

The Space Between: Literature and Culture 1914-1945

Special Issue Call for Essays

International Intrigue: Plotting Espionage as Cultural Artifact

When former head of the MI5 Stella Rimington compared literary critics to the KGB, she might have extended the analogy to include the cultures, histories, and theories of espionage. Her elision highlights the growing interest in the genre and its international reach, as it calls into question divisions between nation states and ideologies and suggests new ways of thinking about relations between gender, race, citizenship, nationhood, refugee, agency, and subjectivity. Strikingly, John le Carré has called international intrigue and its opportunities for interpretation - neverending

From legendary stories of Lawrence in Arabia and Mata Hari in the 1920s, to Borges' parody of the genre, "The Garden of Forking Paths," to Rebecca West's 1949 study of fascist treachery, and onwards to retrospective films of WWII and Cold War espionage, the proliferation of spy fictions, reportage, biographies, and histories provides a mobile set of metaphors for artists working through conditions of belonging, exile, and outsider. While Stevie Smith's 1938 novel *Over the Frontier* poses life itself as "living in enemy territory," Vladimir Nabokov's 1930 novel *Sogiadata* (trans. 'the spy') explores the émigré as suspect.

Fictions of state surveillance and secret intelligence also bleed into real politics, as with George Orwell, who helped underground translators and publishers devise ever more ingenious ways of smuggling his political dystopia 1984 into Poland, and the 2007 release of MI5 files that exposed the widespread practice of spying on writers.

This special issue of *The Space Between* brings together new work and approaches to literary, film, TV, and interdisciplinary media studies of espionage and international intrigue from 1914-1945, including retrospective representations of the period. Suggested topics include:

- The genre's intervention in literary history and theory, including modernism, intermodernism, the middlebrow, popular culture, and pulp fiction.
- The genre's challenges to boundaries between history, fiction, memoir, reportage.
- The roles of propaganda, polemics, and/or parody in narratives of international espionage.
- Tropes of spying, surveillance, voyeurism and pastiche as they inflect literary technique.
- Philosophical and theoretical implications of espionage

Please submit inquiries and Essays of 6,000-7,500 words in Times New Roman 12 pt. font, with MLA citation style, to the editors by December 31, 2016.

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