

Book Reviews

Francis Dvornik, *The Origins of Intelligence Services*, New Brunswick, N. J.: Rutgers University Press, 1974, pp. 316.

The origins of intelligence services lie in the beginnings of human civilization and political organization; they are by no means a modern invention. Prof. Dvornik begins his work by emphasizing the antiquity of the efficient organization of intelligence gathering. In the ancient and medieval empires from the Egyptians to the Muscovites, the rulers developed intelligence services for the defense of their countries, for political expansion and the security of the state and its dynasties. These men were concerned with their own survival in the face of domestic and foreign threats; while investing most of their resources in military expenditure and grandiose display, they neglected or were unaware of the social and economic welfare of their subjects. Prof. Dvornik clearly shows how these empires used internal spying and intelligence gathering as the basic method for the control of their subjects.

In relation to domestic spying, he demonstrates the interconnection of postal, communicating and intelligence services particularly through the often existing conjunction of the supervision of these three offices in the person of the head of the governmental postal services. This latter combination for domestic purposes provides one of the two themes of the book; the second being the organization of foreign intelligence gathering or, as he calls it, diplomatic intelligence.

The book is divided into sections covering the ancient Near East (including the Greeks); the Roman Empire; the Byzantine Empire; the Arab Muslim Empires, the Mongol Empire and finally the Muscovite State. The greater part of the book is given to a discussion of the Roman, Byzantine and Arab intelligence services with the other sections providing largely prefatory and illustrative material. And even the heart of this main section concentrates as one might anticipate on the Byzantine material with which the author is best acquainted.

The section on the Roman Empire provides the background for an understanding of the organization of Byzantine intelligence operations; the author discusses the importance and evolution of the *frumentarii* from grain dealers to military intelligence unit into an internal security corps of police and spies. The *frumentarii* assisted the local governors in policing the population, spying on subjects of the empire, and controlling the imperial postal system whose importance the author, has previously emphasized in his discussion of the Near Eastern empires. Throughout this important chapter on the Romans, Prof. Dvornik demonstrates the continuity of the principles of intelligence services from the ancient Near East to the Romans by way of the Hellenistic Greeks and then passed on to the Byzantines as a result of the Diocletian reforms.

The Byzantines as successors of the Romans inherited many of the Roman concepts of intelligence gathering but they differed in one significant aspect; the Byzantine government gave particular concern to diplomatic intelligence, an aspect which the Roman Empire had somewhat surprisingly neglected, to their ultimate detriment as Prof. Dvornik states. The chapter on the Byzantines is extremely well presented and illustrates the importance to the Empire of both internal intelligence

services in the persons of the *agentes in rebus* and their successors at the Imperial Palace and the diplomatic intelligence services of its military personnel and diplomats. Prof. Dvornik also discusses the organization and functioning of the fire signal system which was one of the best examples of Byzantine technology in the service of the security of the state.

The chapter on the Arab Muslim Empires shows how they were the inheritors of the Byzantine and Persian traditions of intelligence gathering with the now common development of a combination of postal and intelligence services which Prof. Dvornik has developed as a theme from the ancient Near East through the Mongol and Muscovite experiences. For the Mongol Empire there was the additional intelligence heritage of the Chinese which was quite similar to the ancient and medieval Near Eastern tradition, in large part it seems, according to Prof. Dvornik, because the intelligence services he is discussing are those of a common imperial experience.

The section on Muscovy is not as thoroughly developed as the rest of the book and does not give the uniformly excellent treatment of the subject as the rest of the book. The nature of the publication format for the book provides the only real difficulty with the book, i.e., no footnotes, but a simplified reference system to original sources. However, the excellent bibliographies more than compensate and draw one to explore more thoroughly this often neglected subject of intelligence services and their role in an empire as a substitute to the provision of real services to the subject population.

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H. Monnier, *Études de Droit Byzantin*, with an Introduction by Svoronos, London, Variorum Reprints, 1974, pp. 672.

Fr. Dvornik, *Photian and Byzantine Ecclesiastical Studies*, London, Variorum Reprints, 1974, pp. 472.

The first of these publications by Variorum Reprints contains three lengthy studies, printed in *Nouvelle Revue Historique de Droit Français et Étranger* between 1892 and 1914, by Henri Monnier (1851-1920), professor at the University of Bordeaux. The first study is L' «ἐπιβολή» a detailed investigation of the economic and social effects of this Byzantine statute up to the tenth century. Although our knowledge of the «ἐπιβολή» has been enriched by the works of G. Ostrogorsky, Fr. Dölger, G. Rouillard, J. Karayannopoulos, P. Lemerle, and N. Svoronos, Monnier's work remains a classic of this kind. The second published study is «Méditation sur la Constitution ἐκτέρας et le Jus Poenitendi» (1900), and concerns the economic struggle between the *Humiliores* and the *Potentiores* and its repercussions on Byzantine private law. The third study, «La Meditatio de Pactis Nudis» (1913-14),