GEORGE MASON UNIVERSITY

History 615/635 - 001
Tuesdays, 7:20-10:00 pm

Intelligence and Espionage in Historical Perspective

Instructor: Professor Stephen J. Scala
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Office: Robinson Hall B 342
Office hours: Tuesdays, 6:00-7:00 pm

Course description:
This course will familiarize students with the scholarly study of the history of intelligence and espionage. The focus of the course will be on exploring the development of intelligence historically and illuminating the crucial, though variable, role intelligence has played over time in the realms of national security, international relations, and military operations. We will draw upon case studies from around the world to examine central issues and persistent themes in intelligence history. Several class sessions will be devoted to intelligence and espionage prior to the modern era, but the chronological focus of the course will be on the modern era. Being a graduate seminar, this course requires that students actively and productively contribute to class discussions on the basis of a careful and thoughtful reading of the assigned texts. Class assignments include two short essays, an in-class oral presentation, and a final historiographical essay on a topic in intelligence history of each student’s choosing.

Required Texts (available for purchase at the GMU bookstore as well as online):

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The instructor reserves the right to revise the syllabus provided students are given timely notification of relevant changes.
Recommended (but not required):


In addition to these works, numerous articles from journals and edited volumes will be assigned throughout the semester. Most journal articles are available through JSTOR and/or other on-line databases (accessible through the library’s database collection: http://library.gmu.edu/). Articles that are not readily available will be made available on our course Blackboard website (accessible at: mymason.gmu.edu) and are designated as such with an asterisk in the list of readings below.

**GRADE BREAKDOWN AND COURSE ASSIGNMENTS**

**Grade Breakdown:**

Class participation: 25%
Short essays (12.5% each): 25%
In-class presentation: 10%
Historiographical paper: 40%

**Class participation (25%)**: This course is a seminar, which means that active student participation in class discussions is indispensable. You should come to each class not just having done the assigned readings but also having prepared to make a substantive contribution to class discussion. Proper preparation should include identifying and thinking through the key methodological and empirical issues of each text and reflecting upon them in relation to other authors and questions covered in class. *Rationale*: The ability to familiarize oneself with new material, to identify its strengths and weaknesses as well as its contributions to the field, and to articulate your position in a dialog with other scholars is a key skill that every historian needs.

**Short essays (12.5% each → 25% total)**: In the course of the semester, you are required to compose a short essay response paper on the readings assigned for two separate class sessions. The choice of class sessions is up to you (but you’ll want to avoid putting them off until late in the semester). Your response should not present a simple summary of the works in question, but rather should provide a critical discussion of the key issues covered in those works and their place within the broader historical literature on intelligence and espionage. Essays should not exceed 1,000 words. *Rationale*: Forming a critical, yet balanced, opinion of scholarship on any given topic and communicating that opinion clearly and concisely in writing is an absolute necessity for historians.

**In-class presentation (10%)**: For each class meeting, one student will give a brief presentation on the assigned readings (no more than 10 minutes) and serve as that session’s “discussion-leader.” The presentations should highlight the key arguments and themes found in that session’s readings while also placing them within the larger context of intelligence historiography. Students will sign up for a presentation day at the
beginning of the semester. *You may not write one of your short essays for the same class meeting that you give your presentation.*

*Rationale:* No historian can do without the ability to give a clear and effective oral presentation of one’s views on a given body of scholarship and to engage fellow scholars in a critical discussion.

**Historiographical paper (40%):** The historiographical paper is the capstone of the course. The paper should present a detailed, critical discussion of the historiography on a discrete sub-field within intelligence history on the basis of 10-15 scholarly works (monographs and articles together). Your paper should include: a clearly articulated research problem, treatment of the theoretical and methodological dimensions, coverage of the most important empirical contributions, and a critical assessment of the current state of scholarship accompanied by discussion of possible future avenues of research. The paper should number approximately 15 pages in length and include a full bibliography and footnotes formatted according to Chicago/Turabian.

*Rationale:* The ability to master the extant literature on a given topic is at the very heart of the historical enterprise and, indeed, represents the indispensable foundation and precondition for any work of original historical research.

**COURSE POLICIES AND INFO**

**Office hours:** I am happy to meet with you during my office hours to discuss any aspect of the course. It is difficult to tell when a student might need extra help or simply need to touch base one-on-one, so please do not hesitate to come speak with me about any issues that might come up. And feel free to contact me by e-mail with any questions or concerns.

**Academic integrity:** There is no room for plagiarism—i.e., using someone else’s words or ideas without acknowledgment—among professional historians, at George Mason, or among persons of integrity. Submitting plagiarized work—whether done so intentionally or unintentionally—is grounds for failure of an assignment or, if serious enough, failure of the course, and all instances of plagiarism will be reported to the George Mason Honor Committee. Plagiarism is a mortal sin in the scholarly world, and instances of documented plagiarism can destroy careers, so we need to be very careful that we properly document our sources. In cases of uncertainty, feel free to consult me or the *Chicago Manual of Style*. Visit the site of the Office of Academic Integrity to see the university’s definition of what constitutes plagiarism and what the consequences are: [http://honorcode.gmu.edu/](http://honorcode.gmu.edu/)

**Submission and format of written assignments:** All written assignments must be submitted in *hard copy* and *at the start* of the class at which they are due. They should be typed in 12-point Times New Roman font with standard margins (i.e., one inch on all sides). When applicable, bibliographic references should be formatted according to Chicago/Turabian. Finally, *please provide a title for each written assignment* (including the short essays) that effectively and intriguingly conveys its contents.
Laptops and cell phones in class: Laptops are allowed in class for the express purpose of taking notes—usage for any other purpose is not allowed, no exceptions. There is no legitimate reason to use your cell phone during class—please turn it off and keep it out of view.

Accommodations for students with disabilities: If you are a student with a disability and you need academic accommodations, please see me and contact the Office of Disability Services at 703.993.2474 or ods.gmu.edu. All academic accommodations must be arranged through that office.

The Writing Center: You have a wonderful resource at your disposal in the form of the Writing Center, where you can review your written work with a trained tutor. For more information and to schedule an appointment, go to: http://writingcenter.gmu.edu/

Counseling and Psychological Services: One’s mental health can significantly impact one’s academic performance. If you would like to meet with a trained counselor to address a psychological issue, contact the university’s own Counseling and Psychological Services at: http://caps.gmu.edu/

Last day to add/last day to drop (with 100% refund): January 28

University policies: For comprehensive coverage of official university policies, go to: http://universitypolicy.gmu.edu

COURSE SCHEDULE AND READINGS

NB:
- All readings are to be completed by the start of the class meeting under which they are listed.
- Readings that will be made available on our course website (mymason.gmu.edu) are marked with an asterisk.

Tues. January 21 Course introduction, defining intelligence

**Tues. January 28  Origins**
- Rose Mary Sheldon, “Spying in Mesopotamia,” *Studies in Intelligence* 33/1 (Spring 1989): 7-12*
- Francis Dvornik, *Origins of Intelligence Services: The Ancient Near East, Persia, Greece, Rome, Byzantium, the Arab Muslim Empires, the Mongol Empire, China, Muscovy* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1974), 3-47*

**Tues. February 4  Ancient Rome**

**Tues. February 11  Byzantium, the Arab world, Muscovy**
- Francis Dvornik, *Origins of Intelligence Services: The Ancient Near East, Persia, Greece, Rome, Byzantium, the Arab Muslim Empires, the Mongol Empire, China, Muscovy* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1974), 121-261, 300-316*

**Tues. February 18  Early modern Europe**

**Tues. February 25  European absolutism and empire**
Tues. March 4  The American Civil War and the nineteenth century

Tues. March 11: SPRING BREAK – NO CLASS

Tues. March 18  Formation of the US intelligence system
- David Kahn, “The Intelligence Failure of Pearl Harbor,” *Foreign Affairs* 70/5 (Winter 1991): 138-152

Tues. March 25  The Cold War: the Soviet Union

Tues. April 1  The Cold War: the US

Tues. April 8  “Third world” intelligence
• Christopher E. Goscha, “Intelligence in a Time of Decolonization: The Case of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam at War (1945-50),” Intelligence and National Security 22/1 (February 2007): 100-146
• Iran, Oliver Jones, “Iran Insights—Iran’s Intelligence and Security Apparatus,” UK Defence Forum, December 2011 (available at: http://www.ukdf.org.uk/assets/downloads/RS84CIraninsights-Iran%E2%80%99sintelligenceandsecurityapparatus.pdf)
• Gaetano Joe Ilardi, “Al Qaeda’s Operational Intelligence—A Key Prerequisite to Action,” Studies in Conflict & Terrorism 31 (2008): 1072-1101

Tues. April 15  U.S. Intelligence in the post-Cold War World

Tues. April 22  Current intelligence controversies in historical perspective: the National Security Agency
Tues. April 29    Reflections on the past and future of intelligence

Tues. May 6: READING DAY – NO CLASS – WORK ON FINAL PAPERS

Tues. May 14
- Final papers due