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**Intelligence militare, guerra clandestina
e Operazioni Speciali**

a cura di
GÉRALD ARBOIT



Società Italiana di Storia Militare

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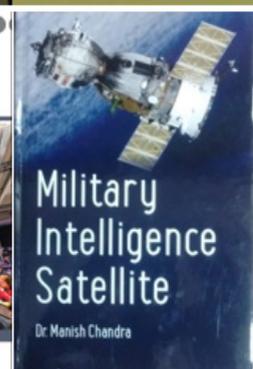
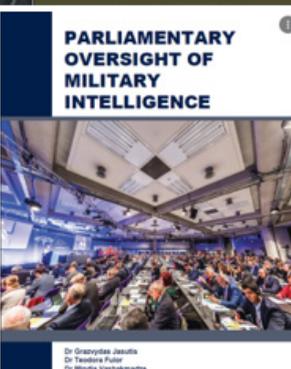
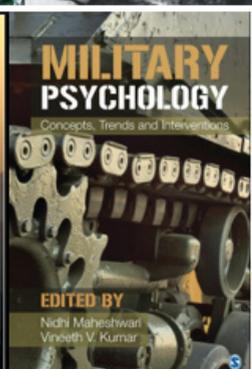
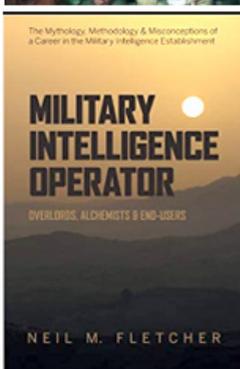
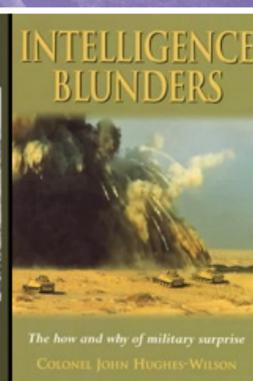
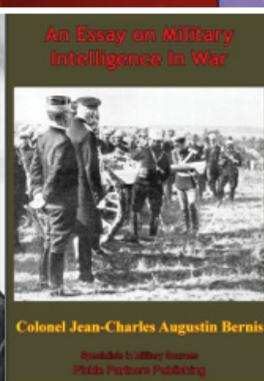
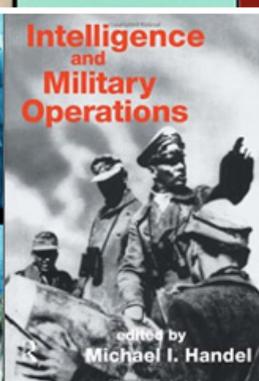
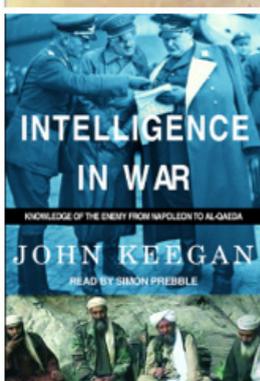
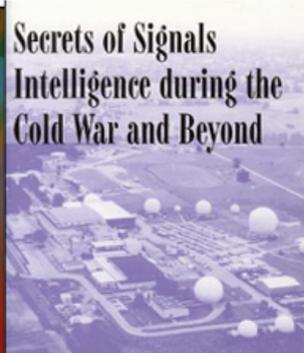
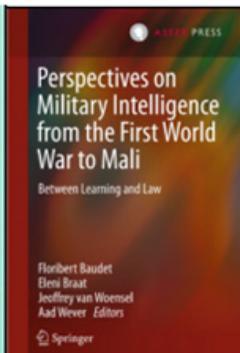
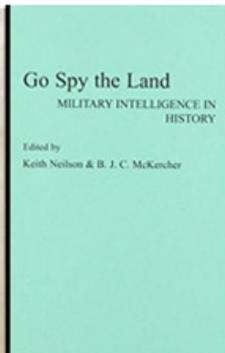
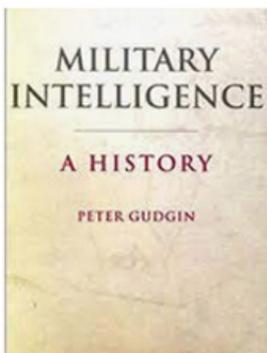
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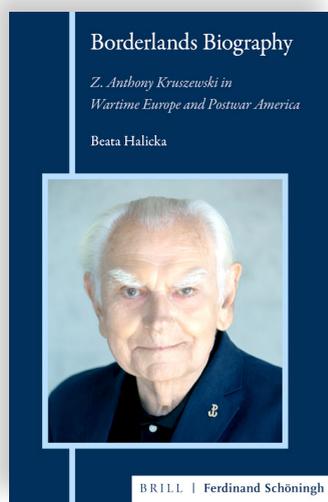
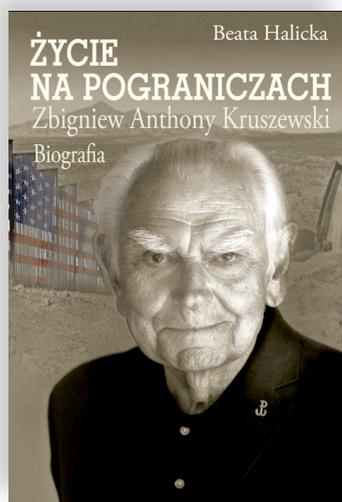




BEATA HALICKA,

***Borderlands Biography:
Z. Anthony Kruszewski in Wartime Europe
and Postwar America***

Brill, Leiden, 2021



As told by Beata Halicka, the life story of Zbigniew Anthony Kruszewski has an almost filmic, quest-like quality to it. Born into a middle-class intellectual family in Warsaw in 1928, as a teenager Kruszewski fought as a Polish scout soldier during the savagery of the Warsaw Rising, before ending up in captivity in a German POW camp. Subsequently, as part of the Polish II Corps, he found himself demobbed in Britain at the end of the war where he survived by washing dishes and studying bookkeeping part-time. Arriving alone in the United States in 1952 as a penniless immigrant with nothing to lose, over the next two decades ‘Tony’ Kruszewski somehow managed to build an entirely new life as world-renowned academic specialising in borderland studies at universities in New York, Chicago and El Paso.

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However, Kruszewski's story is not just a simple tale of 'immigrant made good' since his life-long affinity for his homeland drew him into operating as a 'Cold Warrior' through his involvement in Free Europe Committee's (FEC) clandestine programme to distribute books to Central and Eastern Europe during the mid-1960s.

Although this programme was undoubtedly linked with the CIA, it was officially run under the auspices of the FEC. Starting in 1956, it sent mainly textbooks, reference works and novels to Central-Eastern Europe in order not to arouse ideological suspicions. It is estimated that during the period 1956-1994, a total of 10 million US-funded publications were sent to countries behind the Iron Curtain, including 4 million to Poland to such recipients as the Institute of Animal Science in Krakow, the Library of the Catholic University of Lublin, the Library of the Higher School of Education, the Medical Academy and Technical University in Krakow. Although run by Georg Minden, who treated the whole venture as an initiative in building something akin to a good book club for Central-Eastern Europe rather than a purely ideological venture, it was Adam Rudzki, a Polish American activist, who was employed by the FEC to implement their book programme in Poland.

As Halicka reveals, Tony Kruszewski received an offer to work on this programme from Rudzki in 1963, due to his activity as president of the Polish-American Academic Association. As from the outset, Rudzki stressed the top-secret nature of this work, Kruszewski's wife June (Jadwiga) became his main collaborator in getting the packages of books together. In order to create the impression that the books came from a variety of sources, the sender was labelled as the Polish American Academic Association, the private address of the Kruszewskis themselves or the Legion of Young Polish Women in Chicago. As Halicka describes in detail, the Kruszewskis had orders to record detailed evidence concerning all the packages which had been mailed in the Firm Mailing Books supplied to them, and on the basis on which they were paid about a dollar a package for their work. Kruszewski estimates that over a two-year period both he and his wife sent off thousands of packages to Poland.

Moreover, it was Kruszewski himself who suggested attaching stickers to each book with the legend 'Gift of the Polish-American Academic Association in the United States' as a cover-story for their true origin. Despite many of these

books being lost or destroyed, he tells Halicka the charming story how one later turned up while he was visiting the University of Wrocław with the original sticker he had placed on it decades earlier still intact.

Of course, had the open involvement of the US government in a campaign to distribute books been revealed the credibility of thousands of its agents, above all the publishers and booksellers, would have been undermined as ‘Western lackeys’. Despite the financial support they received, Halicka maintains that those involved in the programme primarily operated from noble motives, not for monetary gain. Moreover, she points out that these literary ‘Cold Warriors’ have not been sufficiently appreciated for the efforts they made in that, since this programme was CIA-funded, it unquestionably falls within Cold War political operations on the East-West axis.

Although several very thorough works have already dealt with Georg Minden’s extraordinary programme, Beata Halicka’s account of Tony Kruszewski’s involvement in it, backed up by lengthy direct quotations, provides a first-hand account of how this was implemented in practice. Moreover, it shows how in line with Minden’s own thinking, Kruszewski wanted it be viewed as part of the ethos of culture, not just politics.

PAUL McNAMARA



Lieutenant A. FROMENT

L'ESPIONNAGE Militaire

LES FONDS SECRETS DE LA GUERRE ET LE SERVICE
DES RENSEIGNEMENTS EN FRANCE ET A L'ÉTRANGER



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