

Chronology

- c. 6000 B.C.** The rise of the great ancient civilizations, beginning 6,000 years ago in Mesopotamia, begat institutions and persons devoted to the security and preservation of their ruling regimes and founded the need for espionage, intelligence, and security operations.
- c. 3500 B.C.** Underground passages first used as hiding places and escape routes during times of war.
- c. 1980 B.C.** Egyptian pharaoh Amenemhet I is targeted as one of the first recorded victims of political assassination.
- c. 1500 B.C.** Between 1500 B.C. and 1200 B.C., Greece's many wars with its regional rivals lead to the development of new military and intelligence strategies. The early Greeks relied on deception as a primary means of achieving surprise attacks on their enemies.
- c. 1000 B.C.** From 1,000 B.C. onwards, Egyptian espionage operations focused on foreign intelligence about the political and military strength of rivals Greece and Rome. Egyptian spies were the first to develop the extensive use of poisons, including toxins derived from plants and snakes, to carry out assassinations or acts of sabotage.
- c. 500 B.C.** Chinese military logician Sun-tzu stresses the importance of intelligence gathering and deception in his treatise *The Art of War*. In this work, added to by later philosophers, Sun-tzu detailed methods of espionage that included the use of defectors, double agents, and organized spy rings.
- c. 480 B.C.** Demaratus of Sparta uses an early form of secret writing, concealing a message on a wooden tablet covered with wax to warn his countrymen of invasion by the Persian empire.
- c. 400 B.C.** The Spartans use a cryptographic system called a *scytale* on papyrus wrapped around wooden scrolls.
- c. 400 B.C.** Tunneling first used in warfare.
- c. 300 B.C.** *Arthasastra*, an ancient Indian manual on politics, discusses mining, metallurgy, medicine, pyrotechnics, poisons, and fermented liquors.
- c. 300 B.C.** During the Etruscan wars, Roman consul Fabius Maximus sends his brother to spy on Umbrians. Romans develop use of intelligence to gain treaties and scout military forces.
- 44 B.C.** Assassination of Julius Caesar; records have established that the Roman intelligence community knew of the plot and even provided information to Caesar or his assistants providing the names of several conspirators. In a pattern to be repeated throughout the ages, the information from the intelligence community was ignored.
- c. 100 A.D.** Roman records dating to the first century mention the presence of a secret police force, the *frumentarii*.
- c. 900 A.D.** Lack of records conceals facts of espionage during the Middle Ages, but the birth of large nation-states, such as France and England, in the ninth and tenth centuries facilitated the need for intelligence in a diplomatic setting.
- 1095** Pope Urban II calls for the first Crusade, a military campaign to recapture Jerusalem and the Holy Lands from Muslim and Byzantine rule. Over the next four centuries, the Catholic Church masses several large armies, and employs spies to report on defenses surrounding Constantinople and Jerusalem. Special intelligence agents also infiltrate prisons to free captured crusaders, and sabotage rival palaces, mosques, and military defenses.
- c. 1200** Thirteenth-century Church councils establish laws regarding the prosecution of heretics and anti-clerical political leaders. The ensuing movement became known as the Inquisition. Espionage was an essential component of the Inquisition. The Church relied on vast networks of informants to find and denounce suspected heretics and political dissidents.
- 1245** A Franciscan monk, Carpini, is used by Pope Innocent IV to gather intelligence about Mongols.
- 1520** Niccolo Machiavelli, a Florentine political philosopher, publishes a series of book detailing the qualities and actions of effective rulers. In his works, *The Prince*, and *The Art of War*, Machiavelli advocates that rulers routinely employ espionage tradecraft,

- engaging in deception and spying to insure protection of their power and interests. His advice, much of which was culled from rediscovered works of Aristotle and Cicero, was intended for the ruling Medici princes of Florence. However, the works gained popularity several centuries after their 1520 publication.
- c.1550 Henry VIII and his daughter Elizabeth I nurture a spy network to locate and infiltrate Catholic loyalist cells that threaten the English monarchy. The Elizabethan intelligence community employs linguists, scholars, authors, engineers, and scientists, relying on professional experts to seek and analyze intelligence information.
- 1574 Francis Walsingham, joint secretary of state under Queen Elizabeth I of Britain, mounts an elaborate and effective spy network that uncovers a plot against Elizabeth by the imprisoned Mary, Queen of Scots, who was then executed. Later, in 1587, the spy network provides Elizabeth with information warning of the impending attack of the Spanish Armada.
- 1593 Christopher Marlowe, English dramatist/playwright/poet, is murdered in a Deptford tavern after being accused of being a spy.
- c.1600 Chemists invent invisible inks, and the rebirth of complex mathematics revives long-dormant encryption and code methods. Later, in the Scientific Revolution and the Enlightenment, the development of telescopes, magnifying glasses, the camera obscura, and clocks facilitates remote surveillance and the effective use of "dead drops" to pass information between agents.
- 1670 Secret treaty between Charles II and Louis XIV.
- c.1700 The Age of Empires: espionage further develops in the numerous conflicts and wars that occur in Europe and between rival colonial powers in Europe and abroad. Industrialization, economic and territorial expansion, the diversification of political philosophies and regimes, and immigration all transform the world's intelligence communities.
- 1703 Although concepts of disease are primitive, in an act of biological warfare, Sir Jeffrey Amherst, commander-in-chief of British forces in North America, suggests grinding the scabs of smallpox pustules into blankets intended for Native American tribes known to trade with the French.
- 1776 Benjamin Thompson (Count Rumford), an English physicist whose work contributed to the formulation of the second law of thermodynamics, acts as Tory spy during the American Revolution.
- 1776 Nathan Hale hanged by the British as a spy during the American Revolution. His last words are reputed to have been, "I only regret that I have but one life to give for my country."
- 1780 General Benedict Arnold betrays the colonial revolution when he promises secretly to surrender the fort at West Point to the British army. Arnold flees to England; his co-conspirator, British spy Major John Andre, is hanged.
- 1789 Congress passes the Judiciary Act, which establishes the federal justice system and creates the Office of the Attorney General, as well as the U.S. Marshal Service.
- 1789 U.S. Customs Service begins operation on July 31.
- 1789 Congress establishes the Department of State on September 15.
- 1789 French spy Richebourg (a dwarf) is disguised as a baby in diapers, and carried in girl's arms, so he can eavesdrop on conversations and carry secret letters through Paris during the French Revolution.
- 1789 During the French Revolution, Robespierre's informant networks denounce traitors to the new republic and track down refugee aristocrats and clergy for trial and execution. The wide application of treason charges marks one of the greatest abuses of intelligence powers in the modern era.
- 1790 France introduces the metric system.
- 1794 First army air corps established when revolutionary France creates a military balloon contingent.
- 1795 Martin Heinrich Klaproth, German chemist, isolates a new metal and names it titanium, after the Titans of Greek mythology. He gives full credit to English mineralogist William Gregor, who first discovered it in 1791.
- 1798 Government legislation is passed to establish hospitals in the United States devoted to the care of ill mariners. This initiative leads to the establishment of a hygienic laboratory, which eventually grows to become the National Institutes of Health.
- 1798 Geologists accompany Napoleon's expeditionary force to Egypt.
- 1798 U.S. Congress establishes the Department of the Navy, which also includes the Marine Corps.
- 1799 Chinese emperor Kia King's ban on opium fails to stop the lucrative British opium trade.
- 1800 Records indicate use of chloral hydrate in the "Mickey Finn," an anesthetic cocktail used to abduct or lure sailors to serve on ships bound for sea.
- 1800 Alessandro Giuseppe Antonio Anastasio Volta, Italian physicist, announces his invention of the voltaic pile, which is the first battery. His work duplicating Galvani's 1791 "animal electricity" experiment leads him to discover that it is the contact of dissimilar metals that causes the electricity. He arranges suitable pairs of metallic plates in a certain order, separates them by pieces of leather soaked in brine, and creates a pile, or battery, that produces a continuous and controllable electric current.
- c.1800 Colonial rulers and powers employ secret police and agents of espionage throughout their territorial holdings, hoping to quell anti-colonial rebellions and separatist movements.
- 1802 John Dalton introduces modern atomic theory into the science of chemistry.
- 1804 Joseph Fouché, a French revolutionary and minister of police, sets up the first modern police state, and uses his spy network to uncover and foil a plot by George Cadoudal against Napoleon Bonaparte.