

For Your Eyes Only: The Secret History of Espionage



MARCH 2024

UNIVERSITY OF LEEDS

3. Letter from the Editor

4. Ancient Greek Espionage: A Tale of Disguise?

Megan Buchanan

5. Ninja: How Feudal Reality Became Legend

Isobel Heed

7. The Art of Using Spies: How Sun Tzu's Ancient Treatise Has Influenced the History of Intelligence

Cydney Stedman

9. Walsingham's Web of Spies: How Espionage Kept Elizabeth on the Throne

Cara Hughes

10. Ignored and Erased: Women in Espionage in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries

Abi Tait

12. Our Man in Fujian: How the East India Company Stole the Tea Trade

Callum Overeynder

14. Britain's Secret Soldiers: Girl Guides in MI5

Gabriella Costa

15. 'The Queen of Spies': Louise de Bettignies

Eleanor Thompson

16. Feminine Supremacy in Espionage

Sophie Tallon

18. Mata Hari: the Woman Behind the Legacy

Isabel Gibbens

19. Covert Suppression: The Use of Espionage to Subdue Anti-Colonialism in the Interwar Period

Liam Nugent

21. Agent Garbo: The Allies' Secret Weapon

Seb Coltrane

22. Phantasmic Foolery: How a Ghost Army Won the Second World War

Eban Raymond

24. Josephine Baker: Hiding in Plain Sight

Anya Grieve

25. Countess Krystyna Skarbek: The Woman Britain Failed

Madeline Cooper

27. Soviet Spies in the British Establishment: The Cambridge Five

Elizabeth Hinchcliffe

28. The Rosenbergs: The First Civilians
Executed for Espionage in America

Emily Lambert

30. Klaus Fuchs and Cold War Paranoia

Kitty Wagener

32. Agent Sonya: The Untold Story of The
Spy Next Door

Ellie Haywood

33. Sexpionage: The Power and Pitfalls of
Seducing the Enemy

Yasmin Mills

35. Bond in the 1960s: A Cold War Hero?

Ava Bogdanovic

37. Espionage Across Borders: Operation
Condor's Reign of Terror in South America

Sadie Kendall

38. Spy Novels: When Truth Becomes
Fiction

Milly Weir

40. Country or KGB? The Influence of
Espionage on Putin's Governance

Kathryn Kitto

41. Paper Trail or Poison Trail?: A History
of Suspicious Deaths

Katie Hudson

Letter From the Editor

March 2024

For Your Eyes Only: The Secret History of Espionage

The mysterious world of spies and hidden secrets has fascinated us for centuries with stories of epic acts of espionage capturing our imaginations and inspiring some of the most iconic characters both on the page and screen. While our understanding of spying is often defined by these fictional personalities, this issue uncovers some of history's more elusive stories of espionage by investigating the real people that worked to covertly shape the world around them.

This issue particularly champions the stories of women who capitalised on the underestimations of the men around them, subverting gender roles in incredible acts of heroism which are unfairly forgotten in the shadow of male espionage legends. It feels especially fitting that the issue comes so soon after International Women's Day and I hope you enjoy reading about these sidelined stories as much as I have. Another prevailing theme across this term's articles is Russia's role as the villain of global espionage. While the world has changed beyond recognition since the darkest days of the Cold War, putting the issue together in the shadow of Putin's shady war against anyone who dares oppose him makes many of the articles particularly compelling as time seems to have done little to change the Kremlin's use of covert tactics to undermine those who stand in their way.

As always I want to extend a huge thank you to all the writers and assistant editors who have been involved with bringing this issue to life, you should be really proud of your hard work and passion for platforming some of history's greatest stories. I can't wait to see what you all come up with for the final edition of this academic year and I hope to see some new names as well as returning writers.

Lily Birch



Ancient Greek Espionage: A Tale of Disguise?

MEGAN BUCHANAN

Ancient Greek civilisation was so advanced in political and domestic life that it still has significant influence on our western culture today, yet very little is known about tactics of espionage in this period. We know there must have been some form of spying, for as long as time itself, battles and wars have raged on, and these required some form of intelligence gathering. Yet, because of the lack of detail in documents, the ancient Greeks seem to have been reluctant to share their techniques of espionage with potential enemies, readers of history, or even their allies. However, through small traces in writings and literary works, historians have been able to piece together a collection of plausible ideas. In fact, as I will discuss here, disguise was possibly the most valued warfare tactic and by its very nature of deception, the ancient Greeks concealed their use of disguise in official documentations.

Evidence of ancient Greek warfare reveals that they depended on the element of surprise for advantage over their enemies, therefore, deception and trickery were of upmost importance to military tactics. The infamous story of the Trojan horse still reigns on in today's popular knowledge; we know of the gifting of a large wooden structure to the city of Troy, with a deadly trap of several hundred Greek soldiers inside waiting to be released in the city's fortress. This incident has long stood as the symbol of Grecian warfare and military intelligence, the use of disguise a most valued tactic.

However, these attempts could be unsuccessful as military tactics were often unorganised and improvised; it is not until the mid-4th century BC that we find the first and only Greek handbook of espionage in warfare. The work of Aeneas Tacticus covers a sort of 'How To' guide for secret message sending and decoding between enemy states and ally states. These instructions were unimaginative and lacking the grandeur we associate with espionage in modern times and so, in terms of practical espionage pursuits of message sending, the Greeks seemed to favour simple and practical techniques. If we dig a little deeper however, we can infer more from contemporary literary works to give us evidence of more sensational acts of espionage.

The writings of Homer in the epic poems Iliad and Odyssey document the events of the Trojan war. In the Odyssey specifically, a tale of how Odysseus dressed as a house slave and infiltrated Troy shows the usefulness of disguise and deception in gaining information to gain the upper hand. Other literary works on mythology, such as those by Euripides, also show the popularity of guise. In The Bacchae, King Pentheus, so infuriated with the god Dionysus' control over the maenad women, is misleadingly advised to take on the disguise of a woman to spy on the maenad and observe their Bacchic rituals in their

worship of Dionysus. The disguise is later proved to be fatal after Pentheus is killed by the maenad women he was spying on. These tales tell us more about the high stakes in Ancient Greek society and the masterful trickery that could be used; ultimately, their value in revealing secret warfare tactics cannot be diminished.

While formal documents may not provide us with details of disguise and deception utilised by the ancient Greeks, the prominence of deception in popular

contemporary culture means it is not unfathomable to think that they would have used these techniques in real life warfare.

Further Reading

'Spies in Ancient Greece' by J. A. Richmond

'Spying in Ancient Greece' by Alexander Rose



Ninja: How Feudal Reality Became Legend

ISOBEL HEED

Aspects of feudal Japan very rarely make their way into western consciousness. Yet if you were to ask the average person if they had heard of the Ninja, images of black clad, nun chuck wielding, sneaking mercenaries are instantly conjured up, perhaps in the form of teenage anthropomorphic turtles. Since the success of mid-century martial arts movies, the Ninja has gradually crept its way into popular culture, morphing into an almost mystical and legendary figure, alongside the 'noble' Samurai. But how accurate is this image? Does the legend truly embody the nature of espionage in feudal Japan? And why exactly has this figure managed to sneak its way out of history and into media?

Despite the popularity of the term Ninja, historically this is not the title typically given to the figures - with 'Shinobi' being the more common name, both being derived from the characters that mean 'endure' or 'conceal' and 'person'. The first recorded examples of unconventional espionage warfare are during the time of Prince Shōtoku, in his attempts to instil Buddhism and new constitutional laws during the Asuka period (c. 592-710). However, before the emergence of a name or even a defined role within society, the discreetness of espionage was regarded as an unsavoury means of warfare. With the Kamakura period in the 12th century, the country became ever divided by feudalism, Samurai emerged as a way for Lords to defend their realms and attack others to expand. These warriors began to

be revered as honourable warlords, eventually establishing a military government, who followed a strict moral code of conduct that insisted on loyalty to their commissioner, sincerity and honour. Contrastingly, by their nature Ninja defied these principles, often pulled from poorer backgrounds to do the less honourable work. Therefore, they are underrepresented within this period, with famous writings such as the Tale of Heike prioritising epic tales of the high-class Samurai over the dirty deeds of the Ninja.

This perception would change as Japan entered a time of great conflict in a long-lasting civil war - the Sengoku period of the 15th and 16th centuries. As the country fractured into smaller clans battling for power, the use of espionage in warfare became an increasingly favoured practise, despite its lack of honour. With espionage, a main method was disguise, where ninja would dress as monks, farmers and laymen (amongst others) sometimes devising new identities in order to gain entrance to castles and strongholds to obtain passwords for their commissioners. These disguises helped ninja go undetected - for example, dressing as a Yamabushi (mountain dwelling hermits who were permitted to travel past clan lines) allowed for safe movement into enemy realms. Ninja committed sabotage via arson, which could act either as means of distraction to guards, or a way of destroying strongholds and food supply. Assassinations were often asked for due to their ability to work swiftly and silently, hiding under floorboards, carrying out work with as little consequence as possible. Due to increasing prestige, the role became less of the opportunistic lower classes as guilds began to form - most notably Kōga and Iga. These would specialise in formalised training - teaching Ninjitsu found in the now encoded Bansenshukai. This included secretive coded communication,

the use of poisons and explosives, as well as stealth and agility training. They were also taught how to use inventory such as ropes and hooks, and weapons such as katana and shuriken.

The establishment of the Tokugawa Shogunate in the 17th century brought an end to feudalism, beginning the Edo period, a time now associated with a boom in arts, culture, and a comparatively peaceful two and a half centuries. Outside of warfare, Ninjutsu training provided skills for peacetime professions, with many becoming martial artists, medics and merchants. There was still need for a Shogunate controlled secret service however, seen with the Oniwaban- who acted as a surveillance upon regional lords. It was also in this time that the role started to morph into its mystical image, with Kabuki often holding a nostalgia for Japan's past, tales of Ninja became immortalised as those with supernatural skills - the stealth, skill and disguises being represented by the ability to physically shapeshift. It was also in this time that black clothing became associated with Ninja, acting as a visual metaphor for their concealment. For example, Goemon Ishikawa, known for stealing wealth to give to the less fortunate, attempted assassinations and his own eventual gory demise via boiling became immortalised through legend as a Robin Hood-esque figure.

With the Meiji restoration of the 1860s, the West became infatuated with Japan, which was only exacerbated by the likes of Kurosawa in the 20th century, bringing Japanese period tales to the forefront of cinema. Despite controversial institutions offering Ninja training, within the West, the role now exists as a concept, a legend within media and consciousness, resurging and reinventing itself through cinema and television.



The Art of Using Spies: How Sun Tzu's Ancient Treatise Has Influenced the History of Intelligence

CYDNEY STEDMAN

Around the 5th century BC, Sun Tzu published *The Art of War*. While not much is confirmed about the identity of Tzu himself, who lived through the political turmoil of China's 'Spring and Autumn Period', his treatise has withstood the span of millennia as an invaluable work of philosophy. One element of this philosophy, the use of military espionage, receives notable recognition. Used today by strategists in the military, sports, business, politics, and more, *Art of War* has transcended its initial existence as a mere ancient artefact. While intelligence work has evolved beyond Tzu's comprehension, remnants of his philosophy, particularly the importance to 'know thy enemy', remain.

The 13th and final chapter of Sun Tzu's *The Art of War* elevates the role of human intelligence specifically, stating that 'knowledge of the enemy's dispositions can only be obtained from other men'. Tzu defines five classifications of spy necessary to success in this area. These are translated by Lionel Giles as: local spies, inward spies, converted spies, doomed spies and surviving spies.

The first three classifications refer to the

type of individual to be used as an asset. The 'local' spy is a local to the area of surveillance, versus the 'inward' spy which describes an enemy official. A 'converted' spy represents the popularized modern term 'double agent' once an enemy spy now an ally. The 'doomed' as opposed to the 'surviving' spy refers to the intention of their respective roles. 'Doomed' spies allow their status as an agent to be known to intentionally mislead enemy intelligence, while the 'surviving' spy is intended to remain unknown and uncaptured.

There is a debate over the modern impact of Tzu's commentary on espionage in war. To some, it is a product of its time which is incompatible with the development of modern intelligence organisations. The 'spies' described by Tzu are more recognisable today as intelligence assets, used by the evolved professional agencies (rather than being the agents themselves) to obtain information. In the age of technologies, such as drones or data analytics, which limit the need for expending human resources, Sun Tzu's theory seems a relic of the past.

While there are inevitably practical criticisms of viewing *The Art of War* as a living document, many of its tenets form a theoretical foundation, at least, for modern day espionage. The treatise itself was included on the US marine corps' "Commandant Special Reading List" as recently as 2016, while in the following years Rupert Smith's 21st century interpretation of the text, "The Utility of Force: The Art of War in the Modern World", was recommended. Mark McNeilly's book recontextualises Tzu's core principles with events from across US history. From Washington's successful use of the British John Honeyman as a double agent in the revolutionary war, to the intelligent failures which led to the shock of the Pearl Harbour attack. Other examples include the Cold War, in which intelligence was crucial in the absence of plausible force. Tzu advocated for the importance of espionage to limit the need for warfare, which tended to devastate resources, both human and monetary, particularly relevant philosophy for this period. Furthermore, the 'double agent' proposed by Tzu has become an infamous symbol of the Cold War, given the historical emphasis on patriotic allegiance and the immeasurable value of information.

As history has progressed, the primary reason to avoid international conflict has been the doctrine of nuclear 'mutually assured destruction' (MAD). Further, technological development has progressively eliminated the need for human actors in intelligence operations. With all this being said, Tzu's key philosophy on the importance of knowing one's enemy, preserving resources, and achieving a monopoly on information, remains a base upon which nearly all facets of human competition has built off.

The Art of War is not just a dust-covered, antiquated artefact. It expressed ideas which we recognize and, in some cases, continue to apply to our part of history.

Recommended Further Reading:

The Art of War by Sun Tzu, translated by Lionel Giles

The Utility of Force: The Art of War in the Modern World by Rupert Smith

Sun Tzu and the Art of Modern Warfare by Mark McNeilly

Walsingham's Web of Spies: How Espionage Kept Elizabeth on the Throne



CARA HUGHES

"On a morning late in the summer of 1586 the sound of gunfire was heard in St James' Park (...) the queen who had been travelling near the park in her coach, was badly wounded."

The next few hours and following days presented Elizabeth's Privy Council with an impossible task. Childless and unmarried, the question of who would succeed to the throne needed to be answered imminently, and for the devout Protestants in Elizabeth's council there was no clear answer. An assassination attempt is perilous for any throne, but the state of the throne in England under Elizabeth was already incredibly unstable. After the reign of Elizabeth's Catholic sister Mary, England had returned to Protestantism. This conversion did not happen without creating new enemies at home and abroad. In the now likely scenario of Elizabeth's death, the crown would be left open to all kinds of threats. Riots at home, invasion from Phillip II in Spain, perhaps with the support of Elizabeth's biggest threat of all, Mary Queen of Scots.

This alternate scenario is how Professor Stephen Alford opens his book, *The Watchers: A Secret History of the Reign of Elizabeth I*. Although no attempt on Elizabeth's life was successful, Alford perfectly captures the tumultuous political environment and anxieties of Elizabeth's advisors in 1558-1603.

The reality was just as mysterious and dangerous. Under the careful supervision of Francis Walsingham, Elizabeth's principal secretary, a system of intelligence and espionage was created as the first line of defence against Elizabeth's exhaustive list of enemies. Walsingham created a web of agents in courts across Europe, often employing merchants and even actors to lead double lives due to the ease with which they could move from country to country with little suspicion.

Walsingham's primary aim was to remove Elizabeth's cousin Mary, whom he saw as the biggest threat of all. Without Mary, the Catholics' dream of overthrowing the Protestant throne was nothing but a

fantasy. However, throughout her reign Elizabeth remained reluctant to act against her cousin Mary Queen of Scots despite the very legitimate threat she posed to her throne. To act against another queen was to bring in to question Elizabeth's own divine right to rule. Not to mention the backlash she would face from Catholics across Europe and in her own backyard. In the aftermath of her siblings' reigns, Elizabeth was pursuing an agenda of relative religious moderation. The Act of Uniformity, passed in 1559, allowed for a Catholic interpretation of communion and was a far cry from Mary's reign of terror. A move against Mary would dismantle this entirely.

Walsingham's finest hour came with his role in uncovering the infamous Babington Plot in 1586. After a previous plot against Elizabeth, all communication to and from Mary had been cut off. Walsingham however, realised this hindered his ability catch Mary at the centre of a plot, and so he established a new line of communication

which he carefully controlled without suspicion. Mary was in communication with a group of Catholics who were plotting to assassinate Elizabeth and replace her on the throne with Mary. Their letters were ciphered and transported covertly in beer barrels. Walsingham, however, was intercepting the messages through a spy named Gifford and passing them on to his cipher expert who would decode the messages. Implicated in treason, Walsingham had the evidence to arrest not only the Catholic rebels, but also Mary. This would ultimately be her downfall and she was executed in 1587.

If James Bond is anything to go by, our country's intelligence system has come a long way from Walsingham's preliminary web of spies but without his ingenious methods of espionage, it is uncertain whether Alford's scenario would have become a reality.



Ignored and Erased: Women in Espionage in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries

ABI TAIT

When thinking of women in espionage, we naturally picture the spies of the 20th Century, such as Mata Hari and Virginia Hall. However, lesser known are the female spies who were vital to the practice of espionage in the 17th and 18th Century.

Women in this era were highly effective in their roles as they escaped suspicion; men

believe that women were incapable of being involved in such nefarious activities, meaning they could move more freely and were generally treated more leniently upon arrest. However, this invisibility is also responsible for their erasure from history, both because effective spies left no evidence and also because of women's exclusion from historical narratives.

Susan Hyde is one of the most tragic examples of female agents during the English Civil War. Hyde, the sister of prominent figure Edward Hyde, was a Royalist spy for Charles II as a founding member of the spy network, the Sealed Knot. However, she was arrested in September 1656 and psychologically tortured into insanity, dying within days. It is unclear why she was handled so rough compared to other noblewomen, however it has been suggested it could be due to a vendetta Cromwell had against her brother. Equally as tragic is her erasure from history: neither Edward's detailed account of the war nor his biographers mention her by name.

Another way in which women made effective spies was their utilisation of domestic items. This ranged from hidden messages in bell skirts, hair, and trinkets, to cooking weaponry into loaves of bread. In the case of Anna Smith Strong, she devised a washing line signal to aid agents in the American Civil War. By placing different items of clothing on the line she indicated meeting spots to agents, allowing them to meet and exchange valuable information.

The bravery and obstinance of these female spies are personified by Elizabeth Van Lew, a Union spy during the American Revolution. As a strong abolitionist, Van Lew led the Union espionage network in her fiercely Confederate town. With her mother, she would visit Union soldiers in prison, smuggling letters and valuable information as well as orchestrating escapes. Her involvement with Union soldiers produced scorn and suspicion from her neighbours, and she was ostracised from society.

Although this only touches the surface of the myriad of female agents of this era, these examples illuminate their tragic trials and their courage and reveals that women have long played an active and vital role in espionage and intelligence. The duality of women in espionage, particularly in this era, is their gender and its perception is what made them such effective agents but also is what has led to their erasure from history. It is important to continue looking into female spies and acknowledge their involvement in these conflicts. Furthermore, we must delve deeper into the work of women in espionage, in hopes to dispel the assumption of female agents as *femme fatales*, and to look at women in history as intelligent and courageous, rather than simply sexualised and undervalued.

Further reading

Invisible Agents: Women and Espionage in Seventeenth-Century Britain by Nadine Akkerman (Oxford University Press: Oxford)

Our Man in Fujian: How the East India Company Stole the Tea Trade

CALLUM OVEREYNDER

In the late 1840s, the East India Company recruited a Scottish botanist with the mission of breaking China's monopoly over the company's second favourite narcotic: tea! It is one of the greatest examples of industrial espionage since the Byzantines broke the silk trade 1000 years prior.

Tea was an immensely successful product in Britain. It was light, lucrative, and an important source of government revenue, with tea taxes contributing 10% to the budget annually in the early 1800s. However, its success was directly tied to opium smuggling in China, where the East India Company operated a triangular trade of opium for silver, and then silver for tea. The company's blatant infringement of Chinese law put it at daggers drawn with the Qing state, resulting in the First Opium War after the Emperor banned the opium trade in 1839. Amid uncertainty over the tea supply and fears of China cultivating its own opium, the company explored the possibility of breaking the tea monopoly. However, the Emperor's tight control made smuggling out seeds and knowledge difficult. They needed a spy.

Robert Fortune was the man to fulfil the company's needs. Fortune was a Scottish Botanist of lowly origin in a field where a bloodline mattered more than green fingers. He rose up the circles of the Royal Horticultural Society after voyaging to

China to covertly collect and catalogue new plant specimens. Whilst escaping close brushes with thieves and pirates, he became a minor celebrity after publishing his adventures in 1847. The swashbuckling botanist was ideal to steal China's coveted tea trade.

Fortune used the same tactics as on his previous trip, masquerading as a Chinese merchant inspecting tea factories, donning traditional dress, queue and shaving the front of his head, a disguise that sounds as dubious as Sean Connery's "Japanese" disguise in the Bond film *You Only Live Twice*. It largely worked, however, as Fortune let his guides invent a number of tall tales to explain his appearance and lack of Chinese. Within the factories, Fortune discovered several valuable revelations. First being the alarming fact that many merchants were chemically dyeing their green tea to make it greener for western markets, which soon killed off green tea demand in Britain for years. The second, more important, discovery was the process of making black tea, the origins of which puzzled outsiders, unsure whether the difference came from the plant or the process. Fortune learned that it was just green tea which had been fermented (or more accurately, oxidised).

He spent the rest of his trip in China with his guide's family, who lived in a tea



producing region. There, he collected about 10,000 seeds and as many plants as possible shipping them in various containers. The safest of which was the Wardian case, a sealed glass container which preserved plants, so long as it was kept airtight and had access to sunlight. Unfortunately, officials opened nearly every case on arrival in India, failing to reseal or plant the specimens before sending them on to plantations in the Himalayas. Almost all the plants and seeds died on the way, which sparked a bureaucratic row about who was responsible. Fingers were pointed, officials investigated, but none were held accountable. A year of Fortune's work was wasted.



Undeterred, Fortune tried again. This time he travelled deeper into the black tea producing region of Fujian. Once again, he collected a vast quantity of seeds, but this time planted them in the Wardian cases. Tea seeds are temperamental, but Fortune hoped that if the seeds germinated during the voyage, they would have a better chance of surviving, which they did. Almost all the seeds survived in spite of an unexpected detour to Ceylon (now Sri Lanka).

Fortune's last task was to recruit local tea workers to train East India Company workers in tea production. They were given relatively good terms of \$15 dollars a month plus 2 months paid in advance, and a stipend for the journey to India. However, the company's bean counters opposed paying more than the regular rate for their specialist knowledge. They therefore imposed a \$100 penalty if a worker failed to complete the 3-year contract, which the workers were none too pleased about.

With that, China's tea monopoly had ended. Not that the company was able to savour success. The years of criminal

management of India, which resulted in more famines under 150 years of company rule than in the preceding 2000, led to mass rebellion. The British crown assumed direct control over the subcontinent and dissolved the East India Company. The Qing rulers outlasted the multinational. As for Fortune, we know little about the rest of his personal life. He spent his remaining years continuing his passion for cataloguing plants all over Asia. On his death, his wife burned all his personal documents, for reasons no one is quite sure.



Britain's Secret Soldiers: Girl Guides in MI5

GABRIELLA COSTA

Have you ever wondered why Girl Guides march in Remembrance Day parades? Well, their connection to wartime commemoration is more than just about patriotism.

Created in 1909 following pressure from girls who chose not to be limited by the gendered block of Lord Robert Baden-Powell's Boy Scouts, Girlguiding became a prominent organization that taught girls useful and militaristic skills. This only grew stronger in wartime, with a membership of 180,000 in Britain by 1920. Many supported the war effort by learning medical skills, fundraising, and volunteering to drive ambulances at the front. Even the youngest members of the brownies (aged 7-10) made and rolled bandages.

During this time, Britain believed their country was infiltrated by German spies, but was now lacking in men, so who better to deliver their secret correspondence than Baden-Powell's Boy Scouts? During the first years of the Great War, MI5 employed the Boy Scouts to deliver counter-espionage messages and intelligence gathering. Although this may seem to be every boy's dream, especially for those who could not enlist, it was not long until they were fired. These boys proved gossips and egoists, endangering both themselves and Britain

and as former Director-General of MI5 Jonathan Evans explained, the Boy Scouts 'proved feckless and noisy'. Rather, the group that proved to be the most trustworthy and disciplined agents were none other than the girl guides. Even Baden-Powell himself noted: 'They can be trusted, better than boys, not to talk'.

Therefore, from September 1915, around 90 girl guides were recruited to replace Boy Scouts as couriers of files and messages. The Guides were already messengers of confidential information for The Marconi Wireless Telegraph, starting in 1914, which had been designed to detect the positions of enemy wireless stations and was used by the Royal Navy and British Army to trace the position of German submarines, and so their motto 'Be Prepared' was certainly on show. The criteria for selecting girl guides ensured they were between the ages of 14 and 16, and 'of good standing, quick, cheerful and willing', swearing on their honour never to read any of the messages or paperwork they carried, and their parents and troop leader had to agree in writing. While they weren't MI5's first choice, the girl guides were very effective. They would collect and post documents, deliver messages to various areas around London, sort cards, collect paperwork to be burned and repair typewriters. Aside from physical

telegrams, they also delivered secret messages from memory. By January 1916, the girl guides had proved to be so valuable to the MI5 that they were giving their own company within the organization. Even as the war concluded, their accomplishments as MI5 correspondents ensured their continued involvement. What remains largely unknown is that a select few accompanied

the British delegation to the Paris Peace Conference, and 16 were present at the signing of the Treaty of Versailles. However, upon return to Britain, very few ever spoke of their experiences, a continuation of their duty as Britain's secret soldiers.

'The Queen of Spies': Louise de Bettignies

ELEANOR THOMPSON

Bettignies – an extraordinary woman who put the Central Powers in a state of unease during The First World War. Her early life was one of a typical middle-class upbringing. She was one of eight children, went to boarding school and became a governess to some important families in England and Germany in her adulthood.

Louise was residing in Lille, a northern city of France at the beginning of the war, at the age of 34. It is said that she dictated letters in German from dying German soldiers to their families. This demonstrates a key skill of Bettignies: languages. She honed her linguistic skills while working as a governess and could speak English, Italian and German fluently, as well as some Russian, Czech and Spanish. Picking up on her talent, both French and British intelligence agencies set out to recruit her but



ultimately she ended up working for the British. After some espionage training, Louise de Bettignies took on the alias Alice Dubois. With the help of the British intelligence, she set up her own intelligence network consisting of 80-100 men and women called 'The Alice Network' after her alias. Other sources call this network the 'Ramble'. An estimation suggests that this espionage network saved the lives of over a thousand British soldiers between January and September 1915 during its operation in occupied France and Belgium. Key successes that emerged from this operation included information about which train the German Kaiser was travelling on, giving the British an opportunity to attack it although they ended up missing their target. Intel on a

German attack on Verdun in early 1916 was also gathered, but this was deemed to be faulty intelligence by those higher up. This organisation and Bettignies' outstanding intelligence work and leadership is where her nickname originated from: 'The Queen of Spies'.

Eventually, Bettignies was captured by German forces. I found a few different stories on how this happened including her friend and colleague, Marie-Leonie Vanhoutte, being captured first and forced to identify Bettignies from photos. Another story claims that at a checkpoint near Tournai the German soldiers were conducting a strip search of all the women and Louise was seen by soldiers swallowing the secret message she was trying to smuggle into Belgium for Britain. After capture, Bettignies was sentenced to death for espionage, and Vanhoutte fifteen years of hard labour. This is a testament to her capabilities as a spy and the threat she posed to the Central Powers during the First World War.

Whilst her sentence changed to hard labour as the Germans failed to prove she was the leader of the organisation, her refusal to cooperate and contribute to the German war effort meant she was subsequently placed in solitary confinement. Unfortunately, on September 27 1918, she died due to complications during an operation for pleural abscesses. After her death, she was awarded various honours including the War Cross, Legion of Honour and the Croix de guerre.

Louise de Bettignies' legacy lives on in many forms. For example, reports and stories like these which spread the word of her heroism as well as a statue of her in Lille and a museum established where she grew up. She was one of the bravest, wittiest and most intelligent women of her time, and although being consistently undermined by male authorities, she kept fighting for her cause and purpose until her death just weeks before the Allies won the First World War.

Sailor beware!



Feminine Supremacy in Espionage

SOPHIE TALLON

It is widely acknowledged that women in the 20th century were confronted with unjust inequalities regarding their freedom, societal value, employability, and rights. A distasteful attitude towards misogyny has driven women to challenge gender roles and escape the prejudicial barriers which confined them to an invisible identity. However, although this imbalance imposes a suffocating stereotype of the female gender, this discrimination also acted as a form of leverage within the confidentiality of espionage in war.

During the the 20th century, Europe was at the heart of two world wars battling the leading forces of despotism. With war officials consisting mostly of men, there was a tiny window for female influence within conflict and espionage became one of the main openings for this influence.

A discriminative attitude fuelled the assumption that women who openly express their eroticism would be unsuited within a position of surveillance was a gateway to female supremacy in espionage. Psychologically the male gender is often highly impressionable or susceptible to behavioural manipulation when faced with a woman who arouses feelings of desire or lust; the utilisation of seduction was a prominent form of operation for women in espionage. Sexpionage arguably bears greater risk and vulnerability than regular espionage due to challenging personal boundaries and exposing oneself to the possibility of serious physical violation or indecent assault. This article brings visibility to two remarkable ladies who have been masked behind a world of conflict controlled by men.

The glamorous Josephine Baker, predominantly known for her talent in singing and dancing, was born for a role in espionage. Baker grew up poor and had a substandard education while also a victim to Jim Crow laws on the grounds of her African American ethnicity. Resultantly, she moved to Paris and secured a role dancing in Burlesque. Her steamy dance routines were so enticing that she became a symbol of the 'Roaring Twenties' and earned her title as one of the highest paid entertainers in Europe. Her reputation made her highly renowned socially, but unsuspectingly carried out spy work in support of French intelligence and targeted German Nazi officials. She enticed diplomats at Italian and Japanese embassy parties via her hypnotising charm and gained intel surrounding the Axis powers.

Baker's most daring tactic was her message delivery approach in which she would write her learnt intelligence on her skin in invisible ink, a decision based on the confidence of her allure and charisma. As she herself said, 'who would dare search Josephine Baker to the skin?'

Moreover, this confidence that she would not have Nazi officials invade her privacy was so strong that she transported refugees and French Resistance members seamlessly to her most grand possession, her chateau. Baker's career was lengthy, but the above was arguably her most significant gender-orientated methodology. She was never unmasked for her involvement in espionage and acquired two French military honours of the highest order.

Alternately, seductress Mata Hari was a renowned Dutch spy who worked on behalf of German intelligence by submerging herself into the French confidentialities of World War I through lust-hungry military and diplomatic officials. Her expertise in espionage lay within her history of exotic dancing, specifically Asian-inspired performances. With the commencement of World War I, she changed the direction of her career, becoming a prostitute and taking on military officials as her clientele. There is no certainty to the achievements of her work in sexpionage but after her arrest in 1917, she was said to have been responsible for disclosing information regarding the Allies' weaponry that had caused the death of thousands of soldiers. On October 15th 1917, Mata Hari was shot for espionage and it is believed that she blew a kiss to her French executioners. Her capture does not dismiss or tarnish her exertion of female agency within the secretive nature of world conflict.

...Sexism or freedom of movement?

Mata Hari: the Woman Behind the Legacy

ISABEL GIBBENS



Mata Hari's legacy is that of a pioneer in female seduction and espionage. She was executed for her work as a spy which allegedly caused the deaths of over 50,000 soldiers. But what is her story and was she really guilty?

Mata Hari was born Margaretha Zelle in 1876 and got married at the age of 18, after a difficult childhood, to Rudolph Macleod. It was reported that Macleod was violent, abusive, and even passed on syphilis to her. The couple had two children, the eldest of whom was rumoured to have been poisoned by their nanny. After this, the couple separated, and Mata Hari was granted custody of their daughter. However, she was struggling financially, and Macleod wouldn't pay child support. Therefore, she was forced to send her daughter back to Macleod and move to Paris.

The persona Mata Hari was born when she resorted to becoming an exotic dancer to make ends meet. She soon rose to success and was even dubbed a 'Star of Dance' in 1908; she began touring her show around Europe shortly after. She enjoyed around a decade of fame until younger dancers began to gain more popularity. As a result, Mata Hari started having affairs with military officials, who showered her with lavish gifts and cash in return. This marks the beginning of her alleged career in espionage; in 1915 Mata Hari accepted an offer from the German consul in Amsterdam of 20,000 francs to become a spy for the German government. There have been debates over whether this money was actually taken as a form of compensation for her bank to send her daughter back to Macleod and move to Paris.

from the German consul in Amsterdam of 20,000 francs to become a spy for the German government. There have been debates over whether this money was actually taken as a form of compensation for her bank account being frozen by the Germans at the beginning of the war. When travelling through Britain in December 1915 she was detained and questioned by the police, primarily because her profession and skills as a linguist made her seem suspicious. Although no incriminating evidence was found, the British passed on their suspicions to the French. As a test, the French asked Mata Hari to spy for them in exchange for a million francs. After failing to gain information from the German Military Attaché, the French intercepted a message from him to the Germans which clearly labelled her a spy. Mata Hari was arrested in February 1917 and accused of, among other things, leaking important information about British tanks before the 1916 Battle of the Somme. As a result, she was blamed for the deaths of some 50,000 soldiers. Mata Hari was sentenced to death by firing squad.

But was Mata Hari really guilty? Firstly, not only has the evidence presented at her trial been deemed circumstantial at best, but also her defence attorney was barred from introducing witnesses that would have aided her case. Furthermore, the French were reluctant to release any documents about Mata Hari and those released in 2017 have reportedly indicated her innocence. Finally, many believe that Mata Hari was made a scapegoat, due to her background and promiscuity with influential military figures, since the French were facing disastrous losses during the war. Despite this, her legacy lives on through many examples of popular culture such as books, films and the 1960s musical 'Mata Hari.'



Covert Suppression: The Use of Espionage to Subdue Anti-Colonialism in the Interwar Period

LIAM NUGENT

The fires of the First World War birthed a host of challenges for the colonial powers of Europe. In this climate, anti-colonial agitation thrived, and was reacted to with an uptake in the use of colonial intelligence agencies. Complex systems of surveillance were put to work to gather extensive data on anti-colonial sentiments, monitor so-called 'agitators' and their organisations, and to use this information to advise colonial administrators. A perfect example of this activity is the work of interwar French intelligence observing the Algerian anti-colonial movement.

The region today known as Algeria was annexed by the French in 1830 following their conquest of the 'Regency of Algiers'. Despite this official switch, total French conquest would be stalled until the mid 19th century due to domestic resistance. From this point, French rule in Algeria remained contentious, especially due to consistent French atrocities like the use of scorched earth tactics against domestic populations in establishing colonial rule. Interwar anti-colonial activism therefore grew out of long-standing colonial tension. The political culmination of such activism was the Étoile Nord-Africaine (ENA) political party, born out of the Algerian immigrant community in Paris, which came to be the driving force of Algerian nationalism in the interwar period. The ENA and its contemporaries

represented a fundamental threat to French colonialism, and as a result its activities were matched by the construction of new intelligence organisations aimed at observing and quelling nationalist sentiment, active in colonial Algeria, local French police, known as the Sûreté, worked as the first line of observation, reporting on local sentiments and occasionally cracking down on anti-colonial organisations. Above this, military intelligence, or the Section de renseignements (SR), worked at a larger scale, gathering region-wide data via professionally trained infiltrators.

Within this cooperation, a prevailing intelligence outlook manifested where urban 'notables', or educated elites, were seen as the primary threat, disregarding serious discontent in rural areas. In part this was fueled by French assumptions that indigenous Algerians were incapable of forming serious unrest without the participation of external 'agitators'. Colonial intelligence was particularly concerned about Soviet, Egyptian, and French trade-unionist ideological 'infection'. Intelligence perceptions were further muddled by French domestic concerns, like in the case of misplaced attention on socialist and trade-unionist activity in Algeria. This clearly exhibits that while colonial intelligence officers could be effective and well-trained culturally and linguistically, the racial

attitudes and political preconceptions inherent in their role as external oppressors distracted and disrupted their ability to properly carry out their role.

The impact of prejudice on the effectiveness of colonial intelligence is likewise evident in the French metropole. Paris, perhaps more than Algeria, was a hotbed of anti-colonial activism. It was here, within the Algerian immigrant community, that nationalist organisation took place through the aforementioned creation of the ENA. Despite this, domestic French intelligence was far more concerned with the presence of Algerian immigrants themselves, viewing their arrival as an 'invasion'. Surveillance resources were not directed at the real, existential threat posed by anti-colonial activism, but instead, coloured by racial prejudice, directed toward the non-existent threat posed by colonial immigration. Domestic colonial intelligence was charged with tasks like immigrant vetting, performing stop-and-searches, enforcing mandated identification schemes, and using intelligence to advise immigration regulation, rather than directing such effort towards real agitation. Curiously, much of the 'official' work carried out by metropolitan intelligence, unlike their colonial counterparts, was immigrant welfare. This, rather than being a selfless act of humanitarianism, had the dual aim of creating extensive datasets on these communities while shifting them to separate and isolated spaces. Intelligence agencies also benefited from the provision and withdrawal of welfare as part of a 'carrot and stick' approach against opposition. Regardless, such activity was on the whole a distraction from the actual threats to French colonialism, clarifying once more the distracting influence that prejudice had on the effective surveillance of anti-colonial activism.

While intelligence gathering was directed by French officials, it would have been impossible without the use of indigenous and immigrant informants. Urban areas of operation particularly necessitated the use of informants, as intentionally designed racial division in cities like Algiers or Paris meant subject communities were often insular and hostile. Informants were usually recruited through promises of wealth, pardon, or citizenship, and often confronted mixed allegiances, balancing their status as informers with active participation in anti-colonial movements they sincerely believed in.

The French colonial intelligence apparatus provides us with a beneficial view of how such operations worked in the interwar period. They were not unified, with a range of institutions carrying out differing functions. They had different administrative focuses and perceived threats. They were split between metropole and colony. And at their core, they were paradoxical, hampered by the same prejudices and preconceptions necessary to justify their own activities.

Further Reading

Empires of Intelligence: Security Services and Colonial Disorder after 1914 by Martin Thomas (2008)

Colonial Migrants and Racism: Algerians in France, 1900-1962 by Neil MacMaster (1997)

Anti-Imperial Metropolis: Interwar Paris and the Seeds of Third World Nationalism by Michael Goebel (2015)

Agent Garbo: The Allies' Secret Weapon



SEB COLTRANE

On the night of the 5th June 1944, 160,000 men prepare themselves for what was to be the largest amphibious invasion in military history. The operation that would take place would shift the tides of the Second World War, eventually leading to total allied victory. On D-Day, the Allies would take the Germans head-on, and would retake Paris in just two months. However, the astounding nature of their success can be attributed down to one man.

Juan Pujol Garcia was born in Barcelona in 1912. During the Spanish civil war, he would fight for both the Republicans and Nationalists, experiencing mistreatment from both sides which grew a hatred for political extremism. Garcia then offered his services as an independent spy for the British, wanting to fight for the 'good of humanity'. Initially rejected, Garcia was resolute, and he instead joined the German spy network, Abwehr, under the guise of a pro-Nazi Spanish government official. Instructed by the Germans to move to the UK, Garcia instead moved to Lisbon and started an elaborate fabricated spy network. Using a tourist's guide and newspaper reels, he would send false reports of his activities to the Germans, including recruiting an array of spies in the UK, all of whom were made up by Garcia. He claimed to be travelling around Britain, using a British railway guide to report his travel expenses. As he had never even visited the UK, Garcia made several mistakes including claimed a man from Glasgow would 'do anything for a litre of wine', unaware of Scottish

drinking habits or that the British used the imperial system. Whenever Garcia would submit false information, he would just blame his fictional sub-agents, fooling the Germans. Garcia was so successful as a German pseudo-spy; the MI5 launched a full-scale manhunt for him. Eventually, as the US entered the war, Garcia would contact the Allies again. This time, he was recruited by the British as a German double agent. Him and his family would move to the UK, and Garcia began his work for MI5 in April 1942. Garcia was given the codename 'Bovril', however, a colleague of his would describe him as 'the best actor in the world', and Garcia would later gain the codename 'Garbo', after famed Swedish actress Greta Garbo. Garbo worked closely with handler Thomás Harris, another Spaniard, who expanded their fictitious spy network to 27 agents, all funded by the Germans. Together, they wrote a total of 315 letters comprising of fake or accurate but irrelevant information to deceive the German high command.

Garbo's most important work for the Allies work would take place during Operation Fortitude, a key part of the invasion of Normandy. Operation Fortitude centred on deceiving the Germans into thinking the Allied forces were double their actual number. The aim of this operation was to convince the Germans that the Allied invasion would take place in Calais, over the Strait of Dover. Given its geographical advantages, this was the obvious location for an invasion to take place. The Allies had to convince the Germans that an invasion would take place here alongside or instead of the Normandy invasion. They built up a fabricated invasion force made

up of fake tanks, airplanes and barracks, along with a fake field army – the First United States Army Group (FUSAG). Garbo kept constant radio communication with the Nazis over the movements of this fake invasion force. His network of 27 fake spies also contributed to the illusion of additional forces. Most importantly, on the day of the invasion, Garbo sent a key letter to the Nazi Command in which, he stated that ‘this is the fake, you have to believe me’. And they did.

The result of this was that the Germans kept a larger force in Calais than in Normandy, even as the invasion was taking place. The Nazi high command’s trust in Garbo had been their downfall. Operation Fortitude was so successful that the Germans had no idea of the location

that the invasion would take place and Garbo was such a trusting spy to the Germans, he was awarded the Iron Cross.

Garbo’s legacy has lived on in intelligence history, as he is described by MI5 as the greatest double agent of the Second World War. He was awarded an MBE by the British for his efforts during the invasion of Normandy. The Germans had never known of Garbo’s deception, and thus he became one of the few men to have received honours from both sides during World War II. After the war, Pujol faked his death in Angola from Malaria and moved to Venezuela with his family. He remains one of the most successful spies in all intelligence history.



Phantasmic Foolery: How a Ghost Army Won the Second World War

EBAN RAYMOND

Deception has been a staple strategy within warfare since time immemorial, serving victory on an underhanded platter of conniving. The likes of Sun Tzu and Machiavelli deemed them one and the same: to ignore one would surely bring ruin upon the other, a fact recognised by many of history’s greatest tacticians. During the Battle of Hastings, Normans feigned retreat and tricked the Anglo-Saxons into a wild pursuit, creating the perfect opportunity for an ambush. Tsar Alexander I burnt Moscow to the ground before Napoleon could capture him in 1812

after a pyrrhic victory at the Battle of Borodino. Yet far from the action, one does not often conjure up images of ghostly armies in the cut-throat world of espionage, a ghastly mistake the Third Reich would only weep at during the twilight of the Second World War. But what precipitated this balmy blunder?

Talks of opening a ‘second front’ in Europe had been ongoing since the haphazard Soviet victory at Stalingrad. Even whilst the Red Army ran amuck on the Eastern Front, grinding down the German war machine,

the Axis powers remained masters of the mainland. Thus, the need for a full-scale invasion of western Europe became a top priority. Considered the most complex deception operation in history, Operation Fortitude was part of a wider allied initiative to confuse German High Command in the months preceding amphibious landings in occupied France.

Location was the main issue. The Germans logically concluded that the invasion would likely take place at the shortest point between Britain and France, from Dover to Pas-de-Calais. The man in charge would be Colonel David Strangeways. Name irony of the man that would create ghost armies aside, Strangeways recreated Operation Fortitude to pose a more formidable threat to the Germans by dividing the targets into north and south. The former would target Norway, the latter, France. As part of this multifaceted effort, deception efforts spearheaded by double agents including the famous 'Balkan James Bond' Dušan Popov and Juan 'Garbo' Garcia would lay the groundwork for intelligence manipulation. Deliberate leaks of falsified information, radio activity and even code pertaining to military units were fed to the Germans; this fed the cognitive dissonance that plagued much of Germany's upper brass. All this formed part of the initial aim of Fortitude: reinforcing the plausibility of the existence of a large military force, the fictional 1st US Army Group, supposedly lead by US General George Patton.

The efforts to consolidate the 1st US Army Group as an ostensibly tangible unit were so extensive that fake shoulder patches were made and given to select soldiers. Night activity was made abundantly clear to any passing German reconnaissance plane, making it appear than an entire army was crawling about the English countryside. Perhaps the most famous aspect of Operation Fortitude was the inflatable dummy vehicles used to deceive the Germans of both the location and size of the real invasion force. Indeed, the operation was so effective that key

German figures, the likes of which included Adolf Hitler and Erwin Rommel, were utterly convinced that the invasion would happen elsewhere. Thousands of men and masses of materiel were shifted to Calais, whilst the feared Atlantic Wall of concrete pillboxes and minefields lay bare on Normandy, the true target of the invasion. Those that saw through the ruse merely believed that any landing on Normandy was to be a diversion.

What rendered Operation Fortitude a truly realistic threat was military action. Just days, hours, prior to D-Day, the Allied air forces would bomb strategic targets around Calais, maintaining the credibility of an impending invasion. To the Germans, it appeared completely irrational. Why would the enemy waste resources attacking targets if the invasion wouldn't happen in that vicinity? It was that very thinking which doomed the Nazi occupation of western Europe. Additionally, the Germans were kept from deducing the Allies' true intentions through their own internal obstructions. Rivalries and ineffective doctrine within intelligence wings such as the Abwehr, impeded efforts to coordinate attempts at counterespionage. To this day, the true effectiveness of Operation Fortitude is debated amongst historians, but it cannot be denied that it played an integral role in facilitating a foothold over western Europe.

Beyond this, Fortitude occupies a place in popular culture. If a picture of US soldiers donning a centuries-old crown of the Holy Roman Empire isn't amusing enough, then pictures from Fortitude will surely bring forth a snort of amusement; belonging amongst the ranks of wartime legend are pictures of bemused British troops standing beside massive rubber Sherman tanks. War never changes and neither will the role of espionage. From Ukraine to Iraq, the shadow of deceit is cast long and hard. What form shall deception take in our new digital age?

Josephine Baker: Hiding in Plain Sight

ANYA GRIEVE

Josephine Baker: captivating, exalted, France's 'Creole Goddess'. Baker's career was embellished with exceptionality, from being the first African American woman to star in a major motion picture to a performance at the Theatre des Champs Élysees. Her Charleston and exotic dance propelled her to the height of celebrity and fortune, once considered the wealthiest black woman alive. Baker was an idol immersed in the world of glamour and stardom, but the Second World War implicated her in a far darker stage of espionage. From opera to invisible ink, Baker's charisma now gilded spy missions instead of ballrooms, and her celebrity morphed from a social status to a shield for her to move through Axis spheres. Her restless commitment to the war cause, partly birthed from her own experience of oppression, was incalculable, earning her an award from Charles de Gaulle and infinite admiration from the French people. Josephine Baker: a hero who found cover in plain sight.

Freda Josephine McDonald was born into poverty in Missouri, 1906. As a young girl, Freda danced through oppression and difficulty, performing on segregated streets for money. At 15, she changed her name and ran away to join an African American theatre troupe, and so the icon, 'Josephine Baker' was born. Baker's step into the limelight truly began as she left for France at 19, shedding the racial confines of the US and freeing herself for stardom. She exhilarated the French public with her whimsical Charleston dances; her racy 'danse sauvage' at the Folies Bergère



was arguably the pinnacle of Baker's career, with her barely-there banana skirt enrapturing the largely white audience. The star was wonderfully scandalous, a trailblazer and an emblem of a liberating modern age, boundless self-expression and vibrancy. Baker had everything to lose.

The sunniness of the 1920s began to dim as fascism's spectre rose, and the hatred Baker knew all-too-well swelled again. Instead of adulation, Baker was greeted by posters calling her a 'black devil' as her European tour reached Vienna. Europe was soon enveloped by the Axis powers, and the 1940 German advance on Paris forced Baker to flee to a chateau in the South of France. Although her escape was perceivably luxurious, by no means did Baker simply recline to comfortability. It was here that her role in the resistance began. The chateau became a home for refugees fleeing the Nazi occupation as well as resistance fighters, who Baker supplied visas for to ensure that their fight for good could continue. The head of French counter-military intelligence, Jacques Abtey, had contacted Baker, estimating her as an invaluable asset to the French resistance. Baker would truly infiltrate the world of espionage, risking her life for the country

she had come to love.

It was Baker's notoriety that allowed her to slip through the Axis world, with her ritzy fame allowing her to seamlessly edge through countries with high security, at times belying the true intentions of her travels by bringing pet monkeys and mice. Baker's flamboyance coincided with the darkest depths of the war: her dazzling attendance at Axis parties, including the Italian Embassy, brought the star into dangerous contact with enemy bureaucrats. These parties allowed her to extract crucial information on German troop movement and the Axis's use of harbours, pinning notes to her bra with a safety pin as her celebrity prevented her from being searched. Baker's connections were now worlds away from the showbiz life she once knew. Stardom never made her untouchable though, and a real threat loomed upon Baker at every hour, with Nazi officers visiting her estate whilst resistance officers were being harboured here. Amazingly, Baker was able to use her starry charm to deflect officers' questions, showing her espionage credentials. However, it was time for Baker to make an escape. Not without a few spy tricks, though. As directed by de

Gaulle, Baker and Abtey left for neutral Portugal, carrying over 50 classified documents in the most fantastical ways. Almost unbelievably, Axis secrets were carried across borders through invisible ink on Baker's sheet music. Baker's life had become a potion of fame, threat, and secrecy.

Baker's humanitarianism persisted post-war as the celebante sold pieces of her jewellery to buy food and coal for impoverished Parisians, solidifying her selflessness and adoration for the country she embraced as her own. In 1961, the significance of her war contribution was recognised, with de Gaulle commending Baker with the highest order of merit for military and civil action – making her a Chevalier de Légion d'honneur – alongside awarding her with the Croix de Guerre and Rosette de la Résistance.

Josephine Baker's role in the war is astounding. Her celebrity was wielded to take action in a perilous world of brutality, and she courageously wagered her tinselled life for the defeat of oppression. Wondrously visible yet swathed in espionage, there may never be a spy quite like her again.



Countess Krystyna Skarbek: The Woman Britain Failed

MADLINE COOPER

Countess Krystyna Skarbek, Churchill's favourite spy, fought for the Allies over the entire course of WW2. She fought on three different fronts, risking her life for them multiple times, just for her to be murdered in London, 7 years after the

war by her stalker. It is hard to summarise this woman in one article, she was remarkable. Britain's longest serving female agent, she was raised in Poland by Count Jerzy Skarbek (Polish aristocrat) and Stefania (daughter of a wealthy Jewish

banking family) and had a privileged childhood. But it was 1939, when the Nazis invaded Poland, that Countess Krystyna's story really gets interesting, and she was already a 24-year-old countess on her second husband.

After the invasion of Poland, Krystyna was determined to defend her country, so travelled to London and set up a meeting with MI6. There, she pitched her scheme, and was immediately recruited as (some argue) Britain's first female spy. Soon she was carrying out this plan, skiing in and out of Poland from Slovakia, smuggling money and arms into Poland, and gathering intelligence and recruiting resistance fighters. This skiing countess became the stuff of legend in the intelligence community, but this was only one example of her amazing contributions to the war effort. To add to this legend, it should also be noted that Krystyna had many lovers, and detested housework so much she lived in hotel rooms and ate in cafés to avoid it, far from the traditional expectations for the 1940s woman. Then again, her job was very different to the traditional woman.

A turning point in her career of espionage was her arrest by the Gestapo in Hungary in January 1941, there she was held and tortured for two days, until eventually ingeniously she bit down on her tongue, to make her cough up blood. Suspected of having the contagious TB, she was released immediately. For her protection after this escape, she was given a British passport, where she took on the name Christine Granville. However, she did not let this close call hold her back, she continued to support the war effort, in 1944 parachuting into Nazi-occupied southern France. Here she travelled through occupied territory to convey messages, at one point hiking 70 miles in 24 hours. Her most impressive achievement in this period was her use of charm and negotiation skills to convince Gestapo officers to release three agents

who had been sentenced to death. These are only a few examples of her heroic actions during the war. As a spy, her gender was her superpower. Able bodied men who were not fighting were viewed with extreme suspicion, where women, having taken over most roles in society, were expected to be active in communities, allowing her to pass through places without raising suspicion, hidden in plain sight.

Despite being awarded a George Medal and OBE by the British, her post-war life did not have the levels of glamour or recognition she deserved. Unable to return to her home country of Poland due to it being under Soviet rule, Christine moved to London, but despite everything she had done for Britain, she was not given citizenship, meaning she struggled to keep a permanent job, and ended up working as a stewardess on cruise ships. It was then that George Muldowney began to stalk and obsess over her. Sadly, with no one to protect her, he would come to murder her. On the 15th of June 1952, having survived 6 years of espionage, including Gestapo torture, smuggling in and out of occupied Poland, and parachuting into a war zone, hero Countess Krystyna Skarbek was stabbed to death by her stalker in a west London hallway. It is hard to not wonder what would have happened to her if she had been given the British citizenship immediately, and the post-war life that a hero like her deserved.

It is a travesty that she is not a national icon. We live in a society that obsesses over war veterans, so why do we not know her? Her Jewish ancestry? Her place of birth? Her gender? Her tragically early death? To find out more about this amazing woman, Clare Mulley has been working to have her recognised, in 2020 getting a blue plaque on the hotel she was murdered in. I recommend checking her out, and giving Krystyna the recognition she deserves.

Soviet spies in the British establishment: The Cambridge Five



ELIZABETH HINCHCLIFFE

In the mid-1930s, the NKVD (the Soviet intelligence service) began recruiting communist sympathisers from universities in the U.K., hoping to find agents who could rise to power within the British establishment and feed sensitive information to the Soviet Union. The most famous example of this is the 'Cambridge Five', a group of men recruited from the University of Cambridge who went undetected as Soviet spies for up to thirty years. Kim Philby, Donald Maclean, Guy Burgess, Anthony Blunt and John Cairncross all enjoyed privileged positions in the British government before (and even in some cases, after) it was discovered that they had leaked classified information to the Soviets throughout their time in their respective offices. None were ever prosecuted for espionage.

Kim Philby was first introduced to communism during his time at Cambridge, where he was a member of the socialist society much like many other members of the group. In 1934, he married Litzi Friedman, an Austrian communist, who persuaded him to become a Soviet agent. All double agents were instructed to abandon communism outwardly to avoid suspicion. Philby was recruited to MI6, the British Secret Service, in 1940 and joined their counter-intelligence unit in 1941; in 1949, he became MI6's chief liaison in Washington D.C. Throughout his time in the U.S, he passed information about Anglo-American collaboration to Moscow. Although he had been interrogated by MI5

in 1950, in 1962 the case against Philby was finalised. He was offered immunity if he returned to London and confessed, but he defected to Russia in 1963, granted Soviet citizenship, and died in 1988. He was buried with full KGB honours.

Donald Maclean was the son of a Liberal cabinet minister, and in 1935, after being a member of Cambridge's socialist society, he joined the diplomatic service, while he was being recruited by the NKVD. After a stint at the Paris embassy in 1938, he was transferred to Washington D.C in 1940, where he gained access to information about nuclear weapons. Eventually, he became head of the American department in Cairo in 1950 - a highly sensitive post due to political tensions surrounding the Korean War. Suspicion fell on him in 1951, following which he defected to Moscow, and died in Russia in 1983.

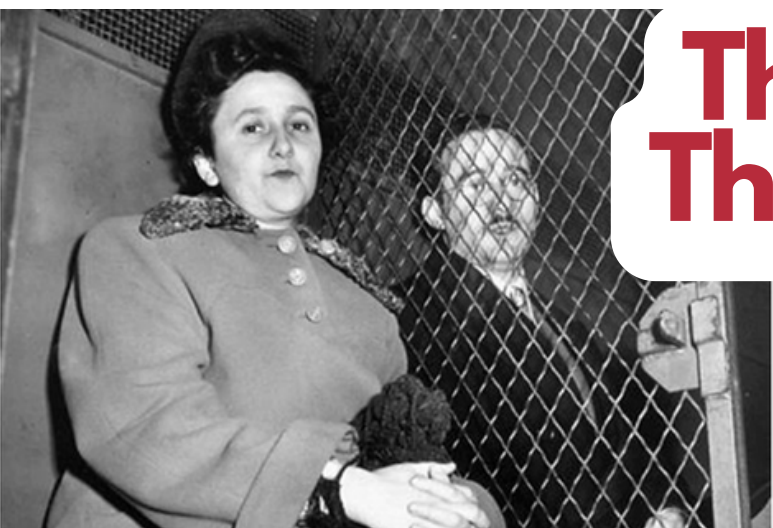
It's unclear as to when Guy Burgess' recruitment by the Soviets took place, however, it was certainly while he was at Cambridge. It was Burgess who introduced Maclean, Blunt and Cairncross to the NKVD, who valued him as a recruiter of useful people. Burgess joined MI6 in 1938 and was private secretary to the Minister of State at the Foreign Office in 1946, when he was appointed to a secret unit whose task was to combat Soviet propaganda. He defected to the USSR with Maclean in 1951 and died there in 1963.

Anthony Blunt's interest in Marxism began in 1933, and he was introduced to NKVD agents in 1937. However, his main use to the Soviets began in 1940, where his work with MI5 brought him into contact with Project Ultra, which was the British government's attempt to break Enigma, the German code during WW2. The KGB archives contain over 1,000 documents that Blunt personally passed to them, and despite this, when he left MI5 in 1945, he became Surveyor of the King's (later Queen's) Pictures, a position within the monarch's household. He was exposed in 1964, after another Soviet agent confessed to the FBI, yet remained in this role until 1972. His espionage was not known to the public until 1979, after which his knighthood was annulled. He died in London in 1983.

After participating in communist meetings at Cambridge, John Cairncross was appointed to the Foreign Office in 1936 and recruited as a Soviet agent in 1937. He worked on Project Ultra in 1942 and supplied Russia with the plans of Germany's

summer offensive, which had a huge influence on what was Germany's last attempt on the Eastern Front. He resigned from the civil service in 1951 after suspicion fell on him and made a full confession in 1964. He continued to co-operate with British authorities, and his identity was revealed in 1979. He died in 1995 in Pembrige.

How was it, then, that these five men succeeded in infiltrating the highest levels of the British civil and diplomatic service? This spy ring fractured Anglo-American relations; the Americans no longer trusted the British intelligence services. Once they discovered that their security had been compromised, MI5 and MI6 also sought to save themselves national embarrassment, hence their offer of immunity for all those involved, should they confess. Whether or not they thought this mishap could be kept a secret forever is unclear, but, as watchers of *The Crown* or *The Imitation Game* will know, this case achieved infamy, even though the British establishment would prefer to forget it ever happened.



The Rosenbergs: The First Civilians Executed for Espionage in America

EMILY LAMBERT

It was postwar United States. Freedom had prevailed and it appeared as if an international detente, and perhaps an era of tranquillity was within reach. However, fears of international political and ideological influence in the US were never so tense than in this 'Cold War' era. This

became defined by Truman's 'domino theory' regarding the global spread of Communism, to the rise and fall from power of Senator Joseph McCarthy, encompassing the 'Second Red Scare' or 'McCarthyism', referring to his modes of political repression, and fear mongering of alleged

in testimonies against them, created to cover up the crimes of those testifying, largely absolving the Rosenbergs of any actual atomic espionage. Ethel's brother, for example, in 2001 finally admitted she had not actively taken part in espionage and he had lied to protect himself. Nonetheless, the essence of this dialogue is not to determine whether Rosenbergs were guilty of atomic espionage. Rather, what the act of their execution reveals about the political atmosphere, and how far the narratives of repression and accusations of being 'un-American' could go under the 'facade' at confronting espionage. We can see narratives exploited by politicians in attempts to demonise groups in the name of national

security, something that remains in contemporary politics. The Red Scare served in suppressing 'communist' ideals, which played out as attacking union activity, hampering Civil Rights legislation, undermining campaigns for increasing equality for women, and acts to dominate the media and intimidate the entertainment industry. Hence, it is encompassed in Shrecker's argument that the political impact and demonising of left-wing dissent was a perhaps more severe result of this hysteria than the individual suffering itself as '...even after it disappeared from the main stage, the political timidity that it encouraged continues to haunt us all'.

Klaus Fuchs and Cold War Paranoia



KITTY WAGENER

The final years of World War II saw international politics wash slowly and subtly to a new conflict – the Cold War. Cold and covert, world leaders abandoned air raids and deadly conflict to quietly support either the United States or the USSR in a bipolar, super-power contest. The Cold War was defined by ideology as the US's liberal and capitalist Western Bloc joined an aggressive arms race, spread propaganda, and attempted to assert dominance to contain the USSR's communist Eastern Bloc. Although conflict did bleed into proxy wars in the Global South, a crucial characteristic of US and USSR competition was espionage. The Cold War's reliance on espionage enflamed a feverous climate of paranoia, fuelling the hostility further. An infamous

example of Cold War espionage is Klaus Fuchs and the secrets of the nuclear bombs.

Klaus Fuchs was the silent assassin of atomic research in the 1940s, overlooked in 2023's 'Oppenheimer'. Fuchs was a German physicist, mathematician, and fatefully, a member of the Communist Party. He was forced to leave Germany due to Nazi occupation, ending up in Great Britain. There, Fuchs studied and received his doctorate, before supporting research on the atomic bomb at the University of Birmingham. In 1944, Fuchs moved to provide crucial expertise to the Manhattan Project in Los Alamos. During this time, Fuchs worked alongside significant figures such as J. Robert

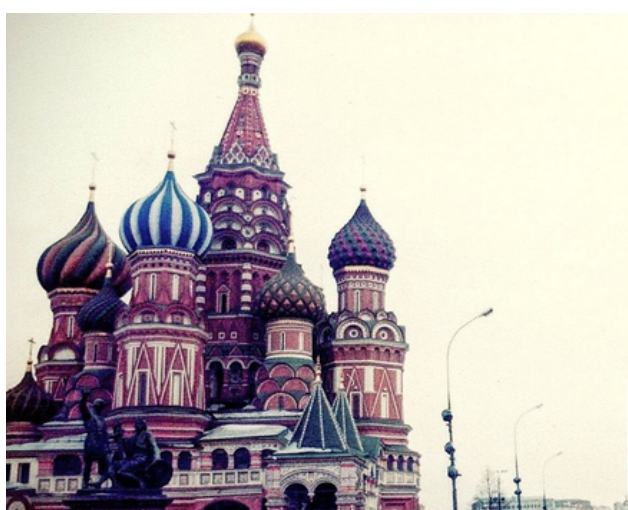
Oppenheimer, Hans Bethe, and Edward Teller on the atomic bomb project. In particular, Fuchs specialised on calculating energy yields and implosion methods.

However, through all of this, Fuchs' compassion for the Communist cause endured. In the silent shadows of the Los Alamos desert, Fuchs loyally worked as a Soviet spy, providing secrets from the Anglo-American nuclear project. Fuchs' devotion to Marxist ideology eclipsed his devotion to his profession, as illustrated in one of his confessions: 'dialectical necessity of correct Party behaviour permitted espionage in the name of historical determinism.' Harry Gold collaborated with Fuchs and others by transmitting their classified information to the USSR, with some experts estimating that Fuchs' espionage reduced the creation of a Soviet atomic bomb by almost two years. But, in 1950, Fuchs was arrested for espionage in Britain and sentenced to fourteen years in prison, of which he served nine. Furthermore, Fuchs' testimony also led to the arrest of Harry Gold, and Julius and Ethel Rosenberg. Though a gifted scientist, Fuchs' ideological conscience was torn within the context of the Cold War. Consequently, Fuchs was compelled to prevent a Western Bloc monopoly on nuclear weapons – he succeeded at this with the Soviet's first atomic bomb detonation in 1949. Thus, Fuchs returned to East Germany in 1959 as a hero, while in the West he was disgraced.

Despite this, Fuchs' story is only a slither of the history of Cold War espionage. The broader atmosphere, during the middle of the twentieth century, was one of repression and paranoia. However, as evidenced by Fuchs' case, fear of Soviet espionage was not unfounded. Furthermore, the international political context of the time included Mao Zedong's

Communist takeover of China in 1949 and the Korean War from 1950 to 1953. As a result, US concern regarding communist advances was supported, but officials who benefited from anti-communism fanned the flames of fear to create extreme public hysteria. This is most grossly evident in the 'Red-Scare', as the House Un-American Activities Committee and Senator McCarthy orchestrated Communist witch hunts within the federal government as well as amongst Hollywood stars. Although this anti-communist fever reached its heights in the 1950s, it scared American life politics for decades. Individual liberties were compromised, and lives disrupted in the vein of anti-communist policy, meanwhile, government policies and actions were consistently rocked by Cold War dealings.

The covert nature of the Cold War arguably created a psychological terror worse than direct conflict, as the US and USSR painfully teetered on the edge of a world war, such as with the Cuban Missile Crisis in 1962. On the other hand, the name 'Cold War' is vulgarly centred on the Global North, as the real victims of the conflict were the Global South, which was used as a playground for a power contest; the people of the Global South's lives were reduced to pieces on a chess board. Espionage may have been a concern for the US and Europe but, in light of atrocities such as in Vietnam, it appears but a trifle.



Agent Sonya: The Untold Story of The Spy Next Door

ELLIE HAYWOOD

In 1945, in the quaint English village of Great Rollright, lived a woman and her family. Her neighbours knew little about her. They didn't know that the woman they called Mrs Burton was Colonel Ursula Kuczynski of the Red Army, a highly trained spy who had conducted operations in China and Switzerland before coming to Britain on Moscow's orders. They didn't know that her most important job would shape the future of the world: helping the Soviet Union to build the atom bomb.

Ursula grew up in Germany, to a rich, influential, Jewish family. In 1924, Ursula attended her first communist street rally, and shortly after she joined the Young Communist League, later joining the KPD (the German Communist Party) when she was nineteen.

When Ursula moved to China, she met Agnes Smedley and Richard Sorge, both of whom were spies and were influential in Ursula's journey. Sorge, the most senior Soviet spy in Shanghai, initiated Ursula into Soviet espionage. He asked Ursula to carry out her most dangerous task to date, hiding a Chinese comrade whose life was in danger. This forced Ursula to reveal to her identity as a communist spy to her husband, but her choice between professional and personal didn't end there. She was asked to go to Moscow to complete a training course, the condition was that she would have to leave her young son behind. She later recalled, 'the

thought of giving up my work never occurred to me'; she would go to Moscow, the capital of communist revolution.

In 1938, the Soviet Union was fearful and distrustful of Hitler and needed information on the military build-up inside the Reich. Switzerland, being the ideal place, was where Ursula was ordered to travel to. This was the first time Ursula would be directly targeting Hitler's regime, and she couldn't wait. This was also the first time that Ursula would be solo, as on every other mission she had been accompanied by someone else. However, in 1940, Ursula was forced out of Switzerland and into Britain. While she gained access into Britain, she was formally designated a potential threat to British society. In 1941, Germany attacked Russia. Because the Nazi-Soviet pact was essentially destroyed; Britain and the Soviet Union were now allies. Ursula was now asked to gain intelligence about Britain for the Soviet Union. In 1942, Ursula met with Klaus Fuchs, who gave her the information about the atomic bomb.

One of the most important reasons why Ursula was able to successfully run one of the largest networks of spies in Britain was her gender, combined with her apparent domestic life this formed the perfect façade in which to operate, men didn't believe a housewife could possibly be capable of important espionage. Only a

woman could see through her ruse. The counter-intelligence section of MI5 contained only one woman, and she was on Ursula's trail. While Milicent Bagot was on Ursula's case it was handed over to William Skardon and in 1947, he would turn up on Ursula's doorstep to question her. Ursula didn't crack under interrogation, but it did lead to her renouncing espionage entirely.

Ursula Kuczynski died on the 7th July 2000. Her life had spanned the whole of communism. She embraced that ideology

and spent much of her adult life fighting for it and died knowing that much of it had been wrong. But she still looked back on her life with satisfaction.

Further Reading

Agent Sonya: The True Story of WW2's Most Extraordinary Spy by Ben Macintyre

Sexpionage: The Power and Pitfalls of Seducing the Enemy

YASMIN MILLS

It is widely recognised that the KGB certainly had some morally questionable methods of gathering foreign and domestic intelligence. Notably, the use of abduction and murder marked the USSR's security service as a quasi-military organisation. However, human nature's sexual vulnerability allowed the KGB to use alternative, surreptitious means of seducing the enemy.

The femme fatale, the beautiful, mysterious but dangerous seductress, apparent in literature and culture, took centre stage in ensnaring unsuspecting journalists, diplomats and political opponents. Moscow's sirens, or 'swallows', were trained in specialised



schools that educated young, glamorous women in the art of seduction and gathering valuable information for the state. British and American embassies provided the most attractive, juicy victims for these women. The embassies were swimming with secretaries, politicians and officials with valuable secrets to spill. One section of seduction school graduates who were crafty, classy and fluent in foreign languages were planted here. One such receptionist, Violette Siena, at an American ambassador's home, successfully extracted American Embassy floor plans and a list of CIA agents from a credulous US marine in the Lonetree affair.

These traps were not as simple and short-term as a one-night stand. On the contrary, the horrific and unnerving reality is that male and female spies entered into seemingly meaningful and loving relationships with the enemy. One American secretary fell victim to engaging in a twenty-two-year relationship that resulted in the handing over of 1500 confidential documents for East German intelligence. 'Swallows' and their male counterparts, 'Romeos' or 'Ravens', built values of trust, affection and confidence in the enemy, preying on emotional and sensual sympathies. The Soviet Union created an intricate sequence of meticulously planned circumstances that would 'manoeuvre the victim to a desired end', as John Barron outlines. Soviet opponents were not simply fighting the urge to embrace sexual desires of a single man or woman, they were resisting a 'very experienced apparatus' of state security.

Upon first glance, the role of the 'swallow' within the KGB seems to be a powerful, dominating position of control for a woman. The role of a siren enables women to exercise the ability to connive and direct male sexual excitement for their own gain. However, it is more convincing to suggest that commanding female sexuality has a more limited value. Female spies were simply necessary 'tools' used in a wider patriarchal structure of the USSR, as a retired member of the KGB highlighted. 'Swallows' were often recruited from impoverished, vulnerable backgrounds and twisted into roles at the KGB. Natasha Kuznetzova comments how they 'caught [her] like a rabbit' once the service learnt she was in a relationship with a Japanese diplomat. They were objectified and judged solely for their attractive physical qualities in contrast to, 'ravens' who were valued for intelligence and charm.

One category of 'swallows' found

themselves placed in foreign offices, whereas another category of women was thrown into prostitution or domestic service. Sir Geoffrey Harrison was seduced by his chambermaid. This is a much less glamorous role for a woman, exorcising the image of Bond-girl-style missions. Can these women acquire true power from positions of inferiority to men where their sexuality and appearance are deliberately objectified?

Eventually, 'Swallows' were often abandoned once deemed to have reached their expiry date. Siena, involved in the Lonetree affair, had become too infamous to carry value in the KGB. She found herself living in poor conditions with her mother and stepsister without a pension or benefits. 'Swallows' certainly played a restricted, inferior role in a larger, patriarchal system of the KGB and Soviet state.



Bond in the 1960s: A Cold War Hero?

AVA BOGDANOVIC

James Bond's timeless style and silhouette have cemented his place as an iconic symbol of the West. As Fleming's original novels were adapted to film in the 1960s, Bond entered global screens as the Cold War entered global politics. Working under Her Majesty's Secret Service against international security threats, Bond became a Cold War hero. However, this title does Bond a disservice. The Bond series shielded viewers not just from the Soviet enemy but from the multifaceted anxieties of the post-war world.

Bond's image soon became an emblem of Western Capitalism with his Aston Martin car and impeccably tailored suits representing the pinnacle of 1960s consumerism. However, his advertisement for consumerism gradually lost its subtlety as the films began to be used as product placement of OMEGA watches. Nevertheless, his cosmopolitan lifestyle warranted admiration from Western audiences. Drinking martinis and travelling to exotic locations, Bond was the antithesis of Soviet isolation. In style, Bond embodied Western liberal society.

The 'Bond villain', on the other hand, epitomised the Eastern threat. The infamous Ernst Stavro Blofeld could not sound more Eastern European if he tried. Cleverly, his collarless suit invoked images of Chairman Mao, adding to the image of

of the Eastern Communist threat. Another infamous villain, the Soviet 'Rosa Klebb' from the 1963 film *From Russia With Love*, was perhaps the only conventionally 'unattractive' woman featured in the early Bond films. Frequently hinted at as being a lesbian, Klebb's subversive personal presentation ensured that the Eastern enemy received little sympathy among the Western audience.

The Bond universe's Cold War symbolism took real-life dimensions in the years before Fleming died in 1964. President John F. Kennedy hugely appreciated the novels, and in 1961, he named *From Russia with Love* one of his ten favourite books. On the campaign trail, Kennedy proclaimed the need for physically and mentally strong leadership to face the Cold War threat. This description closely matched Bond's image. By professing his appreciation for Bond, Kennedy ensured that the American public began to associate Bond with the qualities Kennedy claimed to bring to the presidency. Kennedy used the image of Bond to project himself as a strong and glamorous leader who could face up to international challenges posed by the Cold War.

The James Bond franchise was therefore riddled with Cold War symbolism. Whether depicting a Cold War hero through the subtlety of Bond's personal style or the vaguely Eastern Communist

villain, it is easy to see the series through the East vs. West binary with which we are familiar in depictions of the Cold War. However, the Bond series' political tone may be more multifaceted than we give it credit for.

Reflecting the advent of 'detente' in the 1960s, especially following the 1962 Cuban Missile Crisis, the movie series, despite what we may now see as overtly political iconography, actually sought to avoid such obvious categorisations of the 'enemy'. In the novels, the enemy entity was the group 'SMERSH', a direct reference to the Soviet Red Army's counter-intelligence agency during the 1940s. However, in the film series, SMERSH was replaced with 'SPECTRE', a mysterious international terrorist organisation. Comprising Soviet, former-Nazi, Yugoslav and Mafia elements, the organisation came to represent all things anti-democratic and evil in the Western imagination, re-awakening Western anxieties about the fallout from the Second World War while raising new suspicions. SPECTRE later takes on a more specific role as a 'third entity' in films such as *Thunderball*, where it manipulated Cold War dynamics to cause destruction beyond the viewer's imagination. In this sense, Bond acted not just as the hero of the Cold War but the hero of the West against the challenges raised by the complexities of post-war international society. The US and UK now had to face several threats, some emanating from the rubble of the Second World War, and other, more modern challenges like the rise of digital terrorism, a common theme of the films made in the 2010s.

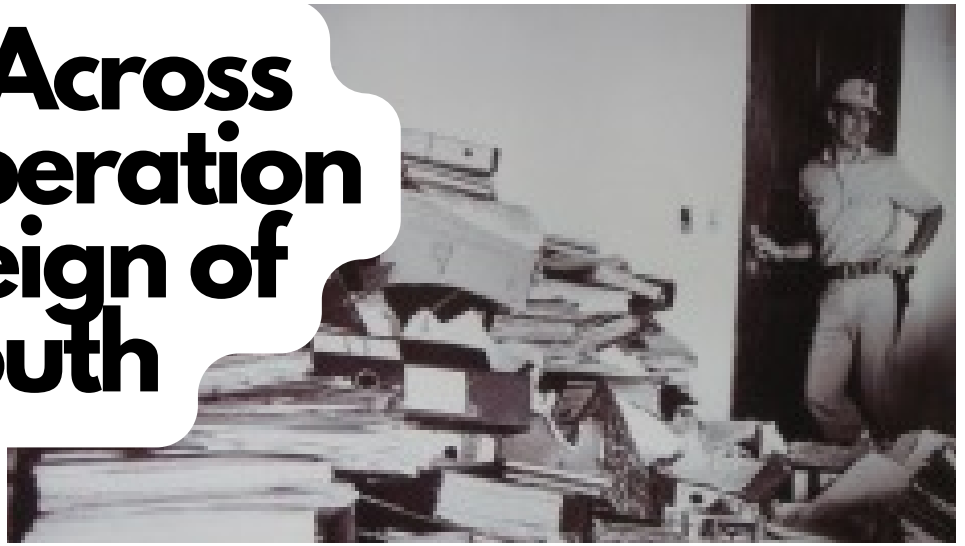
Bond's heroism narrates another phenomenon of the 1960s, American ascendancy as a global superpower and



Britain's comparative 'decline'. As a quintessentially British hero, Bond acted as a source of redemption in the face of Britain's declining global influence after the Second World War and the ensuing loss of imperial power. In the films released in the 1960s, Bond frequently saves the US from ruin. For example, Bond prevents Dr No from interfering with a US missile test thus making him a British hero combining traditional espionage with a cosmopolitan twist to restore Britain's role on the global stage. While this was undoubtedly linked to a reaffirming of Britain's role in fighting the Cold War (the US, in the eyes of Britain, could not do it alone), Bond's heroism was informed by a need for British restoration.

The Bond franchise provided a glamorous and exciting narration for the Cold War. His heroism answered the need for a strong face against the Soviet threat that characterised 1960s geopolitics. However, Bond represented so much more than that. Bond had a redemptive essence, representing a British identity descending towards political irrelevance. Meanwhile, his enemies represented a multifaceted international threat, reflecting the unfolding anxieties of the post war viewership.

'Espionage Across Borders: Operation Condor's Reign of Terror in South America'



SADIE KENDALL

May 27th of this year will mark eight years since the confirmation of Operation Condor's existence in court, when fifteen former military officials were convicted of participating in the continent-wide campaign of state-sponsored terror and suppression of 'left-wing' and communist opponents across South America. Operation Condor was formally launched in 1975 as a United-States backed transnational network of military and intelligence services, the key members being Argentina, Chile, Uruguay, Bolivia, Paraguay and Brazil (all of which were under military dictatorships). Their aim was to coordinate the repression of 'communist' influences in the region, using criminal methods of espionage and terror to eliminate 'subversion', most commonly resulting in the 'disappearance' of thousands of victims across South America.

Espionage was an integral part of Operation Condor, with espionage activities involving monitoring communications, surveillance programmes and infiltration of 'subversive' groups used to gather intelligence on potential targets. Espionage further facilitated the covert communication of this intelligence across borders and eventual kidnappings, torture and assassinations of these targets. This cross-border espionage meant individuals were unable to seek 'safe-havens' in neighbouring countries.

The official impact of Condor is contested, but there is no doubt of the tragic scale of the operation. The discovery of the 'Archives of Terror' in Paraguay detail that Operation Condor led to the loss of more than 50,000 civilian lives, over 30,000 missing and around 400,000 prisoners.

One of the most prominent questions that had arisen from discourses around Operation Condor remains: how involved was the United States and the CIA?

It had previously been suggested that US knowledge of Condor's operations came solely from espionage, namely through the surveillance of South American intelligence communications through CIA owned encryption machines 'Crypto AG'. These machines allowed the espionage of thousands of messages related to Operation Condor.

However, the declassification of important CIA documents in 1999 under Bill Clinton revealed the United States' significant involvement in the operation. Historian J. Patrice McSherry has argued US officials and agencies, including the CIA were 'fully aware of Condor's formation and its operations from the time it was organised in 1975 (if not earlier)', citing Washington's supply of 'military intelligence and training, financial assistance, advanced computed, sophisticated tracking technology and access to the continental telecommunications

system'. Therefore, the CIA directly supplied the South American dictatorships with elaborate methods of espionage that allowed the reign of terror that ensued, in addition to planning and advising the operation

Legacy of Fear

In South America, the extensive use of espionage used in Operation Condor means a fear of right-wing extremist violence still haunts the region. Collective memory of the repression is still strong, especially among survivors. The idea that a system similar to Condor may reappear at some point is not unconceivable following the election of controversial right-wing Javier Milei as the Argentinian

president in December 2023, whose party was criticised for including neo-Nazis and apologists for the last Argentine military dictatorship.

However, stories of trials and arrests of perpetrators of Condor provide hope that the perpetrators of this state-led terrorism will face jail. The first trial to cover the transnational dimension of Condor across South America began in 2013, after around ten years of investigation. The trail was groundbreaking for the fields of human rights and transnational justice, most importantly giving victims and their families legitimate justice despite the horrific lasting memory Operation Condor.



Spy Novels: When Truth Becomes Fiction

MILLY WEIR

In the ever-evolving landscape of global politics, the spy novel has proven to be a genre with a timeless allure, weaving narratives of intrigue, betrayal, and covert operations against the backdrop of geopolitical tensions. Among the luminaries of espionage literature, John Le Carré stands as a towering figure whose works have transcended mere fiction to provide profound insights into the clandestine world of international intelligence and the geopolitical trends of the era.

Beginning with the earliest Le Carré novels, it is impossible to miss the influence of current affairs on Le Carré's work. The influence of the Portland and Cambridge Spy Rings, and the subsequent fascination with the defection of Guy

Burgess and Donald Maclean, is evident in *Tinker, Tailor, Soldier, Spy*, as is the occupation of the popular imagination with espionage activity, resulting from official reports released after the defections from the USSR of officials including Igor Gouzenko and Vladimir and Evdokia Petrov. Earlier novels like *The Spy Who Came in from the Cold* and the George Smiley trilogy encapsulate the moral ambiguity and ethical complexities of the world of espionage, particularly during the Cold War. George Smiley, in particular, became an emblematic figure whose astute observations and strategic acumen mirrored the challenges faced by intelligence operatives during this tumultuous period.

As the geopolitical landscape shifted with

the fall of the Berlin Wall and the dissolution of the Soviet Union, the spy novel adapted to new realities. Le Carré consequently transitioned to an increasing focus on the shifting realities of espionage, considering the transnationalisation of crime, particularly post 9/11, with terrorism and non-state actors taking centre stage of international espionage. This marked a shift from the state-based threats of the Cold War that first occupied Le Carré's imagination. In novels like *A Most Wanted Man* and *Our Kind of Traitor*, he explored the blurred lines between intelligence, politics, and morality in the context of the War on Terror. Le Carré's characters faced a different set of challenges, reflecting the evolving nature of geopolitical threats and the increasing interplay between state and non-state actors.

The twenty-first century undeniably brought about a digital revolution that transformed the landscape of espionage. Traditional spy-craft, with its emphasis on human intelligence and covert operations, collided with the cyber realm. John Le Carré, with his keen insight, adapted his storytelling to reflect these changes. In *A Legacy of Spies*, he revisited the Cold War era and the mission depicted in *The Spy Who Came In From the Cold*, connecting it to contemporary challenges as characters grappled with the repercussions of past decisions in the age of digital espionage. Le Carré, additionally, examines the consequences of Brexit and utilises Smiley to make an emotional case for the Remain campaign ('If I had a mission – if I was ever aware of one beyond our business with the enemy, it was to Europe').

Le Carré's portrayal of the modern intelligence landscape highlighted the ethical dilemmas posed by advanced surveillance technologies, mass data collection, and the blurred boundaries between national security and individual privacy. The enduring appeal of the spy

novel lies in its ability to evolve with the times, reflecting the ever-shifting sands of geopolitics and technological advancements, with no one reflecting this more clearly than Le Carré. He recognised the shift in geopolitics, stating in an NPR interview in 2017 that 'we seem to be joined by nothing very much except fear and bewilderment about what the future holds', in contrast with the global narrative of 'Us v Them' during the Cold War.

John Le Carré's contributions to the spy novel genre extend beyond mere storytelling; they have shaped public perceptions of intelligence agencies and their role in global affairs. His nuanced portrayal of characters and the intricate web of political intrigue has influenced subsequent generations of writers and filmmakers. The enduring popularity of adaptations like *Tinker, Tailor, Soldier, Spy* attests to the timeless allure of Le Carré's narratives. The spy novel, with its roots in the Cold War era, continues to captivate readers by providing a glimpse into the shadowy world of espionage. John Le Carré, through his unparalleled storytelling and insightful exploration of geopolitical dynamics, has left an indelible mark on the genre.

From the moral ambiguities of the Cold War to the complexities of the post-9/11 era, Le Carré's work remains a testament to the enduring relevance of the spy novel in shaping our understanding of global geopolitics. As we navigate an ever-changing world, the lessons and insights gleaned from the pages of spy novels continue to resonate, offering a valuable perspective on the intricacies of international relations. Ultimately, as Le Carré put it in his November 1989 *Washington Post* Column, 'The real excitement will come where it always came from: from the interaction of reality and self-delusion which is at the heart of so many secret lives'.

Country or KGB? The Influence of Espionage on Putin's Governance



KATHRYN KITTO

A name that is at the forefront of media, conversations and global concerns, Vladimir Putin is perceived as a figure that, from the Western perspective, is enigmatic in his style of governance. Since 2000, he has held positions in high office as both Prime Minister and President, as he currently serves, and it can be observed that the government of Russia has become increasingly impenetrable and Putin's authority undisputed. Whilst the legacy of Soviet totalitarianism could perhaps be seen to infiltrate current political agendas, when considering Putin's early career in the notorious KGB secret intelligence, we may instead see the leader as a man influenced by the organisation he dedicated his early career to. Hence, we pose the question: is Russia's administration operating as a country or as a model of the KGB?

Putin joined the KGB after he graduated from Leningrad State University in 1975 with a degree in Law. He was targeted by the KGB before his graduation, perhaps as the law department served as a breeding-ground of potential KGB recruits alongside both police and bureaucratic prospectives. Whilst working for the KGB, his role was partly focused on the recruitment of potential Soviet intelligence allies, namely

in Eastern Germany. Targeting those who had justification to frequently cross borders such as journalists and professors; Putin's goal was to obtain information on Western technology as well as progressions in the NATO alliances. Naturally, a man who had been so dedicated towards serving his nation and securing its defence, Putin was the image of patriotism and was eventually promoted to Lieutenant Colonel.

So how does his career in espionage relate to his current political role? One may only need to look so far as his exit from the KGB itself. Putin resigned from the KGB two days into the failed coup attempt on President Mikhail Gorbachev in 1991. In the previous year he had begun to step into politics, having been given the position of Advisor on International Affairs to the Mayor of Leningrad. Planning his migration into politics, Putin recognised the importance of distancing himself from the organisation attempting to undermine the government. Under Gorbachev's administration, the collapse of the Soviet Union began, and a relatively more democratic approach to Russian politics ensued. Gorbachev endorsed Putin's rise to power in the turn of the millennium, showing how Putin's reserved persona had deceived the former President into

believing Putin would extend the approach he had started. However, it quickly became clear that Putin wanted to re-centralise power and restore the strength of the Soviet era; he had concealed expertly his own aspirations for Russia in order to obtain the opportunity and credibility to support his rise to power, his ultimate goal, much like an espionage agent.

Putin's actions radically re-centralised and reformed government processes, creating a 'single chain of command,' perhaps mirroring the rigid and defensive organisation Putin was once a member of. Putin's government serves him directly, and opposition is limited and stifled. Official parliamentary opposition generally support Putin's policies and any

groups who do not agree, are not legitimately recognised parties. As Steve Pieczenik aptly puts it: 'like all good KGB operatives, he has disseminated intimidation and secrecy, at once silencing domestic cries for security reform and presidential accountability.' Now, the transmission of manipulated truths regarding the Russo-Ukrainian War, as well as various suspicious deaths of critics of Putin's regime, most recently, Alexei Navalny, shows Russia's government, not as a diplomatic administration, but instead as a propagandist body, using information to consolidate the ultimate power of a leader, precisely the purpose of what once was the KGB.



Paper Trail or Poison Trail?: A History of Suspicious Deaths

KATIE HUDSON

Whether complacent or careless, the Kremlin has often displayed little interest in distancing itself from numerous suspicious deaths on UK soil. Since the days of the Cold War, untimely assassinations have become common for Soviet dissidents, former Russian intelligence officers and exiled oligarchs. Often as creative as they are suspicious, these Russian-related deaths leave a trail of paper and poison in their wake.

Throughout the 1960s, Giorgi Markov was a notable novelist and playwright in his home nation of the People's Republic of Bulgaria. Despite his success as an author, many of his

plays were censored by the Communist Bulgarian regime – a close ally to the Soviet Union. His frustration with his creative censorship freedom drove him to dissent, immigrating to Italy in 1969 and later the UK in 1972.

Markov worked as a BBC journalist in the UK, reporting with the Bulgarian service of the BBC Overseas Service. Additionally, he freelanced for US-supported Radio Free Europe – often expressing criticism of the Bulgarian Communist Party.

On 7th September 1978, while Markov was waiting for a bus near Waterloo Bridge in

London, a stranger jabbed him in the leg with the tip of an umbrella. Described as a built man with a thick foreign accent, the stranger apologised and made off in haste.

Over the course of the evening, the sharp pain in his leg worsened and Markov deteriorated. Over the course of the evening, the sharp pain in his leg worsened and Markov deteriorated. He was hospitalised the next morning and died of Septicaemia in hospital three days after the initial incident. An investigation concluded that a tiny 1.52mm pellet containing the toxin ricin was injected into his leg, with the umbrella as the weapon.

It was concluded that Markov was 'unlawfully' killed. In a James Bond fuelled atmosphere of spies and clandestine activity, it was theorised that his death was orchestrated by Bulgarian and Soviet secret police in response to his vocal political criticism.

The next high-profile death occurred in 2006. A former FSB agent, Alexander Litvinenko was granted asylum in the UK in 2000. During his time as an FSB agent, Alexander Litvinenko clashed with Vladimir Putin (his boss and the director of the FSB at the time) for being vocal in his criticism of FSB corruption.

Litvinenko was arrested in 1998 and later acquitted for uncovering an alleged assassination plot against oligarch Boris Berezovsky. He fled to the UK in 2000 after publishing a book stating that the FSB had been responsible for the 1999 Moscow bombings and that said event was used as a scapegoat to invade Chechnya again.

On 1st November 2006, Litvinenko met for tea with two other former Russian agents – Andrei Lugovoi and Dmitri Kovtun. Litvinenko fell ill soon after the meeting and was admitted to hospital three days later. Litvinenko was poisoned with the radioactive substance polonium-210.

Traces of the substance were found in places connected to Mr Lugovoi and Mr Kovtun – including their hotel rooms and Heathrow Airport. Scotland yard requested the extradition of Mr Lugovoi for the murder of Alexander Litvinenko; however, the Kremlin denied this request. A public inquiry established in 2015 concluded that it was probable that President Vladimir Putin authorised this assassination.

Litvinenko was critical of Putin until the end. Just before his death, Litvinenko wanted to be photographed for the public to see. He stated, 'I want the world to see what they did to me'. In one of his final statements, he declared, 'You may succeed in silencing me, but that silence comes at a price... The Howl of protest from around the world will reverberate, Mr. Putin, in your ears for the rest of your life'.

Just as Litvinenko had alluded to in 1998, exiled Russian oligarch Boris Berezovsky was found dead in his Berkshire home in 2013. Berezovsky played a major financial and political role in Boris Yeltsin's 'democratisation' of Russia, using his television channel ORT to secure election success.

Yeltsin appointed Berezovsky to find him a successor. Berezovsky chose Putin, as he believed that he too would be malleable like Yeltsin, allowing him to further his own political career. However, Berezovsky's vision soon clashed with Putin's, and Putin seized ORT TV. Berezovsky fled Russia and was granted asylum in the UK in 2003, where he became an active critic of Putin.

Berezovsky was found hanged in his Berkshire home in 2013. Although his death was officially ruled a suicide and non-suspicious, it was later revealed that UK intelligence services had shared information with US intelligence in the 'context of assassination'. Guilty by association, eight of Berezovsky's inner

circle died on UK soil under suspicious circumstances.

The most recent assassination attempt of note was that of former Russian intelligence officer turned double agent, Sergei Skripal. In 2018 Skripal and his daughter, Yulia, were poisoned after the nerve agent Novichok was smeared on their front door. Both recovered after being hospitalised, however, a member of the public Dawn Sturgess, died after coming into contact with the discarded Novichok container.

Two suspected Russian intelligence officers, operating under the aliases of 'Alexander Petrov' and 'Ruslan Boshirov', claimed that they visited Salisbury to view the medieval cathedral. However, it was later revealed their true names were 'Anatoliy Chepiga' and 'Alexander Mishkin'. Therefore, it appears that Moscow is clearly happy to continue this trend.