perhaps less officially and noted as "in authors' possession" in the endnotes.

intelligence in public media

Intelligence in Democratic Transitions A Comparative Analysis of Portugal, Greece, and Spain

Reviewed by Anthony Sutton

Author: Sofia Tzamarelou
Published By: Georgetown University Press, 2024
Print Pages: 257
Reviewer: Anthony Sutton is an analyst in the Strategic Futures Group of the National Intelligence Council.



Intelligence services in autocracies inevitably repress citizens, who cannot know them and must fear them. Intelligence agencies in democracies suffer the tension between secrecy and accountability but are properly tamed by laws, elected officials, and watchful societies.

Sofia Tzamarelou, a media and PR consultant with a doctorate in intelligence studies from Brunel University London, inspects transitions from autocratic to democratic intelligence work, documenting progress that has been considerable in Portugal, partial in Spain, and limited in Greece. The result is a useful slog for intelligence officers covering political arrangements in these or comparable countries.

Tzamarelou structures her inquiry using a preexisting academic framework called Security Sector Reform. SSR, as its practitioners style it, provides a five-part rubric for describing how far an intelligence service has democratized. Full democratization involves 1) lustration^a to remove autocratic holdovers among intelligence personnel, 2) control and oversight to ensure legal behavior, 3) targeting of national security threats rather than political opponents, 4) recruitment based on merit rather than political reliability or nepotism, and 5) civil society that engages and monitors intelligence services. Across the cases, Tzamarelou emphasizes lustration, reasoning that a thorough purge creates the conditions needed for other elements of democratization.

a. Tzamarelou defines “lustration” as “the process by which a state that is transitioning to democracy removes officials and other insiders from the previous authoritarian regime. These individuals are often identified based on their past involvement in repression, including violations of human rights, and their affinity for the old regime or authoritarian ideology.”

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Intelligence in Democratic Transitions

This framework serves well enough. The book does not offer any new theory^a or waste words debating narrow differences with competing frameworks.^b It follows the common method of measuring national cases against a theoretical yardstick. Contemporaneous articles even did so for Portugal,^c Spain,^d and Greece.^e Tzamarelou's unique contribution is primary research in four languages, plus the service of arraying cases with similar starting points and varied outcomes.

The most reformed case is Portugal. During the autocratic, corporatist Estado Novo era, António de Oliveira Salazar (in power 1932–68) and his successor Marcello Caetano (1968–74) held direct control over the main intelligence agency. That civilian outfit repressed society, but it had little insight into the military, where discontent grew with colonial wars in Africa. Intelligence thus failed to foresee the coup in 1974 that gained public support and inaugurated a democratic transition, breaking sharply from the old regime.

Public antipathy to the old autocratic intelligence service led Portugal to forgo any civilian intelligence until 1984. Democratic Portugal's eventual intelligence service thus suffered no autocratic holdovers. Building from nothing, the democratic regime legally limited intelligence activities and split oversight functions among the prime minister, two ministries, and the legislature. Broader laws giving public access to government documents, along with media attention to isolated scandals, cemented democratic control.

In the case of Spain, military intelligence emerged from civil war in the 1930s vigilant against internal enemies and vengeful against former opponents. Generalísimo Francisco Franco (in office 1936–75) stood up additional agencies that answered directly to him and likewise focused on domestic concerns.

Spain's democratic transition in 1976 created overarching protections for civil liberties while retaining intelligence officers in accordance with the "pact of forgetting." Thereafter, intelligence operated autonomously, with little oversight, close ties to the military, and a habit of hiring for political type and personal favor. Scandals intermittently roused the government to discipline its intelligence service, which failed to warn of a coup attempt in 1981, organized a reactionary death squad in the 1980s, and faced higher expectations after a terrorist attack in 2004. Slowly and partially, agencies recruited civilians, legislators controlled funding, laws restricted operations, and media identified malfeasance.

In the case of recalcitrant Greece, the autocracy's intelligence services, beginning with the 4th of August Regime (1936) through the establishment of the Third Hellenic Republic (1974), focused on domestic communists and reported directly to the national leader. Most intelligence officers were seconded from the military, and many had personal ties to the ruling junta.

Intelligence personnel stayed in place across Greece's democratic transition in 1974. Military and police continued to dominate the service, which remained a politicized tool of the executive despite laws pointing it against national-security threats and eventually establishing some judicial oversight. When partisan control of the government switched, the intelligence agency shifted loyalty to new leaders concerned with new domestic opponents. Decades after democratization, Greek intelligence remains only partially effective against terrorists and little trusted by the public.

Tzamarelou's case studies reinforce several notions in adjacent literatures. Coup scholars will recognize in Portugal's history the tendency for junior-officer

a. Security Sector Reform, an older and broader idea, had already been used to analyze intelligence democratization, as in Peter Gill, *Intelligence Governance and Democratisation* (Routledge, 2016).

b. The main competing framework is Civil-Military Relations (CMR), as in Florina Cristiana Matei and Thomas Bruneau, "Intelligence Reform in New Democracies: Factors Supporting or Arresting Progress," *Democratization* 18, no. 3 (2011).

c. Andres de Castro and Enrique Fernandez-Carrera, "Portuguese Intelligence under Salazar's Estado Novo," *International Journal of Intelligence and Counterintelligence* 37, no. 3 (2024).

d. Antonio M. Diaz-Fernandez, "Spanish Intelligence in the Early Days of Late-Francoism: Fault Lines and Continuity," *International Journal of Intelligence and Counterintelligence* 37, no. 3 (2024).

e. Eleni Braat, "Democratization of Intelligence: Demilitarizing the Greek Intelligence Service after the Junta," *International Journal of Intelligence and Counterintelligence* 37, no. 3 (2024).

coups to reshape regimes more thoroughly,^a whereas transitions, such as Spain's, made through agreement rather than revolution typically preserve prerogatives for autocratic elites.^b Democracy scholars will recall that each country's stock of experience with democracy predicts good governance,^c just as this study finds media investigations and public pressure helped restrain intelligence gradually and reactively. And Europeanists will notice how EU and NATO candidacies motivate structural reforms, although in these cases sometimes also with a preference for technical competence over accountability.

For style, the book reads like the PhD dissertation it was,^d carefully applying an established technique to novel cases while demonstrating mastery of the related academic literature. Which is to say the writing is sometimes clunky and the structure interferes with the

narrative. Meticulous procession through the theoretical framework splits each national case into 12 pieces, making it difficult to follow the plots.

Still, an intelligence officer willing to put in the work will acquire generic measures for the democratization of intelligence, an appreciation for the variety and mutability of national outcomes, and perhaps a renewed commitment to their own professional ethos. Tzamarelou, describing the subordination of intelligence to democracy, directs little attention to why a society might prefer more competence and less abuse from its security services. All the same, readers who pledged fealty to a constitutional order might use these comparative cases as an opportunity to meditate on the roles of their own agencies in maintaining and protecting a democracy. ■

a. Holger Albrecht, Kevin Koehler, and Austin Schutz, "Coups, Agency and Prospects for Democracy," *International Studies Quarterly* 65 (2021).

b. Michael Albertus and Victor Menaldo, "Gaming Democracy: Elite Dominance during Transition and the Prospects for Redistribution," *British Journal of Political Science* 44, no. 3 (July 2014); James Loxton, "Authoritarian Successor Parties," *Journal of Democracy* 26, no. 3 (July 2015).

c. John Gerring, Strom C. Thacker, and Rodrigo Alfaro, "Democracy and Human Development," *The Journal of Politics* 74, no. 1 (January 2012); John Gerring, Philip Bond, William T. Barndt, and Carola Moreno, "Democracy and Economic Growth: A Historical Perspective," *World Politics* 57 (April 2005).

d. Sofia Tzamarelou, "Intelligence Democratization: A Comparative Analysis of Portugal, Greece, and Spain," Brunel University PhD dissertation, 2021.

intelligence in public media

Keishicho koan sosakan: supai hanta no shirarezaru riaru
[Public Security Investigators of the Metropolitan Police]

Reviewed by Stephen Mercado

Author: Katsumaru Enkaku
Published By: Gentosha, 2024 (in Japanese)
Print Pages: 171
Reviewer: The reviewer is a retired CIA open-source officer.



A veteran of Tokyo's Metropolitan Police Department (MPD, also often abbreviated unofficially as TMPD), now active as an intelligence entrepreneur, consultant to a hit Japanese television series, and popular author, has returned with his third book this year to regale the public with tantalizing tidbits about police intelligence in Japan. Katsumaru Enkaku stepped several years ago from the shadows of MPD intelligence into the light of day, more or less. His identity hidden behind trademark dark glasses, ballcap, face mask, and what is almost certainly a pen name, Katsumaru holds forth in interviews on intelligence issues. On his business website (<https://katsumaru-office.tokyo/>), he offers insights and services at various hourly rates.

Part of Katsumaru's high profile comes from his stint consulting on intelligence matters in the production of *Vivant*, last year's big spy drama from the Tokyo Broadcasting System (TBS), now available on Netflix. With Sakai Masato, star of the hugely popular TBS banking drama *Hanzawa Naoki*, Abe Hiroshi, and other top actors, *Vivant* has become in a single season a popular spy thriller that features characters from the MPD's Foreign Affairs Division (FAD) and the Japanese military's secretive Beppan intelligence organization. (Japanese officials have long denied Beppan's existence, but it has surfaced repeatedly in articles and books on Japanese intelligence.^a)

a. See, for example, Ishii Gyo, *Jieitai no yami soshiki: himitsu joho butai 'Beppan' no shotai* [Shadow Organization of the Self-Defense Forces: The True Character of the Secret Intelligence Unit 'Beppan'], (Kodansha, 2018)

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Keishicho koan sosakan: supai hanta no shirarezaru riaru

Katsumaru Enkaku reveals little of his background. According to his author's profile, which omits the customary information on his date and place of birth and education, he joined the MPD "in the mid-1990s." By the early 2000s, he was working in "foreign affairs" in the MPD Public Security Bureau (PSB). Adept at English, Katsumaru spent part of his career overseas at an unspecified Japanese embassy and later worked liaison with foreign diplomatic missions in Japan. "Several years" before this book's publication, he retired from the police to start his present career as an international security consultant to business leaders and corporations.

His previous books included two slim self-published works this year, as well as the earlier *Cho muho chitai: anyaku suru supaitachi* [*Zone of Intelligence and Lawlessness: Spies Active Behind the Scenes*] (Jitsugyo no Nihon Sha, 2023) and *Keishicho Koanbu Gaijika* [*Foreign Affairs Division, Public Security Bureau, MPD*] (Kobunsha, 2021).

In Public Security Investigators, Katsumaru gives one rousing cheer after another for Japanese police intelligence. He explains that, whereas typical police attempt to solve crimes that have already taken place, PSB officers keep spies and terrorists under surveillance and gather other intelligence to thwart them in advance. The PSB includes officers of the public security divisions (PSDs), who track domestic targets, and those of the foreign affairs divisions (FADs), who go after spies, terrorists, and anyone who may be helping them. Katsumaru was an FAD officer, although he refrains from revealing the specific division.

All Japanese police officers may be elite, but Katsumaru writes that those tapped to work in public security are the "super elite." (20) The author claims that PSB officers are those who compiled outstanding records at the police academy. He credits his ability to rise into the elite ranks of the PSB to his high marks and proficiency in English. (32)

Some Japanese academics and police veterans have criticized, or even denounced, Japanese police intel-

ligence practices, but Katsumaru is a cheerleader. He devotes much of the book to describing with pride the art of surveillance, including the work of officers in surveillance teams and the monitoring of suspects from the front as well as from behind. He proudly recalls that he was particularly good at tailing targets. In addition, Katsumaru mentions brush passes, dead drops, disguises, private rooms in restaurants, and surveillance detection routes as some of the tools of the trade.

Katsumaru keeps intelligence interesting and simple. To whet popular interest in intelligence, he devotes attention to the honey trap, the technique of using an attractive man or woman to snare a human target. He also refers repeatedly to intelligence in popular culture. Readers learn, for example, that real intelligence officers do not resemble the strikingly handsome Abe Hiroshi, who plays one in *Vivant*. The author peppers his text with references to James Bond (his inspiration to work in intelligence), the 2012 television movie *Double Face* (a TBS remake of the 2002 Hong Kong police thriller *Internal Affairs*, which Martin Scorsese remade in 2006 as *The Departed*), and the 2022 Japanese animated television series *Spy x Family*.

He also introduces over several pages a number of special terms used in police intelligence. (102–105) One odd term is the English word "monitor," which he repeatedly uses. Rather than someone who, for example, watches the airwaves for intelligence in foreign broadcasts, the author seems to use the term to mean police collaborator, informant, or agent.

Katsumaru also engages in fearmongering to drum up support for new legislation against espionage as well as to boost police intelligence and, by extension, his own background. He repeatedly reminds readers that Japan is the only major power without extensive anti-espionage legislation. In the author's telling, spies run rampant in Japan, brazenly stealing secrets. Without going into details, he asserts that 30,000 foreign spies are in Japan. (75) Nowhere does Katsumaru acknowledge that Tokyo's reluctance to date to institute far-reaching laws against spying has something to do with the legacy of Imperial Japan's

feared Special Higher Police (SPH, aka the Tokkō) and military police (the Kempeitai), as well as the documented violation of post-World War II Japanese law by police officers engaged in illegal intelligence activities.

In Katsumaru's view, FAD police are a pure blue line protecting Japan, despite the absence of rigorous anti-espionage laws, against Chinese, North Korean, and Russian spies. His repeated reminders that readers never forget that they, too, are targets constitute an advertisement to businessmen and corporations for his services.

Such boosterism aside, Katsumaru offers some interesting information on Japanese police intelligence. His claim that MPD officers cut ties to colleagues and

to classmates from the police academy upon entering PSB ranks is an interesting bit of information, as is his claim that PSB officers review past operations and plot next moves in the private rooms of izakaya bars and karaoke boxes.

The publisher, Gentosha, has put out this book as part of its recent series on the Japanese police and intelligence. Among authors in the series are Furuno Mahoro, a police veteran and public security expert, and Fukuyama Takashi, a retired officer of the Ground Self-Defense Force. The launch of this series suggests a growing interest in intelligence among the Japanese public, as well as greater interest among influential Japanese in promoting positive impressions of Tokyo's developing intelligence community. ■

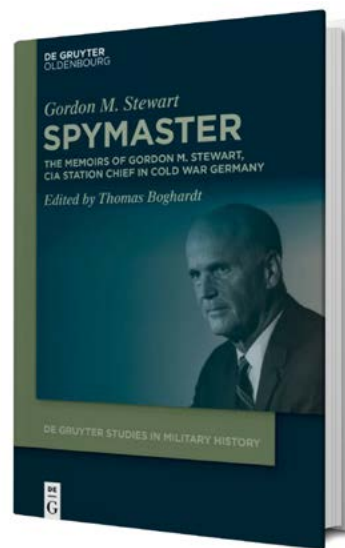
intelligence in public media

Spymaster

The Memoirs of Gordon M. Stewart, CIA Station Chief in Cold War Germany

Reviewed by Duncan P. Bare

Editor: Thomas Boghardt
Published By: De Gruyter Oldenbourg (Military History Series, 2024)
Print Pages 212
Reviewer: The reviewer is a NARA archives technician who has written on intelligence during the period described in this memoir.



The publication of Gordon M. Stewart’s memoir, *Spymaster*, edited by US Army military historian Thomas Boghardt, must be welcomed owing to the glimpses it provides into Stewart’s experiences from the Second World War up to 1971, first with the Office of Strategic Services (OSS), then OSS’s short-lived successors, the Strategic Services Unit (SSU) and the Central Intelligence Group, Office of Special Operations (CIG/OSO), and ultimately CIA.

While Stewart’s memoir comprises the bulk of *Spymaster* (pages 55–187), their greater relevance to intelligence history is contextualized in a 44-page introduction by Boghardt.^a Apart from elaborating upon some of the areas that Stewart discusses, Boghardt uses his contribution

to provide more detail for those periods and topics that Stewart either mentions only briefly or ignores.

More than 50 pages of Stewart’s memoir is dedicated to his childhood, adolescence, and early adulthood. This diverges from the more business-centric autobiographies or memoirs of his contemporaries, such as Richard M. Helms, Peer de Silva, Ray S. Cline, and Harry Rositzke. As such, the closest comparison to Stewart’s memoir is that of his fellow OSS and SSU Germany alumnus, Peter M. F. Sichel.^b Whereas Sichel’s memoir balances his “lives,” Stewart’s is choppy: He does not begin to discuss the Second World War until page 108 and ultimately dedicates less than 80 pages to his experiences in the US Army, OSS, SSU, CIG/OSO, and CIA between 1944 and 1953.

a. Dr. Thomas Boghardt is a senior historian at the U.S. Army Center of Military History and is the author of *Covert Legions: U.S. Army Intelligence in Germany, 1944–1949*, the official history of Army Intelligence operations in postwar Germany.

b. *The Secrets of My Life: Vintner, Prisoner, Soldier, Spy* (Archway Publishing, 2016).

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A brief epilogue (181–87) does cover the period beyond (1953–94), briefly touching on the bulk of Stewart’s career with CIA (1953–71).^a Mentioned are a tour in Asia after Germany, his work in technical intelligence, the Office of Personnel, as chief of the Eastern Europe Division and return to Germany, the Board of National Estimates (which he describes as “boring”), and finally a tenure as inspector general. Throughout this brief section are one-line comments on various luminaries such as Jim Angleton, Frank Wisner, Bill Colby, Ronald MacMillan, Thomas Karamessines, and Dick Helms.

As much of Stewart’s writing is based on his personal experiences and reflections, there is little to contest or dispute. Generally, and to his credit, Boghardt adopted a hands-off approach, maintaining much of Stewart’s memoir as written, and refraining from overloading the text with footnotes that contradict or unnecessarily elaborate. Though, in my view, he might have been a bit more aggressive in correcting Stewart’s errors or adding clarifications.

With respect to Boghardt’s introduction, it will be informative and helpful to newcomers to intelligence history, but it offers little new to US intelligence history of the period. The archivist that I am, leads me to add that Boghardt’s use of archival documentation is commendable (primarily relating to OSS and SSU), but those wishing to retrace his research will find many of his citations deficient because they provide only record group and series numbers—for example, Entry 108B, is a 320-container series within RG 226 that Boghardt frequently cites. Without box numbers, location of the referenced documents is unnecessarily difficult. Conceivably this the publisher’s editorial choice.

In addition to citing holdings in the US National Archives, Boghardt cites a good mix of secondary literature and documentation available electronically in the CIA’s FOIA Electronic Reading Room (ERR). Informed readers will likely have a feeling that more information could have been mined from the ERR, particularly for the 1953–71 period.

I found a number of contextual issues in the introduction that negatively frame the memoir. The most

pressing, in my view, is that Boghardt casts US intelligence in Germany as the clearinghouse for penetration of Central and Eastern Europe from the end of the War in Europe through the 1950s, stating in the third line of his preface how “Germany was the principal staging ground for intelligence operations behind the Iron Curtain” Perhaps Boghardt was led to that conclusion by Stewart’s singular focus on his service in Germany: Stewart rose to Chief of Secret Intelligence (SI) and its successor, Foreign Reports Board (FRB) at SSU Germany and would work primarily in that country during the period he focuses on his memoir. Boghardt leverages this to assert that it “put ... him in charge of all SSU espionage operations in Central Europe.” (10) Stewart’s role in the Cold War is, therefore, significantly inflated.

However, Churchill’s “Iron Curtain” extended farther, from “Stettin in the Baltic to Trieste in the Adriatic,” and the activities of SSU’s and later CIG/OSO’s two other main outfits on the continent, Austria and Italy, aptly reflected that. At least until the late 1940s, SSU, CIG/OSO, and CIA missions in Austria and Italy played equal, if not more important, albeit less widely known, roles in Central and Southeastern Europe, launching their own operations and gathering valuable intelligence wholly independent of Stewart and their organizational compatriots in Germany. The characterization of Stewart’s importance misses the cumulative nature of precentralized US intelligence’s experience in Europe, and the “fiefdoms” which had arisen among the various field-based SSU and CIG/OSO missions that would persist well into the 1950s and likely beyond.

All in all, Boghardt has added substance to a memoir that, at times, is disappointingly short of detail. He also deserves recognition for shepherding Stewart’s work to publication, and although he is not as informative or insightful as some of his contemporaries were, he does add insight into a period almost always overlooked and frequently misunderstood. Stewart’s role in formalizing and professionalizing the postwar US intelligence setup in Germany is unmistakable. *Spymaster* is a valuable addition to the shelves of intelligence historians and scholars. ■

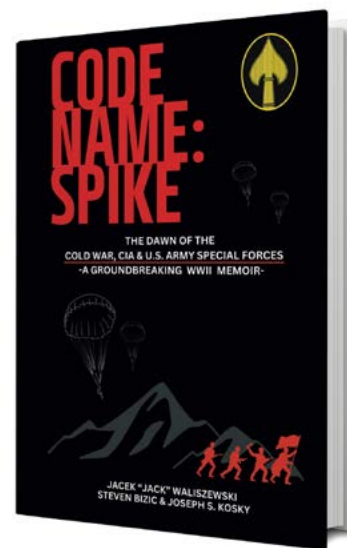
a. Stewart explains this brevity by saying, “The story of the German station can, I think, be told. The other should not. For that reason, the memoir ends with a description of my departure from Germany in early summer 1953.”

intelligence in public media

CODE NAME: SPIKE

*The Dawn of the Cold War, CIA
& U.S. Army Special Forces*

Reviewed by Kevin McCall



Author: Jacek “Jack” Waliszewski, Steven Bizic, and Joseph S. Kosky

Published By: Stories by Publishing, 2023

Print Pages 542

Reviewer: The reviewer is a former Marine and US Army paratrooper. He is now a member of CIA’s History Staff.

CODE NAME: SPIKE is a recently discovered, rare and valuable World War II memoir about an Office of Strategic Services mission in Yugoslavia. The memoir was originally written shortly after the war ended by two of the team’s members, Sgt. Steven Bizic and Cpl. Joseph S. Kosky. US Army Special Forces WO2 Jacek “Jack” Waliszewski discovered the manuscript, unpublished due to early Cold War sensitivities, in the US Army Heritage and Education Center archive.

In it, Sergeant Bizic, an immigrant to the United States, parachutes into Yugoslavia with three other SPIKE team members, including Corporal Kosky. The mission was the third OSS attempt to penetrate the area—the earlier insertions had been lost and unaccounted for. Team SPIKE was received by British Special Operation

Executive Team BURLESQUE. “Their primary mission is to reinforce and direct Yugoslav and Macedonian resistance operations, and gather vital intelligence against the Nazis.”

SPIKE’s area of operations is southern Yugoslavia—surrounded on three sides by Albania, Bulgaria, and Greece. In this corner of Europe, in addition to the Germans, SPIKE encounters Yugoslavs from competing parties of partisans and royalist Chetniks, Bulgarian soldiers, and Albanian fascists—any or all of whom may be hostile. The mountainous terrain is remarkably forbidding with steep slopes, narrow valleys, and fast flowing rivers—conducive to guerrilla warfare of the most grueling and difficult character—that physically challenge the hardiest of people.

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CODE NAME: SPIKE

After insertion and link-up with the British team, SPIKE demonstrates its most valuable ability: calling in air-dropped supplies, some of which partisan leadership purloin for their own purposes. The reader is introduced to the overriding concept of the book: *Pokret*, a Serbo-Croatian term that translates into “Let’s move right now.” In a continuing effort to evade Albanian patrols and Bulgarian aircraft, the partisans of the SPIKE and BURLESQUE teams conduct a series of forced marches, some lasting up to 30 hours, throughout the mission. The narrative of being continually chased because of revelations by local informers and German radio-direction-finding reveals an oft-neglected truism: Although evasion is generally considered an individual skill for conventional forces and downed pilots, it is the sine qua non for unconventional armies. The ability to flee unheard and unseen from enemies and to outlast and “out suffer” them, tips the balance toward survival.

This account of the four-month mission reveals startling perspectives on guerrilla warfare and the savagery inherent to societies in dissolution and its impact on people, property, and social order. Previously amicable neighbors become brutal enemies by terror, loss, betrayal, and degradation. Burning, rape, torture, mutilation, and destruction of anything not transportable devolves into the commonplace—despicable and ubiquitous. Despite society’s previously civilized proclivities, the rationale of “kill or be killed” becomes paramount to even reluctant participants in guerrilla war, and local populations absorb the anger and reprisals of combatants.

CODE NAME: SPIKE also reveals the hazards of arming guerrilla forces—and thereby giving them the ability to fight common enemies *and* their other, additional enemies. While in the company of the guerrillas, paramilitary advisers may be allies, a source of protection and subsistence *and* the guerrilla’s “prisoners.” Their value as “hostages” varies according to the scenarios and dangers in which the guerrillas find themselves and whether or not the captors still require hostages. Paramilitary advisers are also at the mercy of political machinations well beyond their cognizance or control, as demonstrated by Allied abandonment of the Chetniks to support the Russian protégé—communist

partisan leader Josef Tito—in the name of Allied unity, as agreed upon in the 1943 Tehran Conference.

Of particular interest to intelligence officers and historians is an example of the developing “special relationship” between the OSS and its slightly elder cousin, the British Special Operations Executive. Much of OSS’s original training and doctrine was adapted from SOE early in the war. By dint of necessity, despite separate missions, the organizations often shared resources, worked together, fought together, and discreetly “looked the other way” when national decorum demanded. It was the operational establishment of a cultural affinity that has since been passed along to today’s US Special Operations and British Special Air Service as well as CIA and Britain’s Secret Intelligence Service (MI6).

In his rendering of the original manuscript, WO2 Waliszewski went the extra mile to research British archives for corroborating information. His efforts located SPIKE’s Morse code messages to OSS Headquarters, which he inserted throughout the book to validate its credibility. The narrative itself is buttressed with clear, well-drawn maps and a collection of photographs (courtesy of surviving family members) that help carry the story, clarify locations, and give the characters shapes, faces, uniforms, and humanity.

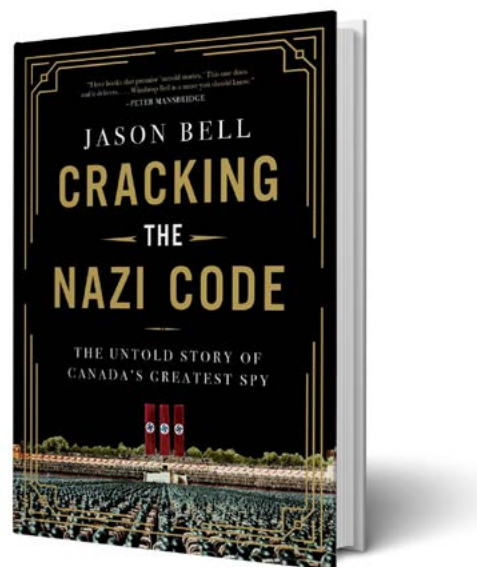
CODE NAME: SPIKE compares favorably to other prominent OSS memoirs of the 1940s such as Stewart Alsop and Thomas Braden’s *Sub Rosa: The O.S.S. and American Espionage* (1946), Corey Ford and Alastair MacBain’s *Cloak and Dagger: The Secret Story of the O.S.S.* (1946), and Elizabeth MacDonald’s *Undercover Girl* (1947). The volume’s detailed documentation of a behind-the-lines mission fills a niche left by such works published right after the war. It will take a rightful place in the libraries of OSS historians and aficionados. Moreover, *CODE NAME: SPIKE* should be required reading for aspiring Special Operations soldiers, their officers, and other paramilitary operators as a primer for understanding the nature, difficulty, and uncertainty inherent in their chosen profession. Its straightforward story will inspire future generations of “quiet professionals” to train, prepare, and steel themselves for the rigors of irregular war. ■

intelligence in public media

Cracking the Nazi Code: The Untold Story of Agent A12 and the Solving of the Holocaust Code

Reviewed by Edward L.

Author: Jason Bell
Published By: Pegasus Books, 2024
Print Pages 341
Reviewer: The reviewer is a Department of Defense analyst



Could reports from an intelligence agent inside Germany have saved humanity from Nazi victory and worldwide genocide? This is the premise of Jason Bell's new book on Winthrop Bell (no relation to the author), a Canadian journalist and clandestine British MI6 agent in Germany during 1919–20. W. Bell's reports not only informed policymakers of the threat posed by violent right-wing reactionary forces in the immediate aftermath of the Great War, but also warned of their plans for a future genocidal war.

The author shares more than just a surname with his subject: like W. Bell, J. Bell is an academic philosopher whose work is rooted in phenomenology. *Cracking the Nazi Code*, however, is no dry academic monograph.

Instead, it is a rousing narrative non-fiction in the vein of Ben Macintyre. J. Bell serendipitously uncovered the story of W. Bell while researching his PhD in 2008. Based largely on recently unsealed archives, J. Bell's book gives an account of W. Bell's career, primarily focused on his time undercover during the tumultuous early years of the Weimar Republic.

W. Bell, scion of a prominent Nova Scotia family, first moved to Germany to pursue a PhD under the supervision of philosopher Edmund Husserl. In 1914, W. Bell's studies were interrupted by World War I. Denied a doctorate by his university, W. Bell spent the war interned in Germany. Released after the 1918 armistice, he traveled to Britain with the intention of continuing on

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Cracking the Nazi Code:

to take up a professorship at Harvard. Instead, British and Canadian officials persuaded him to return to Germany, ostensibly as a Reuters reporter but actually in the employ of MI6.

Codenamed A12, W. Bell spent the next year reporting for Reuters and MI6 on the dire conditions in post-war Germany. His reports warned of virulently antisemitic, right-wing paramilitary forces' intentions to overthrow Germany's fragile democracy and wage a war against perceived internal and external enemies. W. Bell also cautioned against imposing severe peace terms on Germany, which he correctly assessed would create further resentment to be exploited by anti-democratic forces. Crucially, these intelligence reports may have influenced British officials to press for a less harsh settlement during the 1919 Paris Peace Conference.

W. Bell left Germany in early 1920 and returned to North America where he began his academic career, first at the University of Toronto and then at Harvard. He eventually left academia to work as an executive in his family's fishery, where he made enough money to retire in 1933 at forty-eight. Still engaged in international events, in spring 1939, W. Bell wrote a lengthy article warning that the Nazis' ultimate intention was to carry out a global genocide, an assessment he based on reading *Mein Kampf* and listening to broadcasts of Hitler's speeches in German. Viewed by many editors as overly alarmist, W. Bell had trouble finding an outlet for his piece. It was eventually published in a prominent Canadian newsweekly in late 1939.

Given J. Bell's impressive research, it is unfortunate that he gets much of the broader history wrong. For example, the author often refers to all reactionary right-wing groups active in Germany in 1919 and 1920 as "Nazis." This moniker, however, specifically denotes the Nationalsozialistische Deutsche Arbeiterpartei (NSDAP) [National Socialist German Workers Party] and was not coined until the 1920s. More than just semantics, this leads to muddled history, such as the claim that at the end of 1919 the "Nazis' power was already astounding..." and "that they could already take over the country any day they wanted..." (200). In fact, in late 1919 the group that would become known as the Nazis was little more than a Munich beer-drinking club,

comprising a few dozen rabid anti-Semites. Consolidation of militant right-wing forces under the Nazi banner was not fully accomplished until the 1930s.

J. Bell's misuse of the term Nazis could be overlooked if it was not intertwined with the book's central historical fallacy: that World War II and the Holocaust were the culmination of a plot originally hatched by German militarists in 1915. As part of this conspiratorial argument, J. Bell claims that Nazi leaders used a young Adolf Hitler to infiltrate the Deutsche Arbeiterpartei (DAP)—soon to be renamed the NSDAP—in 1919, to provide political cover for their secret genocidal plan. While space does not permit refuting this here, it should be noted that such claims find no support in any reputable history of the period, such as Volker Ullrich's recent biography of Hitler.

The flawed historical account leads J. Bell to somewhat mischaracterize W. Bell's value as an intelligence agent. His real contribution was not to uncover a secret diabolical master plan for world domination concocted by sinister, shadowy forces—something more akin to a James Bond plot. Instead, W. Bell's intellect, personality, and native-like fluency in German allowed him to develop well-placed sources within society, while his cultural insights allowed him to correctly interpret the information they provided. As a result, he was able to send timely and accurate intelligence reports that helped shape British policy at the highest levels during the critical early post-war years. Later, as a private citizen, these same attributes allowed W. Bell to mostly correctly assess Hitler's genocidal intentions at a time when many still dismissed such claims as overblown.

Could W. Bell have saved humanity from Nazi victory and worldwide genocide, as J. Bell suggests? Almost certainly not. Regardless of W. Bell's warnings two decades earlier, the Nazis' bid for global domination would still have run up against the overwhelming obstacles of Soviet manpower and US industry. This fact, however, should not diminish W. Bell's contributions as an intelligence asset. Likewise, the flaws in *Cracking the Nazi Code* highlighted in this review should not diminish J. Bell's contributions to bringing a previously unknown, fascinating, and important true story of espionage to light. ■

intelligence in public media

The Bulldog Detective: William J. Flynn and America's First War Against the Mafia, Spies, and Terrorists

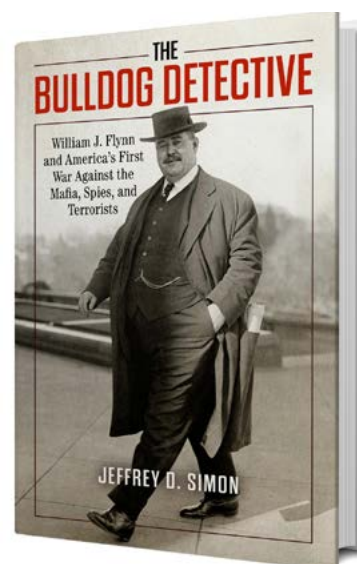
Reviewed by Heribert von Feilitzsch

Author: Jeffrey D. Simon

Published By: Prometheus Books, 2024

Print Pages 288

Reviewer: The reviewer is author of *The Secret War Council* book series and co-author of *The Federal Bureau of Investigation before Hoover*.



William J. Flynn is one of the most fascinating US law enforcement and intelligence personalities of the early 20th century. Historian Jeffrey Simon has authored a long overdue biography of this illustrious and colorful man. Born in 1867, Flynn grew up in New York City, where he remained his entire life and came to understand intricately. Flynn joined the US Secret Service (USSS) in 1897 and quickly rose through the ranks. Only four years into his career, he headed the Eastern Division. His exploits received excited news coverage, in part because Flynn freely gave interviews touting his achievements, in part because he wrote “first-person accounts of his adventures.” (ix) National papers reported on the “supersleuth,” who personally chased criminals up dark alleys and down fire escapes. In the public eye, Flynn was a real-life Gotham City superhero.

After the successful prosecution of the Morello and Lupo crime families in 1910, Flynn was hired to reorganize the NYPD’s detective division, widely seen as corrupt and ineffective. After only six months Flynn left, succumbing to intense political infighting. He returned to the Secret Service. Despite his capitulation, Flynn instituted lasting changes in the NYPD and, for years to come, remained close to the detective force he had assembled.

In 1912, President William Howard Taft appointed Flynn to head the USSS. “Being a New Yorker through and through,” (87) Flynn refused to move to Washington, DC, and remained in New York. Simon noted, “As busy as Flynn was dealing with counterfeiters and protecting presidents, he still found time to write.” (89) Published

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The Bulldog Detective:

in papers throughout the country, Flynn recounted his fights against the underworld in colorful prose.

Albeit nominally neutral in the emerging World War, the US became the main supplier of war materials for Germany's enemies. Germany responded by launching a sabotage campaign against US industry and shipping in 1915. New York became a key battleground. Simon starts his monograph with the story of German Commercial Attaché Heinrich Albert, who lost his briefcase in an elevated train in New York in the summer of 1915, triggering a massive scandal. Simon uses the leading secondary literature dealing with German conspiracies in the neutrality years (1914–17) to recount one of the most unsettled periods in US history.

The absence of primary sources, which reveal that Flynn radically exaggerated his role in fighting German spies during this period, leads to an uncritical view of the often historically inaccurate books Simon used to assemble the story. The Albert briefcase theft, for example, if even perpetrated by Flynn's Secret Service, was a rogue operation in the best case. The USSS had the protection of the president and counterfeited investigations as its only authorized missions. The purported executive order of President Wilson expanding the Secret Service mission in May 1915 never existed, neither did the eleven-man counterintelligence force in New York Flynn supposedly organized and Simon describes. (See *Studies in Intelligence* 68, No 1 (March 2024): 21–34). Chief Flynn made these claims in several books and movies about his wartime experiences after he left the Secret Service in 1917. In his 1931 autobiography, Flynn's former boss, Secretary of the Treasury William Gibbs McAdoo seconded the claims, which formed the basis for the generally accepted story in subsequent historical accounts.

One of the most controversial facets of Flynn's career was his ambition to insert himself into Bureau of Investigation (BI, the forerunner of the FBI) turf. In his postwar writings, Flynn placed himself at the center of counterintelligence work in New York during the war. For example, he took credit for the Robert Fay case, a German sabotage agent, who was identified and arrested by the NYPD. Flynn never led the investigation. The same is true for counterintelligence successes

of the BI he took credit for. His close connections to the NYPD offered him a venue to share or even usurp the limelight of the "German spy hunters." Flynn's claims set up the thesis, that the USSS and the BI battled for control of counterintelligence in the US during the neutrality period. Yet, there was no battle between agencies. It was Chief Flynn's battle alone as he craved public attention. While Simon leaves open the reasons for Flynn's firing in 1917, it is documented and obvious: Flynn would not cease his interference in Bureau and Military Intelligence operations. As a result of his insubordination, Attorney General Gregory forced Treasury Secretary McAdoo to oust Flynn, which happened without warning via telegram (comparable to firing by tweet).

Flynn, soothing his hurt ego with widely publicized articles, books, and movies between 1918 and 1920, managed to briefly rekindle his career. President Wilson appointed the "Bulldog Detective" in 1919 to head the very organization he had loathed as Secret Service chief. Simon points out, that he, not J. Edgar Hoover, became the first Director of the Bureau of Investigation. (183) Arguably, William Allen was the first [acting] director of the agency. Promising to solve a string of terrorist attacks, including the 1920 Wall Street bombing, in which thirty people died, Flynn once again raised public expectations with exuberant proclamations. He did not solve these crimes and instead presided over the controversial Palmer Raids, mass arrests of suspected anarchists and communists. The story of the red scare and the anarchist threat is the strongest part of Simon's book. The author has written extensively about this topic. His thorough research and expertise shine brightly in this account.

After only two years heading the BI, the Harding administration replaced Flynn with William Burns, a sleuth of similar public stature. Flynn's career never recovered. He continued to write and publish accounts of his past accomplishments while operating a private detective agency. He died in 1928.

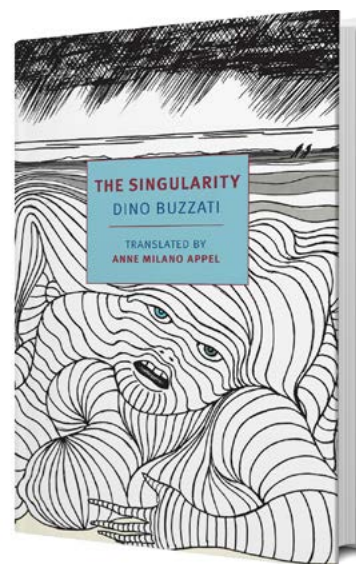
Simon celebrates Flynn as incorruptible, unmotivated by "financial rewards..., a straight shooter..., " lacking political ambitions (183–184) and blames "unrealistic expectations" for his failures. Yet it was Flynn who carefully curated his public image as the

“supersleuth,” one of the underlying causes of his enduring fame, which also set him up for failure. His blind ambition and thirst for public recognition placed him in political situations and power struggles which he predictably lost. Overall, Jeffrey Simon has put together a well-researched and comprehensive account of Flynn’s life, an account that has been overdue for 100 years. ■

intelligence in public media

The Singularity

Reviewed by Joseph Gartin



Author: *Dino Buzzati; Anne Milano Appel, trans.*
Published By: New York Review of Books, 2024 (originally published in Italian in 1960)
Print Pages 127
Reviewer: The reviewer is managing editor of *Studies in Intelligence*.

So ubiquitous now as to be all but unnoticed by harried commuters who slip by every morning and evening, the sprawling and mostly indistinguishable data centers of eastern Loudoun County, Virginia, hug the ground behind fences, guard shacks, and security sensors. Parking lots stand mostly empty. Once the construction workers and their cranes and dump trucks leave their job sites for good, only a dozen or so humans are necessary to run one of the nearly 200 complexes built on fallow farmland. Huge power lines buzz overhead, delivering electricity from plants far to the west. Low-slung, mostly windowless concrete buildings thrum with massive heat-exchanges and thousands of servers. At night, they blink and shimmer with infrared cameras and incongruous splashes

of decorative lights. The buildings seem somehow alive despite their emptiness.

It is a scene that would fit well into Dino Buzzati's 1960 novella *Il grande ritratto* (The Great Portrait), published by New York Review of Books in 2024 as *The Singularity* in a new and vibrant translation by Anne Milano Appel. Buzzati, a prolific and inventive Italian poet, editor, and novelist from the tumult of the 1920s until his death in 1972, spins a tale that was avant-garde in the 1960s but unlike much science fiction has aged rather well.

Recruited to work at a secretive site on an unknown project managed by who knows who, scientist Ermanno Ismani and his no-nonsense wife Elisa approach a collec-

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The Singularity

tion of buildings hidden in a vast mountainous reserve they now call home.

Now that they were looking more closely, they also noticed a dark forest of small antennae poking from the upper edge of the wall: backlit screens, concave dishes like those for radar, think tubes with a kind of cap on top that made them look like tiny chimney pots, and even curious tufts reminiscent of feather dusters. They were opaque, and blue, so that at first glance, especially at night, it was not easy to spot them. In the profound silence of the night, the Ismanis stared at them. But it wasn't silence. (46–47)

The Ismanis' journey to this mountain redoubt is at once comic and familiar to anyone who works in a secret organization. When first approached by a mysterious colonel about committing to a two-year assignment to work on an unspecified goal, Emanno presses for details. They are not forthcoming. The colonel demurs: "At times the military's top-secret machinery rises to the level of absurdity. Our job is to protect the secret. What's concealed inside it, however, is none of our concern." (5)

Later, winding their way through mountain passes to their new home, Elisa (whom Buzzati reveals to have more mettle than the reader first suspects), asks their

minder, Capt. Vestro, "But you know what it is they do there, don't you?" Vestro responds with a mixture of Donald Rumsfeld and Joseph Heller:

Look, ma'am, and forgive me for being pedantic, there are three possibilities: either it isn't a secret but I don't know what it is; or I know but it's a secret; or it's a secret and on top of that I don't know what it is. (13)

We learn the terrible answer along with the Ismanis and their small band of coworkers soon enough. In Buzzati's crisp storytelling (foreshadowed by the cover art, adapted by Katy Homans from Buzzati's graphic novel *Poema a fumetti*), those volatile elements for many tales—secrecy, passion, and hubris—combine to hurtle the reader toward the book's final enigmatic scenes. Elisa Ismani stands in a bare corridor, talking to someone and no one at all:

"Come in. I'll show you a big secret," the voice seemed to be saying.

You too have a secret? Does everyone up here have a secret?"

Everyone. (117)

You won't look at a data center in the same way. ■

intelligence officer's bookshelf

Compiled and reviewed by Hayden Peake with contributions
from Graham Alexander, J.R. Seeger, and John Ehrman

General

The CIA Intelligence Analyst: Views From the Inside

Edited by Roger Z. George and Robert Levine
(Georgetown University Press, 2024) 269 pages,
index.

Most books about the CIA emphasize aspects of espionage or covert action operations. Few mention the many analytic disciplines employed, and fewer explain exactly how analysts do their work. (xiii) With one important qualification, *The CIA Intelligence Analyst* reverses those conditions. The qualification concerns the implication that readers will learn “how” analysts do analysis. It is more accurate to say that they can learn “what” the analyst does to allow their analysis to occur. No examples of the analytic processes that reduce the variables weighed to a final result are included.

The 10 contributing authors discuss their CIA personal experiences and the core intelligence disciplines they learned to become analysts. These include foreign political matters and military, economic, cyber, counterintelligence, counterterrorism topics, and leadership analysis. In many cases they also learn related science disciplines and statistical methods and models necessary to support policymakers.

For example, Cynthia Barkanic’s chapter on economic intelligence employs the concept of the “invisible hands” to describe the largely unseen economic analysts and what they do to respond to administration requests. She reviews how analysts work with CIA managers, policymakers, and collectors as well as sources such as public documents, diplomatic reporting from US embassies and consulates, and clandestine information.

To illustrate specific economic issues she has dealt with, Barkanic discusses CIA work on the international petroleum market necessary to make long-range output projections.

Other topics include financial technology, cryptocurrency, and supply chain analysis.

Barkanic also mentions a feature unique to the CIA: “opportunity analysis.” This art form involves finding and assessing potential policy options or opportunities that might exploit US strengths and a competitor’s vulnerabilities. (80) Not all of her examples end favorably, but they offer sound lessons.

The chapter on counterintelligence (CI) describes its history in CIA and discusses the challenges of CI analysts in the Ames case, among others. The authors emphasize the risks associated with cognitive and confirmation bias that can distort findings. They cite the WMD claims from the source CURVEBALL prior to the 2003 invasion of Iraq to make their point. (147)

The CIA Intelligence Analyst reaches an important general conclusion: Each topic of analytic interest requires its own methods, models, and often techniques. They draw on a wide range of collectors, and serve various policymakers to which the analyst must adapt. A valuable contribution and an eyeopener for prospective analysts. ■

Intelligence Agencies, Technology and Knowledge Production: Data Processing and Information Transfer In Secret Services During the Cold War

Edited by Rüdiger Bergien, Debora Gerstenberger and Constantin Goschler
(Routledge, 2022) 297 pages, index.

In June 2019, a conference in Potsdam, Germany titled “The Knowledge of Intelligence. Scientification, Data Processing and Information Transfer in Secret Services, 1945–1990”, was attended by the authors of the 12 chapters

All statements of fact, opinion, or analysis expressed in this article are those of the author. Nothing in the article should be construed as asserting or implying US government endorsement of its factual statements and interpretations.

in this volume. The contributors are academics and researchers in Europe and South America. The countries studied include the United States, West Germany, Brazil, Poland, Turkey, and the Soviet Union.

The objective of each contribution is to show the progress made since the 1960s, when the “heads of intelligence in the West, the East and the South often described their agencies as scientific and technological enterprises.” They support this premise by quoting former Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) director William F. Raborn who stated “in a 1966 interview, that the main purpose of a modern intelligence organisation was scientific data analysis.” Heads of other services discussed in the book are also quoted with no better clarity. (1) This book attempts to show that intelligence since then has undergone “scientization”—become a science—doing much more than data analysis. (1)

Eleven of the chapters deal with Cold War intelligence services that employ computers and technical devices as well as scientific data analysis to accomplish missions. The twelfth concerns the Soviet Union. From the context provided, the KGB appeared to be behind its contemporaries in scientific know-how. Little clarification resulted from the author’s characterization of the KGB as “constituted scientificity at its core—universalism, reflectiveness, method orientation, critique—remained alien to the KGB until the end.” (276) Occasionally academic vocabulary intrudes; this is not a solitary example.

Applied digitization is a theme common to each service and its application to various surveillance techniques is discussed. At several points the Cold War boundary is exceeded when Edward Snowden’s revelations are considered. (85)

In general this volume paints a multilayered picture of the changes in the circulation of intelligence knowledge as a result of scientization and digitization that affect national security. The authors identify functions and conditions they consider questionable but do not always make clear. For example they refer to CIA’s so called “machine hegemony” over partners, (110) and the curious statement that the “politicisation of intelligence knowledge in the United States apparently went hand in hand with the elevation or even mythification of the “intellectual core” of the intelligence service. But overall “they are confident that the contributions in this volume are first and important steps on the way to a global history of intelligence knowledge in the Cold War world.” (282) Others may hold the view that the steps are not well defined.

Intelligence Agencies, Technology and Knowledge Production offers interesting views, expressed by academics, on how some intelligence agencies gradually adapted to the digital world during the Cold War. ■

Memoir/Biography

Humble Yet Fierce: My Life Behind the Curtain of the CIA

By Katy McQuaid
(New Degree Press, 2023) 236 pages.

In the 1970s, while in high school, Kathy McQuaid joined the all-male swimming team and got her first taste of what it was like to compete in a man-comes-first world. After graduating from Penn State she joined the CIA in 1983 and encountered a similar atmosphere during her early years there. In her memoir, *Humble Yet Fierce*, McQuaid tells how she dealt with two career-long challenges: job performance and leadership. She did well with the former, rising from a GS-7 to an SIS super-grade—the first woman to reach that level in the Directorate of Support. As to the latter, she “learned effective leaders don’t have to be loud to be strong. In fact, people who are humble, yet strong and courageous, are often the most effective leaders.” (14)

McQuaid’s CIA career included assignments in Asia, Afghanistan, the Persian Gulf and Headquarters. Beside the normal logistical functions, she tells about “driving on dangerous roads in remote villages ... closing a CIA covert facility ... [and] experiences in war zones.” (15)

In 2004, while serving as deputy director of logistics, McQuaid became involved in contracting work supervised by “a very charismatic and influential leader named Dusty [she doesn’t give his surname]. He was relentless in pursuing a very large contract to a specific company for the movement of all air cargo.” (193) Despite pressure from Dusty, McQuaid refused to cooperate with what appeared to be questionable practices and learned later that she was right. Dusty was fired and eventually sent to jail.

Humble Yet Fierce also tells stories of McQuaid's personal life that shaped her character. They include unexpected losses of family members and CIA colleagues. She also discusses her unsuccessful marriage, which eventually caused considerable stress. Initially reluctant to seek professional counseling, she learned that "CIA encourages employees to get help before issues spin out of control" and does not penalize one's career.

Katy McQuaid decided to retire after an exemplary 32-year career at the CIA. She concludes *Humble Yet Fierce* with an account of her post CIA life as a writer and public speaker whose successful career was the result of a humble, firm, and unwavering commitment to her profession.

Indochina Hand: Tales of a CIA Case Officer

By Barry Michael Broman

(Casemate Publishers, 2024) 291 pages.

Reviewed by Graham Alexander

Retired CIA officer Barry Michael Broman's *Indochina Hand: Tales of a CIA Case Officer* is a sequel to his 2020 memoir, *Risk Taker, Spy Maker: Tales of a CIA Officer*. In *Indochina Hand*, Broman proffers vignettes culled from over seven decades of a life richly lived. Broman does well to illustrate quintessential qualities of an effective case officer throughout his narrative, even when discussing events outside his agency career, which lasted for a quarter of a century. He is, if nothing else, an adventurer who seems to embrace hard living just as easily as luxury in a wide array of geographic and geopolitical circumstances. Broman is a talented writer with an obvious eye for both the lurid and the beautiful and whose prose is only occasionally inhabited by small factual errors or political pronouncements. *Indochina Hand* is a consistently entertaining work for any intelligence professional who enjoys "war stories" from an experienced, accomplished colleague.

Indochina Hand begins like a traditional biography and stays roughly chronological throughout. Nonetheless, Broman displays no qualms in skipping between continents and assignments while relating his, and occasionally other's, most seminal or simply fascinating experiences. Readers will learn interesting details about Broman's time in Vietnam, his flight from the Khmer Rouge in Cambodia, his asset meetings in Rome, and his later-life journey to Samarkand. Broman has a well-trained eye for tales that will engage the reader. Exotic foods, booze-fueled parties, ziplines over the Pecos River, and even a risqué

scavenger hunt through the streets of Bangkok all feature. Broman is modest when relating his own accomplishments, but the person that emerges from the prose was obviously well-suited for operations work. Offhandedly, Broman describes dozens of close friends, decades-long relationships, and a knack for building bridges with a wide spectrum of individuals. In one passage, Broman thinks nothing of befriending a Burmese border official despite a potentially hostile introduction. In another, he persuades a local contact to provide crucial information in response to a FLASH message on a European crisis.

Broman's goal in writing *Indochina Hand* seems to have been, foremost, to entertain. Unquestionably, he is successful in this objective. *Indochina Hand* feels like encountering the most interesting patrons at a local watering hole and listening wide-eyed as they relate, always interesting, and often amusing, stories that well encapsulate why operational intelligence work intrigues so many. The principal critique of *Indochina Hand*, if one might label it thus, is that Broman sometimes sells himself short. One chapter titled "On The Recruitment of Spies" consists, for example, of only four pages. Others on hard target recruitments and asset meetings are similarly brief. This is a pity, given that Broman obviously has the intellect, writing prowess, and experience to author a work that trades punch for nuance. Simply stated, he was clearly a high-performing professional, in many respects the consummate case officer, whose insights on intelligence operations likely would provide valuable learning tools for the generations of officers who have and will follow. Broman notes in the book's introduction that he has recently spent more time writing fiction than fact. Any reader of *Indochina Hand*, however, is likely to leave wanting more and hoping that a third volume in a life-trilogy, will emerge, one that emphasizes strategy and mentality over plot. ■

History

The CIA: An Imperial History

By Hugh Wilford

(Hachette Book Company, 2024) 366 pages.

Reviewed by JR Seeger

Hugh Wilford is an author who should be familiar to readers in the Intelligence Community. His book *The Mighty Wurlitzer* described early CIA operations in the 1950s and early 1960s, beginning with the creation of the Office of Policy Coordination headed by Frank Wisner and eventually expanding to include every type of political warfare against the USSR and the Warsaw Pact, ranging from Radio Free Europe to CIA funding of cultural and scientific exchange programs. In his book *America's Great Game*, Wilford described in detail the lives of multiple CIA Arabists in the early Cold War. In this new book, Wilford has decided to use his research and writing skills to create a broad-brush polemic hostile to CIA operations from 1947 to 2020. Along the way, he follows the careers of multiple CIA officers, from Sherman Kent through Gina Haspel. In each and every case, he focuses on the perceived flaws of these officers and how their decisions created what he calls the unintended consequences of an "imperial CIA."

Wilford's primary premise here is that CIA followed in the footsteps of the British and the French colonial security services and, in doing so, created multiple catastrophes in the developing world, while also creating "an imperial boomerang," which significantly disrupted the United States internally from 1960 to the present. It is clear from the first few pages that Wilford has decided to prosecute the CIA as an organization and intends to place the responsibility for nearly every US foreign policy catastrophe, including covert action programs in Iran, Guatemala, Southeast Asia, the Middle East and Southwest Asia.

Wilford mixes facts uncovered in declassified archival material and "whistleblower" writings with periodic caveats that allow him to appear to be even handed. He regularly ends a damning study of a CIA operation by stating "To be fair, many CIA officers were aware of these complexities" (63) or in an accusation that the CIA made extensive use of unwitting anthropologists by stating, "A complete picture of the CIA's influence on the discipline is probably unattainable due to the continuing official secrecy." (253)

Along with broad brush criticisms, Wilford also makes assumptions unsupported by facts. For example, he suggests that the WWII US intelligence community and, most especially, OSS commander William J. Donovan were completely under the control of the British, specifically under the control of the British Secret Intelligence Service. OSS histories—including the official *OSS War Report* but also more modern histories—and OSS and British archives are clear that Donovan and his OSS lieutenants regularly were at odds with their British counterparts, both in London and in the field. In fact, it was only after D-Day that SIS was willing to openly cooperate with OSS/Secret Intelligence officers in the field. OSS/Special Operations teams were regularly in direct conflict with their Special Operations Executive counterparts. While not openly hostile to OSS/X2 (counterintelligence), British Security Service officers in London were overly cautious in revealing too much of their Double Cross System both for operational security reasons and because BSS already had a detailed working relationship with the FBI.

Once Wilford moves into the early Cold War, he focuses on historic figures familiar to CIA officers: Sherman Kent, Frank Wisner, Edward Landsdale, Cord Meyer and James Angleton. As with his version of the OSS, Wilford is very selective in his descriptions of each of these men and, most especially, the historic context of the early Cold War. One thing Wilford seems to ignore completely is that covert action from 1947 to today is directed by the president of the United States. CIA officers may design a specific operation but the strategic purpose of the operation comes directly from the White House with the expressed understanding that since the operation is "covert," the White House and the president of the United States will have some degree of plausible deniability.

The most difficult argument to understand is Wilford's view on the importance of conspiracy theories that center around the CIA, including conspiracies related to the assassination of JFK, the rise of the crack cocaine crisis in Los Angeles, and the role of CIA in the 9/11 attacks. Throughout Chapter 6, "Unintended Consequences," Wilford never accuses CIA of any heinous crimes in this episodes, but he implies that there must be some as yet undiscovered bases for the theories.

In sum, in *The CIA: An Imperial History*, he uses writing skills to craft a polemic against the historic sins of CIA and CIA officers. He makes no effort to explain how the CIA or any other intelligence organization—foreign or domestic—could better have addressed the historic challenges of the Cold War or the new challenges of Cold War v2.0. It is a book of no real use to anyone who wants to understand the complexities and challenges of the Intelligence Community. ■

Mission to Mao: US Intelligence and the Chinese Communists in World War II

By Sara B. Castro
(Georgetown University Press, 2024) 215 pages, index.

Before WWII, US intelligence collection in China depended on the reporting of diplomats and attachés. In 1943, responding to the demands of war and Nationalist Chinese intelligence chief Dai Li, President Roosevelt and Nationalist Chinese leader Chiang Kai-shek negotiated an agreement that created the Sino-American Special Technical Cooperative Organization, commonly referred to as SACO. A principal provision prevented intelligence collection by US officials in China—especially about the Chinese Communist Party (CCP)—without Chiang's permission, a constraint no intelligence operation desires.

In late 1943, Lt. Gen. Stilwell (the overall commander in China) and the US embassy received reports that CCP forces were having more success against the Japanese than the Nationalists. There were also indications that Chiang was content to let the US fight the war with Japan. To determine the reality a 'liaison staff' of diplomats, intelligence officers and support troops, was dispatched to CCP headquarters in Yanan and "slightly insulated it from intrusion by SACO." (54) Officially designated the US Army Observer Mission To Yan'an, unofficially it was called the Dixie Mission, a reference to the CCP "rebel" territory. (1) For the next four years, despite Chiang's opposition, it reported intelligence, diplomatic events, and the political situation to Washington.

In *Mission to Mao*, historian Sara Castro, formerly a Wilson Center China Fellow, 2020–21, and currently an associate professor of history at the US Air Force Academy, reveals the history of these organizations, while seeking "to center the Dixie Mission as the locus of first official contact between the United States and the CCP

and as an example of an interagency intelligence mission during World War II." (7)

Although initially headed by an Army G-2 officer with Chinese experience, the Dixie Mission didn't have a formal military structure. The "OSS had a fairly significant presence among the initial Dixie Mission roster," with other members coming from the Army Air Force, the Signal Corps, the Navy, and the State Department. (57)

Mission to Mao first reviews what others have written about the Dixie Mission, most of which focused on its role in the Chinese Civil War and that Castro characterizes as "historical scholarship with no recognition of American imperialism or the hubris driving the deployment of Americans to Yan'an." (4) Then she describes "her fresh look" approach: "*Mission to Mao* is a social history of US intelligence focused on the role of human relationships, social networks, factions, rivalries, and personalities involved in the Dixie Mission—a root-up, everyday perspective on events. This approach pushes presidents, ministers, secretaries, and ambassadors to the periphery. that emphasizes Chinese actors and US officials, including those at the lowest levels of their respective organizations... who ate watermelon with Mao Zedong and coped with a lack of plumbing and heat in order to collect and report intelligence." (9)

Castro writes that the "CCP leaders were aware that the visitors might help them fight enemies and boost their legitimacy if they handled the relationship well." (63) In general, the mission activities went well, although disagreements led to several commanders declared persona non grata. The turnover in theater commanders, ambassadors, and mission personnel was high, and Castro deals with them at length, particularly the OSS role. She argues that Donovan thought "the Dixie Mission showed the greatest potential" for cutting-edge intelligence work ... particularly the dramatic operational successes "in China through Yan'an-based activities and cooperation with the CCP." According to Castro, General Donovan "used stories of successful operations to persuade Roosevelt and others in Washington of the need for an independent peacetime strategic intelligence organization in the United States after the war's end," a topic she mentions frequently. (150)

The Dixie Mission ended in 1947, and Castro doesn't discuss its final composition. She does note that its post-war reputation was mixed because "Policymak-

ers, journalists, and scholars in the 1950s and 1960s frequently linked the activities of the Dixie Mission with the American 'loss of China' to the Communists." (5) Castro sees it differently, concluding that "instead of the loss of China," the actions of the Dixie Mission represented a "lost chance in China," whereby US statesmen squandered opportunities for engagement with the CCP in lieu of an exclusive partnership with what the scholars termed 'the corrupt and dysfunctional' (but non-Communist) government led by Chiang Kai-shek." (10) She reasons the "positive tone of [John] Service's initial reports ... throughout his official correspondence dispatched in August and September 1944" and similar diplomatic post-war statements would have consequences in a McCarthyite Washington. (71ff) However, she declares that the "OSS officers at Yan'an showed the most enthusiasm among all the Dixie Mission participants for proposals that supported the CCP." (149)

Mission to Mao does indeed, as Castro promised, present a fresh look at the Dixie Mission, showing in part that in "China (as elsewhere), US officials often created their own obstacles." But it is also an important contribution to intelligence and especially OSS history.

Neither Confirm Nor Deny: How The Glomar Mission Shielded the CIA from Transparency

By M. Todd Bennett

(Columbia University Press, 2022) 374 pages, index.

Author Todd Bennett edited the Foreign Relations of the United States series at the State Department before joining East Carolina University as an associate professor of history. In *Neither Confirm Nor Deny* he argues that the CIA adopted a "new category" of response to FOIA requests for details of clandestine operations, which unnecessarily limits transparency.

For background, Bennett first reviews the events that unintentionally contributed to the creation of the "new category." They began with the CIA's response to the March 1968 accidental sinking of a Soviet nuclear-armed Golf-class (diesel powered) submarine in the Pacific Ocean. Thought to contain a nuclear warhead, a ballistic missile system, code materials, and cryptographic gear, a covert operation was proposed to retrieve the wreckage. After the project—named Operation AZORIAN—was approved, Bennett summarizes its cover story and implementation plan designed to raise the wreckage using a special ship named the *Glomar Explorer* built by the

Hughes Corp. Next he describes the recovery efforts and the results obtained. Finally he notes that the remains of Soviet sailor were returned with honor to the Yeltsin government.

None of this is new and merely provides the foundation for Bennett's account of the reason the "new category" was created. While acknowledging that some data need to remain classified, he expresses frustration with the CIA's application of the current system that often fails to release other requested details of the operation in a timely—in his judgment—manner, citing classification, a response that admits the data exists. What the CIA needed, according to Bennett, was a response that met legal requirements and yet did not indicate whether or not it possessed the desired information in any form, thus limiting further inquiries.

The solution, according to Bennett, was provided by Walter Lloyd, "the program's cover director, and a lawyer" in the CIA's Office of General Counsel. (272) By adapting a response previously used by Kissinger at State Department—"We can neither confirm nor deny the existence of the information requested, but hypothetically, if such data were to exist, the subject would be classified and could not be disclosed."—the CIA achieved the flexibility it required to deal with the complex AZORIAN-GLOMAR operation on its terms. (273)

Bennett is not unconcerned with the need for oversight of intelligence agencies and concludes with a summary of events that justify close scrutiny. But, in his view, the CIA's "neither confirm nor deny solution" is unsatisfactory and merely continues the dilemma faced by those seeking information and those charged with protecting it. This is an old problem and no solution is offered. ■

Tripping On Utopia: Margaret Mead, the Cold War, and the Troubled Birth of Psychedelic Science

By Benjamin Breen

(Grand Central Publishing, 2024) 269 pages, index

Anthropologists Margaret Mead and Gregory Bateson (Mead's first husband) are central characters in *Tripping On Utopia*, a book that barely mentions anthropology. The lightly disguised dominant theme of the book is suggested first by the word "tripping" in the title, as in the experience after taking psychedelic drugs, and second by the word "utopia," the desired but illusionary state of consciousness sought. Author Benjamin Breen, professor of history at the University of California (Santa Cruz),

has written a history of US psychedelic science from 1920 to 1980, with its links to intelligence. Many American interdisciplinary scientists made contributions. Most were connected to Mead and Bateson. (3)

Breen's study is chronological, beginning in the inter-war period with the 1938 discovery of LSD (lysergic acid diethylamide) in Switzerland, the event that launched an "era of utopian drug research." (4) After the United States entered the war, Mead, Bateson, and the intellectual circle forming around them considered one of the "newest and most controversial methods of waging war: psychological warfare." (45) The OSS soon showed interest.

Contrary to Breen's erroneous claim that OSS was started with a push from British Naval Intelligence and Lt. Cdr. Ian Fleming, OSS started on its own to explore the potential of hypnosis and truth drugs as methods for interrogating captured enemy soldiers and agents. (49) Mead, Bateson, and several of their scientist colleagues were hired and their contributions are described. In mid-1942, Stanley Lovell, the OSS chief of research, began to dream up ideas for weaponized "altered states." (51) Breen's detailed accounts of these projects lays the foundations for much of the post war research presented later in the book.

In his discussion of the scientists' contributions to OSS, Breen gives their professional and sometimes their personal backgrounds. In the case of Mead and Bateson he notes they had been married, that she was bisexual, and the FBI was investigating her. And while their professional paths would cross on experimental techniques, and while he tried LSD, she never did, though she did become a CIA consultant. (143)

After OSS was abolished in October 1945, the scientists continued their work in what would become think tanks, private research institutes, academia, and eventually CIA. Some believed "LSD and other psychedelics could open a new world of experience that would help redirect global culture away from its pathological addictions to nationalism and violence." (104) Many "considered collaboration with the CIA to be a patriotic duty and a professional honor." (114)

Others, like Timothy Leary and actor Cary Grant, explored psychedelics as means to mind-expanding pleasure—the "search for Utopia." Some former OSS officers were among this group and Green describes their activities at length.

At the same time, though treated later in the book, a group of serving CIA officers "began conducting their own amateurish experiments with consciousness-expanding drugs, testing them on themselves and on poorly informed "volunteers" from a host of settings, including hospitals, military bases, and psychiatrists' offices." They were not experts and "much of the Agency's work with psychedelics was a toxic mishmash of amateurism, unchecked megalomania, and simple incompetence." (119-120) Breen's detailed account of the MKULTRA program is based on the Church Committee Report.

Tripping On Utopia reveals a more extensive intelligence agency role in the development of psychedelic science than has previously been presented. While informative, it is not an inspiring story, but it is part of intelligence history. ■

The Unvanquished: The Untold Story of Lincoln's Special Forces, the Manhunt for Mosby's Rangers, and the Shadow War That Forged America's Special Forces

By Patrick K. O'Donnell
(Atlantic Monthly Press, 2024), 410 pages, index.
Reviewed by David A. Welker

Author of 13 books focusing mostly on special forces, Patrick O'Donnell's latest volume turns to considering irregular forces of the American Civil War. A topic of considerable interest to intelligence officers who want to know just how far US intelligence has come in 150 ye

ars, a comprehensive, accurate, accessible single volume on this issue has long been wanted. Although its subtitle suggests this might be the volume, *The Unvanquished* falls short of these ambitious promises.

Organized into three parts, the book's first part recounts the running competition between the Union Jessie and Blazer Scouts and Mosby's Confederate Rangers that extended throughout much of the war in Northern Virginia. Offering many first-hand accounts, the author explores not only these units' formation and actions, but also how and why the Union played catch-up in creating irregular forces. The second major section considers the Confederate Secret Service's operations, chiefly those in the Shenandoah Valley, where its interests and mission most clearly overlapped with Mosby's irregular troops and their Federal counterparts. The closing section considers the rise of Union irregular forces toward the war's end, as Gen. Phillip Sheridan builds the shattered remains of earlier Union scout units into his

own irregular force during his late-war operations that secured the Shenandoah Valley before joining Grant's drive to finish off Lee's Army of Northern Virginia to end the war. This section interestingly extends to consider these irregular troops' post-war actions, particularly offering a rare look at the US response to France's 1866 political and military maneuvering in Mexico that threatened the wounded, recovering reunited nation.

There certainly are some bright spots to recommend the book. O'Donnell spends much of his work telling exciting, fast-paced stories of derring-do by Civil War scouts and rangers, who frequently risked life and limb to gather intelligence by penetrating deep behind enemy lines in disguise, risking execution as spies if discovered. The author has a dramatic flair for such storytelling, which perhaps derives from his own experiences accompanying today's US Special Forces into combat zones. Skillfully weaving together participants' own postwar writings, these passages have readers riding along with these courageous soldiers, and while telling only their own first-hand accounts, O'Donnell adds context that brings this material to vivid life. Pulling these disparate accounts into one volume and weaving them nicely within a comprehensible narrative is a genuine contribution.

The volume first stumbles, however, in frequently stretching to make Civil War scouts and rangers fit modern special forces concepts as "Lincoln's special forces." Despite some general overlapping actions—collecting intelligence, harassing enemies behind lines, etc.—today's US Special Forces' mission and role derives mostly from two 20th century world wars, which makes the frequent comparisons to concepts and applications unknown in the 1860s inaccurate and stilted. Another shortcoming is in trying to make too much of the contributions of these scouts and rangers. The truth is that unlike today, irregular forces in the Civil War were odd men out, playing a periodically useful role but one that the top generals on both sides didn't fully understand or appreciate, leaving irregular troops a "sideshow of the main show." Examples of this include claims that a Jessie Scout's "information gleaned while posing as a Confederate no doubt had a role in the Battle for Fort Donelson," accepting unquestioned Mosby's postwar claim to have launched the 1862 Battle of Cedar Mountain, asserting that General William Averell's 1863 "raid may well have contributed to breaking Longstreet's siege of Knoxville," and many more.

Similarly, the book spends considerable time on the plot to capture or kill President Lincoln, weaving throughout a distracting story of Confederate Secret Service operations that is but thinly connected to Mosby's Rangers or any other irregular units. The revealed point of this diversion is to show that Confederate President Davis and other Richmond officials were behind the plot but, like previous generations of those inclined to this view, in the end lack of documentation and data leads to unsupported accusations and nothing truly new. Such "gilding the lily"—making a good story, better—reflects the book's overall misplaced nature. Rather than being a scholarly work of history, *The Unvanquished* would work better as popular history, meant not to break new historical ground but rather to inform while entertaining.

Similarly, despite the subtitle's promises, the book notably and oddly omits any mention of the Union's Bureau of Military Information, its head Colonel George Sharpe, or the scouts operating under him, commanded by Captain John McEntee. Their exploits were no less daring than those of the units included and arguably had the greatest impact of any irregular troops on the war's course, so no study of Civil War irregular forces would be complete without them.

Lt. Gen. Philip Sheridan, whose experience with scouts later in the war developed his appreciation for the emerging value of irregular troops, wrote that the scouts "kept me constantly informed of the movements of the enemy and brought in prisoners from brigadier-generals down. The information gained through [them] was invaluable." Although the book that fully examines these irregular forces has yet to be written, *The Unvanquished* provides interested readers a lively, engaging way to learn of Civil War scouts and rangers' exciting personal stories. ■

Non-US Intelligence

The Factory: The Official History of the Australian Signals Directorate—Volume 1 – 1947 to 1972, Incorporating the History of Australian Signals Intelligence from 1901 to 1947

By John Fahey

(Sidney: Allen & Unwin, 2023) 568 pages, index.

In 2022, the Australian Signals Directorate (ASD) commemorated 75 years of service and decided to mark the occasion with a history from its origins until 1972. Former ASD officer John Fahey, currently an Honorary Fellow in the Department of Security Studies and Criminology at Macquarie University, Sydney, was selected as the author. His mandate was to discuss the organizational development, some operations conducted, the serious security issues that were overcome, and the people involved. *The Factory*, ASD's nickname, is the result.

In his chronological account, Fahey begins by noting when war broke out in 1914, Australia was conducting signals intelligence through the Royal Australian Navy. As the need for an Australian national signals intelligence capability grew, he reviews the various organizations created to meet it. During WWII, it was conducting research on Japanese army codes and ciphers, monitoring traffic and working with its allies as part of Fleet Radio Unit, Melbourne (FRUMEL), a United States, Australian, British signals intelligence unit.

It was during his period that serious security problems arose. The first concerned leaks to the Japanese that were eventually attributed to the Nationalist Chinese. The second and more serious, involved leaks revealed to Britain and the United States by VENONA decrypts. MI5 led the efforts to determine the source. The Americans refused to have classified contacts with Australia, a position that lasted into the 1950s. "The hard reality was that the Americans rated Australian security as being nonexistent and thought that Australia could not be trusted at all." (318) In what came to be called "The Case"—not to be confused with a post 1972 Australian molehunt given the same name—Fahey examines these developments and their resolution closely. (293)

After summarizing ASD's contributions to the Malayan emergency, its operations in Indonesia, and its support to NSA in Vietnam, Fahey concludes with a discussion of postwar staffing problems complicated by poor facilities, and low salaries. Only after a lengthy search for a permanent home was progress made. (578)

Nevertheless, Fahey stresses that throughout the entire period covered by this history, Australia's signals intelligence people established themselves, directly or indirectly, as major contributors of intelligence to the liberal democracies of the world. "By the end of 1972, they had indeed earned their nickname." (602)

The Factory tells an interesting and important story. A positive contribution to the intelligence literature. ■

Spies For The Sultan: Ottoman Intelligence in the Great Rivalry With Spain

By Emrah Gürkan

(Georgetown University Press, 2024) 232 pages, index

Emrah Gürkan is a history professor in the Department of Political Science and International Relations at Istanbul 29 Mayıs University. He received his doctorate from Georgetown University, where among other interests he did research on intelligence. *In Spies For The Sultan* he documents the intelligence activity during the heyday of the Ottoman Empire—a Turkish-led Islamic Caliphate—that existed between 1330 and 1922.

Although Gürkan acknowledges Ottoman intelligence existed from its earliest years, he concentrates on how it influenced the 16th century political-military and religious rivalries with the Habsburg Empire—which included Spain at the time—and the other regional Mediterranean powers.

The central focus of the book is revealed in four chapters discussing how the Ottomans used intelligence to deal with the rivalries. The first concerned the characteristics they required in their agents to accomplish functions "such as intelligence gathering, assassinations, bribery, and agitation" to obtain the information needed. (76) The second topic is a discussion of "the civilian, military, and diplomatic sources of Ottoman intelligence." (148)

Next Gürkan describes the operational consequences arising from organizational differences. The Habsburgs and Venetians had centralized organizations that controlled intelligence from the seat of government. Ottoman secret service control "did not have a formal institutional structure and functioned primarily on the basis of personal networks, in keeping with the patrimonial structure of the Empire." (189) In practice this complicated Istanbul's efforts to control operations.

The forth topic concerns Ottoman counterespionage or the struggle to detect and deal with enemy spies. The Ottomans established an effective intelligence system that, “with the help of various news sources and their spies operating out in the field, they managed to kept abreast of military and diplomatic developments” while protecting their own spies. (260)

As Gürkan stated at the outset “The purpose of this book is... to show how the Ottomans had great success collecting information about other states” and outperforming their archrivals the Habsburgs. (19) While he has

accomplished that goal with a thoroughly documented work, it is not easy to read. This is mainly because of the unfamiliar names and places and inadequately explained political arguments of the time, which readers are left to learn about on their own. For example, he takes issue with any suggestion that the religious clashes of the period are analogous to Samuel Huntington's concept of the Clash of Civilizations, but he doesn't explain why.

Nevertheless, *Spies For The Sultan* fills an important gap in intelligence history, especially for English-language readers, and is a positive contribution to the literature. ■

Fiction

A Reluctant Spy

By David Goodman

(Headline Publishing Group, 2024) 401 pages.

Reviewed by John Ehrman

The Secret Intelligence Service has a problem. When one of its officers, Jeremy Althorp, returns to London after having been arrested and tortured in Kyrgyzstan, he tells his disbelieving superiors that their simple, old-fashioned cover identities aren't working any more. “My cover fell apart as soon as their interrogators gave it the slightest digital prod,” says Jeremy, describing how with a few internet searches “They picked my story apart like they were deboning a chicken.”

Sound familiar? But the clever lads at Vauxhall have a solution. “The Legends Programme asks real people to lead lives that lend themselves to effective cover,” Jeremy explains a few years later to Jamie Tulloch, a young university graduate he recruits to be one of the Legends. They embark on careers in which, with SIS steering behind the scenes, they develop plausible contacts and access. At the same time, they live under the radar, with few friends or serious relationships and minimal internet presence. “Then, when the time comes, a trained agent who resembles you, who knows everything about you, will step into your life.” Identities and photos on the web are swapped, the Legend goes on a holiday where he can't be reached, and the SIS officer assumes his identity for a few weeks or months.

Truly, an elegant solution for a thorny problem. Maybe we should adopt it.

A Reluctant Spy, David Goodman's first novel, starts with Jamie Tulloch's “activation” after a quiet decade as a Legend. All he has to do, he's told, is fly to Charles de

Gaulle airport and meet the SIS handler who has been steering his life, who then will take him to the officer taking on his identity. Unfortunately, when Jamie goes to the rendezvous in a men's room, he finds his handler with his throat slit from ear to ear. (Is this a nod to William Goldman's classic thriller *Marathon Man* [1974], which also featured a men's room assassination?) Instead of doing the smart thing and returning to the safety of London—which, admittedly, would not make for much of a spy novel—Jamie decides to take up his doppelganger's mission, even though he has no clue what it is or what he's doing. Indeed, maybe Jamie would have thought better of the idea had he known that, back at Vauxhall, Jeremy is discovering that someone has penetrated the Legends Programme's super-secure network, stolen all the data, and wiped the servers clean.

This is a solid piece of entertainment, the classic story of the outsider stumbling into a world of intrigue. The plot is up-to-the-minute, with brutal Russian mercenaries up to mischief in Africa, and a subplot about the mole hunt. None of it is in any way believable, but Goodman moves the story along at a breathless pace and without a wasted word. The mayhem mounts, the betrayals and bodies pile up, and you will overlook the absurdities and keep turning the pages. (Note to readers: the speed with which Goodman portrays MI5 making decisions and moving across London strains credulity, to say the least.)

It's clear by the end that the Legends Programme is not the solution to our cover problems. But SIS is nothing if not determined to keep trying, and it looks like Goodman may have a follow-on adventure in mind for Jamie. Here's hoping it's as much fun as *A Reluctant Spy*. ■

The Year of the Locust: A Thriller

By Terry Hayes

(Simon and Schuster, 2024) 800 pages.

Reviewed by Resolute Lee (pen name of a DNI officer)

The Year of the Locust, the long-awaited follow-up to Terry Hayes's highly acclaimed, bestselling debut novel *I Am Pilgrim* (2013), is a captivating, vividly descriptive epic, immersing the reader in the moral ambiguity of espionage, told in a genre-defying novel. The book is lengthy for a modern thriller, at 800 pages and told in four parts. The novel hearkens to the groundbreaking techno-espionage thrillers of a Tom Clancy.

Although not a sequel to *I Am Pilgrim*, *The Year of the Locust* is similarly told through the eyes of a first-person narrator, reminiscent of *A Legacy of Spies* by John le Carré (2017), where Peter Guillam, the disciple of the legendary George Smiley of the British Secret Intelligence Service, now long retired, offers a retelling of his role in an operation decades earlier. The opening line of *The Year of the Locust* hooks the reader from the beginning, "I once went to kill a man," (1) immediately setting the tone for the well-paced narrative that follows. The narrator and protagonist, Ridley Walker, a CIA denied area access officer, also known as Kane among other names, is an old-fashioned intelligence officer, a man "in the field" who has spent years studying and threading himself into the cultures and languages of other societies to understand the world through the eyes of others.

The reviewer could visualize Ridley, seemingly sharing the recollection through the reflective eyes and experience of an older self, lifting the veil of secrecy, offering snapshots of intimate moments of a life lived within the shadows. Ridley is an immediately likable and multidimensional character, woven in idealism and emotional vulnerability, elements of the character that bleed through in flashbacks and fleeting moments with his love interest. A highly skilled officer adept at infiltrating inhospitable hard-target countries like Iran and Russia, Ridley uses an array of tradecraft along the way, including cover identities, languages, navigational knowledge, escape and evasion tactics, technical capabilities, and the will to act.

When an asset contacts the CIA advising that he has sensitive threat information warning of a 9/11-scale spectacular, Ridley is sent to the badlands, the border of Afghanistan, Pakistan, and Iran to exfiltrate the asset. He stealthily infiltrates into Iran, with a kit even James Bond would envy. This is where Hayes elevates the techno-espionage aspects of the story. The navigational and cloaking

capabilities, though yet to exist, are believable in the context in which they are used in the story. The surveillance, targeting, and tracking technologies leveraged by Ridley and his colleagues at headquarters entail facial and voice recognition capabilities that are certainly authentic and demonstrate the exhaustive nature of identifying and tracking illusive priority targets across the globe.

During the infiltration, Hayes first foreshadows that Ridley has a sixth-sense-like ability guiding him. Coming upon a vivid desolate landscape depicted via the author's gift for cinematic screenwriting, Ridley hears "gunfire from the future," altering course, only later discovering the decision saved his life, setting the stage for a cat-and-mouse game with a formidable, yet unidentified, ISIS foe known only as al Tundra, all leading to a drastic plot pivot in the third act. The descriptive scenes and high-speed action sequences keep readers on the edges of their seats, eagerly turning the pages.

Two-thirds into the book, the story takes a startling pivot that pulls it—and the reader—out of the espionage thriller genre altogether. With Ridley aboard an experimental submarine, in the Pacific Ocean, readers are propelled into a post-apocalyptic sci-fi story through an unexpected time jump decades later. While the shift is jarring and an explanation of the submarine's time traveling technologies are all but ignored along with any understanding of the esoteric complexities and paradoxes of time travel, those who fancy a merger of *The Hunt for Red October* and *The Walking Dead* would be pleased. Having invested much time into the novel by this point, this reviewer allowed Hayes's strong writing and Ridley's emotional vulnerability to carry through the time leap, before ultimately returning to the original timeline.

Despite the dissonance as the third act unfolds, what emerges is a love story woven within the broader thriller. After what felt like, and perhaps was, a fever dream, Ridley has the motivation to complete the mission—to save his family and of course humanity—at all costs. *The Year of the Locust* is an enthralling, evocative story; while not for the faint of heart, if you hold fast, and keep faith in Terry Hayes's artistic storytelling you'll appreciate the explorations of an old-fashioned intelligence officer in this modern spin of a classic espionage thriller that dares to defy genres. ■

Media Reviewed during 2024

Studies in Intelligence

CONTEMPORARY ISSUES

- Downfall: Prigozhin, Putin and the New Fight for the Future of Russia*, by Anna Arutunyan and Mark Galeotti (*Studies* 68, 4 [December 2024]) reviewed by John Ehrman
- Getting Russia Right*, by Thomas Graham (*Studies* 68, No. 1 [March 2024]), reviewed by Sarah
- National Security Intelligence and Ethics*, edited by Seumas Miller, Mitt Regan, and Patrick F. Walsh (IO Bookshelf, *Studies* 68, 1 [March 2024]), reviewed by Hayden Peake
- Open Source Investigations in the Age of Google*, by Henrietta Wilson et al. (eds). (*Studies* 68, 3 [September 2024]) reviewed by Stephen Mercado
- The Routledge Handbook of Disinformation and National Security*, by Rubén Arcos, Irena Chiru, and Christina Ivan eds. (*Studies* 68, 1 [March 2024]), reviewed by Michael J. Ar
- Subversion: The Strategic Weaponization of Narratives*, by Andreas Krieg (*Studies* 68, 1 [March 2024]), reviewed by JR Seeger
- The United States–South Korea Alliance: Why It May Fail and Why It Must Not*, by Scott A. Snyder (*Studies* 68, 2 [June 2024]) reviewed by Yong Suk Lee
- The War for Ukraine: Strategy and Adaptation Under Fire*, by Mick Ryan (*Studies* 68, 4 [December 2024]) reviewed by John Ehrman

GENERAL

- Challenger: A True Story of Heroism and Disaster on the Edge of Space*, by Adam Higgenbotham (*Studies* 68, 3 [September 2024]) review essay by John Ehrman
- The CIA Intelligence Analyst: Views From the Inside*, edited by Roger Z. George and Robert Levine (IO Bookshelf, *Studies* 68, 4 [December 2024]) reviewed by Hayden Peake
- Counter-Intelligence: What the Secret World Can Teach Us About Problem-Solving and Creativity*, by Robert Hannigan (*Studies* 68, 3 [September 2024]) review essay by John Ehrman
- Covert City: The Cold War and the Making of Miami* by Vince Houghton and Eric Driggs (*Studies* 68, 4 [December 2024]) reviewed by Alissa M.

Intelligence Agencies, Technology and Knowledge Production: Data Processing and Information Transfer In Secret Services During the Cold War, edited by Rüdiger Bergien, Debora Gerstenberger and Constantin Goschler (IO Bookshelf, *Studies* 68, 4 [December 2024]) reviewed by Hayden Peake

A New Vision of Spycraft: Or Necessary Notations on Espionage, by Daniele-Hadi Irandoost (IO Bookshelf, *Studies* 68, 2 [June 2024]), reviewed by Hayden Peake

Nothing Is Beyond Our Reach: America's Techno-Spy Empire, by Kristie Macrakis (IO Bookshelf, *Studies* 68, 1 [March 2024]), reviewed by Hayden Peake

Nuclear War: A Scenario, by Annie Jacobsen (*Studies* 68, 4 [December 2024]) reviewed by Michael Ard

A Short Introduction to Geospatial Intelligence, by John (Jack) O'Connor (IO Bookshelf, *Studies* 68, 1 [March 2024]), reviewed by Hayden Peake

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MEMOIR/BIOGRAPHY

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The Last Honest Man: The CIA, the FBI, the Mafia, and the Kennedys—and One Senator's Fight to Save Democracy, by James Risen and Thomas Risen (*Studies* 68, 3 [September 2024]), reviewed by David Robarge

The Melting Point: High Command and War in the 21st Century, by Gen. Kenneth F. McKenzie, Jr., USMC (Ret.) (*Studies* 68, 4 [December 2024]) reviewed by Alissa M.

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Targeted as a Spy: The Surveillance of an American Diplomat in Communist Romania, by Ernest H. Latham, Jr. (IO Bookshelf, *Studies* 68, 1 [March 2024]), reviewed by Graham Alexander and Hayden Peake

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Zhou Enlai: A Life, by Chen Jian (*Studies* 68, 3 [September 2024]), reviewed by Matthew J

HISTORY

The Achilles Trap: Saddam Hussein, the CIA, and the Origins of America's Invasion of Iraq, by Steve Coll (*Studies* 68, 3 [September 2024]) reviewed by Brent Geary

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The CIA: An Imperial History, by Hugh Wilford ((IO Bookshelf, *Studies* 68, 4 [December 2024]) reviewed by JR Seeger

CODE NAME: SPIKE: The Dawn of the Cold War, CIA & U.S. Army Special Forces, by Jacek "Jack" Waliszewski et al. (*Studies* 68, 4 [December 2024]) reviewed by Kevin McCall

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Cracking the Nazi Code: The Untold Story of Agent A12 and the Solving of the Holocaust Code, by Jason Bell (*Studies* 68, 4 [December 2024]) reviewed by Edward L.

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- SPYING: From the Fall of Jericho to the Fall of the Wall: An Intelligence Primer Based on the Lecture Notes of Professor Arthur S. Hulnick*, edited by John D. Woodward, Jr. (IO Bookshelf, *Studies* 68, 1 [March 2024]), reviewed by Hayden Peake
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NON-US INTELLIGENCE

- Beyond the Wall: A History of East Germany*, by Katja Hoyer (*Studies* 68, 1 [March 2024]), reviewed by Graham Alexander
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Keishicho koan sosakan: supai hanta no shirarezaru riaru [Public Security Investigators of the Metropolitan Police], by Katsumaru Enkaku (*Studies* 68, 4 [December 2024]) reviewed by Stephen Mercado

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Spies For The Sultan: Ottoman Intelligence in the Great Rivalry With Spain, by Emrah Gürkan (IO Bookshelf, *Studies* 68, 4 [December 2024]) reviewed by Hayden Peake

Three books on Ireland and the “Troubles,” all reviewed in *Studies* 68, 1 (March 2024) by Joseph Gartin:

The Padre: The True Story of the Irish Priest Who Armed the IRA with Gaddafi's Money, by Jennifer O'Leary

Stakeknife's Dirty War: The Inside Story of Scappaticci, the IRA's Nutting Squad, and the British Spooks Who Ran the War, by Richard O'Rawe

There Will Be Fire: Margaret Thatcher, the IRA, and the Two Minutes That Changed History, by Rory Carroll

FICTION

Central Park West (A Crime Novel), by James Comey (*Studies* 68, 1 [March 2024]), reviewed by Mike R.

Ilium, by Lea Carpenter (IO Bookshelf, *Studies* 68, 2 [June 2024]), reviewed by John Ehrman

Moscow X: A Novel, by David McCloskey (IO Bookshelf, *Studies* 68, 1 [March 2024]), reviewed by Graham Alexander

The Peacock and the Sparrow, by I. S. Berry (IO Bookshelf, *Studies* 68, 1 [March 2024]), reviewed by John Ehrman

A Reluctant Spy, by David Goodman, (IO Bookshelf, *Studies* 68, 4 [December 2024]) reviewed by John Ehrman

The Singularity, by Dino Buzzati; Anne Milano Appel, trans. (*Studies* 68, 4 [December 2024]) reviewed by Joseph Gartin

The Suicide Museum: A Novel, by Ariel Dorfman (*Studies* 68, 3 [September 2024]) reviewed by Graham Alexander

The Year of the Locust: A Thriller, by Terry Hayes (IO Bookshelf, *Studies* 68, 4 [December 2024]) reviewed by Resolute Lee ■

