

Societies and the Human Environment

Spies, Intelligence Communities and the Links Between Landscape and Right-Wing Ideologies from Nazism to Muslim Fundamentalism.

Dr. David M Fowler

This course explores the history of human agency in shaping political events of the twentieth century; and the significance of Landscape and the Natural Environment in shaping right-wing political ideologies, from Nazism to Al Qaeda and beyond. Throughout, it probes how the role of human agency (in the form of case-studies of spies and espionage) and the landscape and environment have together shaped much of the political history of the twentieth and early twenty-first centuries. The course is thematic; but it draws on the historical and contemporary experiences of several countries-primarily Britain, the United States and Germany-of Spies and Espionage and wrestling with the Natural Environment and its role in Politics, Society and Culture.

Week One: Area of Study – Landscape, Nazism and Far-Right Movements since Nazism In the early twentieth century Far Right political movements in Europe (Germany and Italy principally) and in Britain turned the Natural Environment into a politicised landscape and constructed racialist theories that were seemingly rooted in the “Soil”. We explore how, and how successfully, Landscape and the Natural World were utilised for political purposes by Fascist movements; and an assortment of cultural and environmental pioneers with political ambitions and programmes.

Week One: Area of Study - Human Agency in History: Spies and Espionage in The Twentieth Century We examine the role Cambridge has played both in generating code-breakers during World War II and, more notoriously, in nurturing Soviet agents; especially since the 1930s, with the emergence and subsequent influence on international affairs of ‘the ‘Cambridge Spies’. As we will discover, Cambridge University has played a pivotal role in the history of international espionage; far more so than Oxford University. But why?

Week Two: Area of Study – Intelligence-Gathering during the Second World War-We examine the role intelligence-gathering; iconic codebreakers such as Alan Turing and other extraordinary human agents such as Churchill played in defeating Nazi Germany and its Organic Nazi Community during the Second World War.

Globalisation, Intelligence and Modern Day Environmentalism What role does Intelligence and Espionage play in the Twenty First Century? What role does the Environment play in Global politics today? We examine these two features of modern day Human Societies with reference to specific case-studies; from the United Nations to the World Health Authority. Have these institutions reduced economic and health inequalities in the contemporary world?

Suggested Reading

Anna Bramwell, Ecology in the 20th Century (Yale U.P., 1989)

David Matless, Landscape and Englishness (London, Reaktion Books, 1998)

Matthew Reed, Rebels for the Soil: the Rise of the Global Organic Food and Farming Movement (London, 2010)

Phillip Conford, The Origins of the Organic Movement (Edinburgh, 2001)

C. Andrew, The Defence of the Realm: the authorized history of MI5 (2009)