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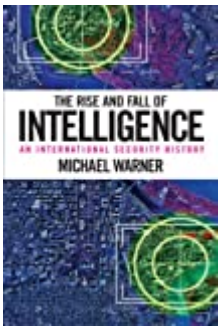

Michael Warner. *Rise and Fall of Intelligence: An International Security History.* Washington DC: Georgetown University Press, 2014. 304 pp. $54.95 (cloth), ISBN 978-1-62616-103-0; $29.95 (paper), ISBN 978-1-62616-046-0.

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Commissioned by Margaret Sankey (Air War College)

In exploring the history of intelligence, Michael Warner masterfully addresses a subject that is at once problematically secretive and bogglingly expansive. The concept of âintelligenceâ itself encompasses information gathering and analysis methods that include espionage; it also reaches to the realm of counterintelligence for foiling an adversaryâs efforts and touches on covert actions. Relating history in this area poses an enormous task, and Warner describes that âtelling the story of intelligence feels odd because it is a story that desperately did not want to be toldâ (p. 3). Furthermore, the project could have easily grown into a global history and a ponderous and esoteric tome. Instead, Warner ensures that the work remains welcomingly accessible and informative.

Warner focuses chiefly on three major intelligence powers during the modern era: the United States, the United Kingdom, and Russia/USSR from the late nineteenth century until the present day. This focus provides the basis for the bookâs arc and thesis. The first part of this arc is that security challenges including the two world wars, along with the existence of weapons of mass destruction and the Cold War, forced a fundamental transformation in the scale and capability of intelligence entities and the formation of true intelligence services. Thus the twentieth century witnessed the âriseâ of intelligence, which up to that point in history had long been practiced but typically in ad hoc ways by individual rulers or regimes. US victory in the Cold War, the challenges of the antiterrorism efforts particularly regarding al-Qaida, and the monumentally increasing opportunities both for collecting and leaking intelligence data combined to cause the present-day âfallâ of intelligence. The result is a dynamic in which ordinary people and entire states are both the watchers and the watched. Warner notes in his conclusion that âthe fall of âintelligenceâ is not yet bad, or good. It will be what we make itâ (p. 338), and implicitly a similar dynamic was at work during the century-long ârise.â

A recurring message is the interconnection and reactive nature of intelligence, since it is a competitive process conducted by rivals and adversaries. The Russian tsarâs Okhrana secret police pushed radical revolutionaries to heightened secrecy and suspiciousness that became embodied not only in the Soviet Unionâs policy but also in its own secret police and intelligence entities, starting with the Cheka. Soviet dangers shaped the twentieth century; the Second World War forced Allied nations to collaborate on intelligence, and the practice was later revived in the Cold War. Technological intelligence mechanisms developed in the Cold War shaped the tools and

methods available afterward and helped influence events marking the âfallâ of intelligence. The result is a crisp but not simplistic presentation of intelligence dynamics in history, particularly from the late nineteenth century forward.

Because the narrative primarily follows the United States, the United Kingdom, and Russia, other countries with significant history in modern âinternational security affairsâ (the bookâs subtitle) appear less often than a reader might anticipate. Israel, a powerhouse in the intelligence realm, is mentioned only once in the bookâs last hundred pages, despite the fact that this portion is about the past three decades marking the end phases of the Cold War and the entire post-Cold War era. Also, despite such security issues as its potential nuclear program, its apartheid policies and actions against the African National Congress, and its activities in Namibia and Angola, South Africa is mentioned only once and indirectly. East German intelligence activities, however, do rightly receive attention. East Germanyâs Stasi employed up to 1 percent of the countryâs population as agents or informants, and during the Cold War it trained almost two thousand guerrillas and secret police from fifteen foreign countries.

The paucity of discussion about modern Israel and South Africa is likely due to declassification issues. Scrutiny over (and revelations about) US and British intelligence activities since the 1970s and the collapse of the Soviet Union and its satellite regimes means a wealth of accessible and relevant information not available regarding many other countries. The bookâs focus on US, British, and Russian intelligence serves an important purpose, since it permits a relatively unbroken progression of documented and now declassified historical material. The book does a powerful job of discussing and contextualizing Wikileaks and other recent phenomena as well.

In sum, Warner provides an excellent narrative describing and explaining how and why intelligence apparatuses professionalized, grew, and encountered existential challenge over the course of about a century and a half. The book shines meaningful light on a topic that craves existence in the shadows.