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Deborah Bauer, *Marianne is Watching: Intelligence, Counterintelligence, and the Origins of the French Surveillance State*. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2021. xv + 337 pp. Illustrations, appendix, notes, bibliography, and index. \$65.00 U.S. (cl). ISBN 978-1-4962-2372-2; \$65.00 U.S. (eb). ISBN 978-1-4962-2914-4; \$65.00 U.S. (pdf). ISBN 978-1-4962-2915-1.

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In the popular imagination words such as “intelligence,” “counterintelligence,” and “surveillance” conjure images of spies going undercover to discover foreign secrets. In other words, stories like the fictional James Bond, Jason Bourne, or Carrie Mathison tend to spring to mind. Yet those of us who study the history of state surveillance might be more inclined to picture the drab and slow day-to-day reality of state bureaucracy that involves desk agents puzzling over endless paperwork. Beyond this, we might also think of the higher levels of administration of the government and military who direct intelligence and legislatures who establish laws about how to punish spies. Deborah Bauer’s book *Marianne is Watching: Intelligence, Counterintelligence, and the Origins of the French Surveillance State* manages to capture all these dimensions of surveillance. In the book Bauer describes the origins, transformation, and operation of French intelligence institutions while weaving in some juicy stories about spies. Bauer also discusses popular perceptions of spying through an analysis of newspapers and fiction, providing a wider take on the social history of intelligence and counterintelligence. As a result, this remarkable and well-researched new book engages with many fields, including military, legal, colonial, political, and cultural history. Another strength of the book is the wide variety of sources Bauer employs. She draws from military, foreign affairs, departmental, police, and court records in addition to novels and press sources.

The field of the history of intelligence, surveillance, and counterintelligence in France, the French empire, and Germany has grown considerably in recent years, but mostly within the time frame of the twentieth century.^[1] Bauer’s book makes an important contribution because it concentrates closely on the history of French intelligence at the moment of its inception in the latter half of the nineteenth century and remains focused on the period before the First World War.^[2]

Marianne is Watching charts the emergence, growth, and practice of surveillance institutions. But it also does much more than that. Bauer frames intelligence as an essential way of understanding the Third Republic and French society in the fin de siècle. In the introduction Bauer notes that “[b]y expanding the scope from the agents and agencies responsible for professionalizing spying to also include politicians, judges, news reporters, novelists, and ordinary French citizens, we can see a society that allowed a preoccupation with spies and spying to become an important part of

the Republic's daily affairs" (p. 6). Bauer's argument also encompasses an understanding of intelligence as a part of state-building. She writes, "The creation of professional intelligence organizations coincided with a new category of knowledge driven by individuals and agencies considered experts in their fields and therefore granted credibility as understandings and expectations of professionalism grew during the second half of the nineteenth century" (p. 7). As a military historian Bauer argues that "The study of French intelligence therefore reveals a new kind of relationship that many in society maintained with military institutions and the army in particular" (p. 14). Through these three interconnected arguments Bauer engages with social, political, and military history.

Marianne is Watching makes several important contributions to understanding French politics and society under the Third Republic. First, Bauer shows how the very notion of espionage transformed significantly during the fin de siècle years. Spying went from being an ad hoc activity that was considered shameful to one that was deeply institutionalized within multiple areas of the government and hailed as patriotic and heroic. Secondly, Bauer uses an analysis of counterespionage to show how xenophobia influenced intelligence operations. Claiming to be scientific, analysts contributed to growing fears of foreigners and Jews in late nineteenth-century France. Finally, Bauer argues that the French public came to be enthusiastic and supportive of French spies both real and fictional as they consumed their stories and denounced their neighbors.

The first part of *Marianne is Watching* is an institutional history of the emergence and transformation of intelligence operations. In chapters one, two, and three Bauer recounts how the government of France, defeated and gripped with fear and anxiety after the Franco-Prussian War, began to take seriously the idea of conducting foreign espionage. In chapter one Bauer shows how prior to the Franco-Prussian war, spying was considered "devious and sneaky" by the military and beneath the dignity of honorable men (p. 26). The chapter also explores precedents to the establishment of military intelligence through discussion of the Arab bureaus of colonial Algeria where the notion of "intelligence gatherer as expert" first took hold and where "managing, relocating, and policing" the population helped establish colonial rule (p. 32). Chapter two charts the creation of the intelligence service in the aftermath of the Franco-Prussian War as the army sought to revitalize itself. This new service was to function in both times of war and peace. The new institution (the Deuxième Bureau) was designed to be scientific and include both espionage and counterespionage. The military intelligence agency studied code-breaking, weapons technology of French adversaries, and intercepted telegrams. They conducted reconnaissance of territory, troop movements, and railroads.

Chapter three tells the story of the expansion of the intelligence operations beyond the work of the military. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Interior Ministry, and many police agencies all cooperated in gathering of intelligence. This expansion which also involved domestic spying occurred under the leadership of General Georges Boulanger, the minister of war, who was a particular proponent of gathering intelligence. The proliferation of surveillance activities included the hiring of agents within foreign embassies, including famously Marie Bastian, the cleaner who discovered the documents that falsely incriminated Alfred Dreyfus. The Dreyfus Affair brought an abrupt end to the dramatic expansion of intelligence services as they came under scrutiny and were reorganized. Readers hoping for a detailed description of the Dreyfus Affair will not find it here. Bauer wisely avoids extensive discussion of the trial, conviction, and eventual exoneration of Dreyfus to focus on the consequences of the scandal for the intelligence

services. According to Bauer, “When all was said and done, the Dreyfus Affair cost the French intelligence services considerable credibility and resulted in the dismantling of significant parts of the Deuxième Bureau” (p. 93).

In part two of the book Bauer focuses on the practice of intelligence. In chapter four she describes the assessment of intelligence that confirmed the assumption that Germany was aggressively pursuing war. Bauer also shows how intelligence helped secure the alliance between France and Russia and to justify intervention Tunisia in 1881 and Morocco in 1904. Chapter five concentrates on the espionage law of 1886 at a time when “spy mania” had taken hold in France (p. 135). At this point the focus shifts to the capturing spies within France. After an investigation, suspected spies were arrested and tried under the 1886 law for stealing state secrets related to defense. However, court cases frequently deviated from the letter of the law when suspects were not specifically caught with documents. In one example, a suspect took photographs of defensive ramparts in Nancy. In another case the suspect was in possession of a French rifle cartridge. Bauer finds that it was ultimately in the implementation of the law the courts took a very broad view of espionage. The spirit of the law came to define espionage as “the intent to weaken the nation by strengthening another” (p. 156). Chapter six tells the story of the infamous Carnet B, which listed foreigners suspected of being enemies. Bauer writes here about the practice of surveillance, but also about the ideas that shaped it—namely xenophobia and anti-Semitism. Simply singing a patriotic German song or lacking sufficient sympathy for France could land a person on the Carnet B. According to Bauer the practice of counterespionage “allowed the Republic to discriminate against particular groups under the auspices of national defense” (p. 184).

Part three shifts the focus of the book to the public sphere and popular reactions and involvement in intelligence collection. In chapter seven Bauer examines the phenomenon of denunciations, drawing a link between participation in mass politics and serving the nation as good citizens by identifying and denouncing spies. Not unlike the professionals who established the Carnet B, the French public also helped to “crystallize notions of insider and outsider at the turn of the century” (p. 189). Again, foreigners were defined as the greatest threat to the nation. The “spy” types were foreigners, Jews, and women, especially “femme fatale” figures who might use seduction to uncover secrets (p. 201). In the history of women spies, it was a case of anxiety about the emerging New Woman, press stories, and novels that shaped this particular stereotype above all. In chapter eight Bauer turns to attempts to regulate the French press to protect state secrets. Ultimately, Bauer finds a lot of evidence that the French press supported espionage and published articles praising spies as heroes and patriots. By showing how the press and public came to be cheerleaders for spying, Bauer concludes the transition of spying from dishonorable to heroic. Finally, in an epilogue Bauer traces many of her themes—domestic spying, growth of military institutions, haphazard analysis of intelligence, and a consensus that allowed state overreach of surveillance—through the twentieth century.

Some of the most compelling sections of the book use stories of spy cases to illustrate points and add color to the story. The introduction begins with the story of Baroness Lucille von Kaulla, the original femme fatale, who engaged in numerous romances supposedly to access military secrets. Yet, as Bauer points out, there was never any evidence of her passing military secrets to the Germans. The perception persisted that women who divorced, had affairs, and created public scandals were also likely to be spies. In chapter four Bauer tells the story of Captain Charles Lux who was arrested and imprisoned in Germany for espionage. Lux’s story involves invisible ink,

a prison break, and a disguise. Chapter eight tells the story of Foucault de Mondion, who was a spy found poisoned in his apartment and mourned as a national hero.

As mentioned above, this book engages with an exceptionally wide variety of sub-fields. Although this book is not strictly a transnational history, in many ways *Marianne is Watching* is also about the history of intelligence operations in Germany, or at least what the French thought of them. The book's greatest strength is in putting military history into a framework that connects with political, social, and cultural history, which is where so much of the scholarly literature on fin-de-siècle France is centered. This book reveals how deeply the Third Republic as a state and a society was rooted in militarism.

Bauer has done critical archival work by painstakingly resurrecting the history of intelligence institutions for future scholars of French military intelligence. But this book will also be essential reading for students of French, German, and European history as well as the growing number of students and scholars interested generally in surveillance and intelligence. *Marianne is Watching* reminds us that our cultural fascination with spies and spying may seem benign entertainment, but its history is one of military expansion and xenophobia that is romanticized to compel people to believe in a powerful nationalist state.

NOTES

[1] See for example, Daniel Brückenhaus, *Policing Transnational Protest: Liberal Imperialism and the Surveillance of Anticolonialists in Europe, 1905-1945* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017); Gillian Glaes, *African Political Activism in Postcolonial France* (New York: Routledge, 2019); Alexander Keese; "A Culture of Panic: 'Communist' Scapegoats and Decolonization in French West Africa and French Polynesia (1945-1957)," *French Colonial History* 9/1 (2008): 131-145; Kathleen Keller, *Colonial Suspects: Suspicion, Imperial Rule, and Colonial Society in Interwar French West Africa* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2018); and, Martin Thomas, *Empires of Intelligence: Security Services and Colonial Disorder after 1914* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2008).

[2] For a broad overview of the history of French intelligence see Douglas Porch, *The French Secret Services: A History of French Intelligence from the Dreyfus Affair to the Gulf War* (New York: Farrar, Strauss, and Giroux, 2005).

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