

MACHINE SPACE
MASS INTERROGATION AND LATER MODERN AMERICAN WARS

by

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Abstract

This dissertation examines the use of mass interrogation by military intelligence agencies during later modern wars. It draws from state, non-government, and military archives, as well as extensive primary and secondary records. The research focuses on the activities of the US military intelligence branches and the CIA since 1945, with empirical analysis centring on key episodes from the early cold war, the American war in Vietnam, and the ‘war on terror’. Together they demonstrate that interrogation apparatuses have been crucial means by which these agencies have produced the geographical and other intelligence needed to know the enemy and spaces of war in order to extend power over them.

Much more than an interpersonal encounter in a tightly delineated zone, I argue that intelligence interrogation should be conceived of as an extended spatial practice. The research shows that mass interrogation recurrently takes form as large-scale ‘technopolitical apparatuses’. Their political geographies are infrastructural, material, and performative. As military technologies, they facilitate control over enemy bodies and territories by indexing the geographies of both; as political technologies, they produce new specialist subjects, disclosing interrogation as an expert-bureaucratic problem of maximising data production. The study establishes that mass interrogation is not singular; it takes radical new forms as the geographies of later modern war transform. Nonetheless, whether contributing to an industrial-economic cold war, a neo-imperial counterinsurgency, or as part of an ‘everywhere war’ by a counterterror state in the twenty-first century, American interrogators and their supporting personnel continue to be confronted by the imperatives of ‘machine space’. In it, military interrogation is not ‘a science and an art’, as commonly presented, but instead appears to demand the mechanical coordination of forces against material objects by military workers, each with strictly compartmentalised responsibilities. In machine space, the collective challenge of interrogation is to process a maximal number of human sources, to ‘break’ them so that ever greater volumes of data may be extracted and reassembled as new informational forms. This dissertation finds that, in doing so, mass interrogation has helped to activate some of the violent circuits necessary to perform later modern American war.

Lay Summary

Since the Second World War, mass interrogation has been a basic means for US war planning agencies to produce intelligence. It involves the apprehension and systematic questioning of hundreds, thousands, or even hundreds of thousands of detained enemies and other witnesses to conflict zones. Popular depictions show interrogation to be low-tech and age-old, a duel of psyches in a dim room. But in practice, US mass interrogation is more akin to a modern industrial enterprise. New technologies are summoned, extensive infrastructures built, complex bureaucracies arranged, and specialists trained. In this dissertation, I explore how these systems have been set up to supply geographical and other knowledge for the purposes of achieving national security. In this story of transformation, key empirical episodes include programmes operated by the US Air Force in the early cold war, the Army during the American war in Vietnam, and the CIA during the ‘war on terror’.

Preface

This dissertation is an original, independent work by Elliott Callan Child.

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List of Abbreviations

ACLU	American Civil Liberties Union
AFHRA	Air Force Historical Research Agency
AISS	Air Intelligence Service Squadron, USAF
AISW	Air Intelligence Service Wing, USAF
AQ	Al-Qaeda
ARPA	Advanced Research Projects Agency
ARVN	Army of the Republic of Vietnam
BASR	Bureau of Applied Social Research, Columbia University
BE	Bombing Encyclopedia
BSCT	Behavioural Science Consultation Team
CAT	United Nations Convention Against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment
CDEC	Combined Document Exploitation Center
CIA	Central Intelligence Agency
CICV	Combined Intelligence Center, Vietnam
CMIC	Combined Military Interrogation Center
DIA	Defense Intelligence Agency
DOD	Department of Defense
DOI	Directorate of Intelligence, USAF
FBI	Federal Bureau of Investigation
FM	Field Manual
FRUS	Foreign Relations of the United States
GHQ	General Headquarters, British Army
GVN	Government of the Republic of Vietnam ('South Vietnam')
HIG	High-Value Detainee Interrogation Group
HRI	Human Relations Research Institute
HUMINT	Human Intelligence
ICRC	International Committee of the Red Cross
IIR	Intelligence Information Report
IWM	Imperial War Museums
JGS	Joint General Staff, ARVN
JIDC	Joint Interrogation and Debriefing Center
JTF-GTMO	Joint Task Force - Guantanamo
MACV	Military Assistance Command, Vietnam
MP	Military Police
NARA	National Archives and Records Administration
NLF	National Liberation Front of Southern Vietnam ('VC')
NVA	People's Army of Vietnam ('North Vietnamese Army')

OLC	Office of Legal Counsel, US Department of Justice
OMS	Office of Medical Services, CIA
POW/PW	Prisoner of War
RG	Reading Group
RMO	Regional Medical Officer, CIA
SAC	Strategic Air Command
SASC	Senate Armed Services Committee
SERE	Survival Evasion Resistance and Escape
SSCI	Senate Select Committee for Intelligence
SVB	Strategic Vulnerability Branch, USAF
TDB	The Torture Database, ACLU
UNTS	United Nations Treaty Series
USAAF	United States Army Air Forces
USAF	United States Air Force
USAFE	United States Air Forces in Europe
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
VC	Viet Cong (National Liberation Front of Southern Vietnam)
VCA-TTU	Vietnam Center and Archive, Texas Tech University
VCI	Viet Cong Infrastructure

Acknowledgements

It's hackneyed to say that archives seem to yield the juiciest discoveries serendipitously, and with fifteen minutes before closing. But it's true, and this dissertation began in just those circumstances. On a stifling summer afternoon in 2015, I rushed to check one last box as staff of Columbia University's Rare Book & Manuscript Library gave me their closing-shop signal. It involved a tired round of brushing onto the floor pieces of priceless documents left on vacated researchers' tables (another startling discovery). As they neared me, I hurriedly heaved a fat triple-stapled manual out of a carton of the University's behavioural science records. But rather than more university memoranda, it was a 1952 edition of the US Air Force's 'Air Interrogation Guide'. Marked everywhere with 'Restricted-Security Information', and ordering recipients to burn their outdated versions, it seemed like the cold war simmered on inside the box. Suddenly, the world of expert intelligence production appeared much more extensive than I had imagined.

That chance discovery in New York set in train a larger investigation into mass interrogation, and the following story is in some ways a sweeping one, reaching far beyond the cold war. However, it is committed to taking seriously the material nature of intelligence, which is instrumental knowledge that is very often put in boxes, stuck to war planners' clipboards, or entered into a database. State secrecy and the decaying effects of time mean that the materials upon which this study relies have now been reduced to shards of paper, the kind of data residuum that could easily have been swept up by dutiful staff closing shop in military installations in post-War Germany, US-occupied Saigon, or 'war on terror' black sites. As such, this dissertation is constructed out of many partial insights and small stories, 'bits of truth', as one interrogator puts it. It is in part about the labour—mine and theirs—of producing, storing, integrating, circulating and disposing of fragmentary documents. I could not have hoped to put any of them together without the help of a large number of collaborators, some of whom are undoubtedly unaware of their involvement.

I've incurred an immense debt of gratitude to my research supervisor, Trevor Barnes. His mix of generosity, broad-mindedness, and exacting attention to detail is a model impossible to replicate. The world would be a better place if we all tried, however. Trevor's commitments to intellectual variety, storytelling, and the force of ideas as real things in the world has given me much more than an education in geography. I must also thank Joan Seidl. Her kitchen table opened a space to formulate this project, but her shrewd warnings from the next room meant it got done.

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Occasionally it has seemed that that initial discovery in New York really was just a false start, that the document in question should have become a sidenote, not the basis of a study. If so, it would still have led to an over-elaborate story interrupting a quiet beer or some relaxing Sunday morning eggs. The likely victims would have been Juliane Collard, Pete McKay, Guille Bervejillo, Meredith Krueger, and Emily Hawes. There are no better friends. I can't thank James Rhatigan enough. He is both a true confrere, and the one I trust to tell me when not to use the word 'confrere'.

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wouldn't have opened that box, and without her love and sacrifice I certainly couldn't have written about what I found.

It is not death that separates [War's] incarnations, but paper: paper specialties, paper routines ... The War needs to divide this way, and to subdivide, though its propaganda will always stress unity, alliance, pulling together ... it wants a machine of many separate parts, not oneness, but a complexity.

Thomas Pynchon, *Gravity's Rainbow*, 1973

What power needs is not science but a mass of information which its strategic position can enable it to exploit.

Editors of *Hérodote*, 1976

Chapter 1: Mines, Grains, and Bits

The historical geography of US mass interrogation in three vignettes

This dissertation is about military interrogation systems, as technologies and political apparatuses, in the performance of later modern American war.

Large-scale military interrogation schemes—what I call ‘mass interrogation apparatuses’—have been constructed by US forces during every major American conflict since 1945, as well as within a number of murkier, though no less violent engagements. As *military technologies*, they have been used to control enemy bodies and territories by indexing the geographies of both. In doing so they produce vast quantities of ‘intelligence’, an analytical form of martial representation with certain propensities for mobility, recombination, and pragmatic use. The following chapters show how these technical systems have been used to fabricate some of the knowledge integral to performing later modern war.

By later modern war, I do not simply mean contemporary or recent conflicts. The term refers to shifts in the way war has been organised, prosecuted, and represented over the past century. Since 1945, especially, advanced militaries have tended to perform relatively fewer operations involving the mass mobilisation of industrial standing armies for episodic confrontations on ‘the battlefield’, at least as traditionally conceived. Instead, more flexible, open-ended forms of political violence are often pursued. By constantly rerouting technological forces and targeting processes, the geography of later modern warfare is radically dispersed, blurring the horizons of civilian and military space (if those spheres were ever separate in the first place). The objects of violence are also increasingly mobile, rather than whole cities or fixed positions. Targets and intelligence are to be compiled more responsively, through procedures mediated by sophisticated information, disciplinary, and geospatial technologies that further serve to abstract and disembodify the killing process. On the other hand, these developments have also coincided with the aggrandisement of ‘individualised’ war. In the twenty-first century, advanced militaries such as the United States’ frequently proclaim their abilities to identify and destroy targets ‘surgically’. Operations, it is frequently asserted, are now hyper-selective, calculated remotely and on the back of vast information resources, expert managerial skills, and legal authorisation. In practice, this stretching and twisting of warfare has retooled advanced

militaries for operations against malignant non-state agents, not just other large-scale, sophisticated forces. Often, the result is dramatic imbalances of technological and political power between adversaries. Less-advanced enemies are pursued within populations as part of ‘low-intensity security’ operations that bear the hallmarks of neo-colonial occupations. Consequently, the technology-laden violence of later modern war is frequently a means for exercising power over life itself, rather than the territory inhabited by a population.¹

This description of later modern war is not exhaustive but merely raises some of its key features and tendencies. The point is that the line between modern and later modern war is real, but not clear cut. The latter shapeshifts such that older modes of killing, injuring, and destroying frequently burst back into the present. Hence, while the following chapters are each broadly focused on a paradigmatic ‘way’ of later modern war, that structure should not be mistaken for clear historical geographical transitions. Despite the US military apparatus’s assertions, its operations have not become cleaner, more sanitised, or ‘revolutionised’ from an age of mechanical-industrial to information or electronic warfare. Instead of a single trajectory of development, this dissertation charts out a range of coexisting temporalities and modalities of later modern war, examining how mass interrogation has been reconfigured to serve each.

As such, the story of mass interrogation begins not with US national security agencies, but with the totalisation of war in Europe and the prosecution of colonial ‘small wars’ in the nineteenth century. This dissertation attends to these pre-histories in order to sketch the birth of a new mode of apprehending warzones, one that will become commonplace over the following century. However, in subsequent chapters I will be especially concerned with its elaboration by US forces from the early cold war onwards. This is because it is in this period, and under these coordinating agencies, that mass interrogation became increasingly performed as if it were a

¹ My understanding of later modern war is drawn from the work of Derek Gregory, who has developed the term. Key treatments include his "From a View to a Kill: Drones and Late Modern War," *Theory, Culture & Society* 28, no. 7-8 (2011): 188--215, <https://doi.org/10.1177%2F0263276411423027>; "Gabriel's Map: Cartography and Corpography in Modern War," in *Geographies of Knowledge and Power*, eds. Peter Meusburger, Derek Gregory, and Laura Suarsana (Dordrecht, Netherlands: Springer, 2015), 89--112, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-94-017-9960-7_4; "The Nature's of War," *Antipode* 48, no. 1 (2016): 3--56, <https://doi.org/10.1111/anti.12173>. See also Craig A. Jones's "Lawfare and the Juridification of Late Modern War," *Progress in Human Geography* 40, no. 2 (2016): 221--239, <https://doi.org/10.1177/0309132515572270>; and, "Researching the Intersections Between War, Law and Military Geography," in *A Research Agenda for Military Geographies*, ed. Rachel Woodward (Cheltenham, UK: Edward Elgar, 2019), 84--99, <https://doi.org/10.4337/9781786438874.00013>.

mode of *machinic production*. After 1945, interrogation was planned and run in zones of this nature, supplying on an industrial scale the strategic targeting intelligence necessary for planning the rational destruction of an ideological and political-economic enemy, sealed-off yet ever-threatening. Sophisticated versions were then enrolled in the performance of ‘technowar’ in Vietnam. There the US military built on experiments conducted by colonial armies and directed vast numbers of detainees into complex carceral-intelligence systems. Meant to resolve the space of counterinsurgency through information production, those apparatuses also had a geographical purpose, but viewed through the prism of modern management. American intelligence planners in Vietnam compared their work to that of accountants, with interrogation reports the ‘money’ or ‘nickels and dimes’ that underwrote the business of identifying evasive enemies within populations, illuminating terrain, and directing an economy of forces against human targets. More recently, mass interrogation initially bolstered the US counterterror state. For much of the first two decades of the twenty-first century, its agencies have collectively rehearsed an ‘everywhere war’, whose aggressiveness and indeterminate global spatiality have been defended by the claim that its violent dispensations are ‘individualised’ and legal, within regulatory limits.² This included conducting war inside brutal interrogation intelligence production sites deemed legal because they were ‘safe’, a condition insisted upon because rendition and coercive interrogation were staged as a series of spaces of medical observation. Inside them pain and suffering were to be precisely calculated. In this performance of mass interrogation, ‘sources’ biological bodies—not just their subjective states—became central to the mechanical process of producing intelligence as never before.

The targets of mass interrogation are thus military and disciplinary, bodies and technologies. Once apprehended, ‘enemy’ subjects may suffer spectacular bouts of force, legal or otherwise. But for its deputed military subjects, such as US intelligence control officers and specially trained interrogators, the apparatuses surrounding them function more like *political technologies*: their operations are often banal and normalised, disclosing a horizon of technical and expert-bureaucratic problems to be solved through instrumental procedure and improved administrative techniques for establishing control over space. The productive qualities of mass interrogation systems thus extend to the subjects they call into being and regulate, the new

² Derek Gregory, "The Everywhere War," *The Geographical Journal* 177, no. 3 (2011): 238--250, <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1475-4959.2011.00426.x>.

warfare capabilities they make possible, and the material and imaginative geographies that they motivate.

Those geographies extend far beyond the interrogation site. Both the technologies and politics of mass interrogation centre on the challenges of processing human beings in order to supply and authorise the circuits of later modern war. Interrogation systems are built to draw in ‘sources’, ‘exhaust’ them, and communicate new spatial knowledge in order to compile targets, intercede in ‘enemy territory’, and injure bodies by other calculative means. In this dissertation I argue that, since 1945, US mass interrogation has done this by disclosing series of ‘*machine spaces*’. While the ways of American war have evolved, military interrogation has nonetheless been continually recast as a kind of social or political machine that deploys industrial and managerial methods for controlling bodies rationally and producing information at large scales. Later modern war is in part premised upon the proliferation and operation of a range of expert machine spaces. Inside them, work is not as much scientific or artful as involving the mechanical coordination of forces against material objects. Their features may confer the sense that mass interrogation is merely a localised activity, a minor bureaucratic facility, while it actually is wired into a national, or even transnational infrastructure for circulating information and human sources. At any scale, a machine space is a zone where geography is delineated according to the principles of mass production: it is designed in order to direct inputs and control flows of energy, to link components together in efficient arrangements, to put the bodies of detained subjects to work, to rationalise the labour of political subjects, and to turn equipment into specialist tools. The knowledge that their use produces is ever technical, validated when it conforms to the textual rules of information and procedure. Finally, machine spaces are made possible by the ambition to yield outputs, preferably a maximal volume of commoditised units of intelligence value.

In this dissertation I explore how mass interrogation performs machine space. In doing so, interrogatees become key inputs in the mass production of martial knowledge, a catalytic conversion that has political ramifications. These programmes commonly utilise techniques for mechanising detainment, logical schemas for incarcerating large numbers of prisoners, rubrics for methodical questioning, and assembly line models for hammering out vast quantities of informational outputs for national security ‘customers’ higher in the command chain. The historical geography of US mass interrogation in later modern war demonstrates that, as

machinic artefacts, these intelligence ‘products’ are conceived as chunked, recombinable ‘bits of truth’. In this way, since at least 1945, US military interrogation has been founded upon the precepts of *informational atomism*. Dissimilar epistemic objects are collated together, sifted, and worked into conformity as tabularised entries.

In each of the post-Second World War vignettes and empirical chapters that follow, I suggest that the design and function of military interrogation is mediated by discourses and material practices of data recording and large-scale assimilation. ‘Data’ invites not just its contemporary connotation, as a mass noun referring to units of quantised and transferable information. Its more ancient meaning is also relevant: in its root form, ‘data’ means something ‘given’, a fact, an item of knowledge that holds true regardless of context. The diverse aims driving mass interrogation continually align around the larger ambition of elemental fact production, of representing war objectively, as it *really* is. Time and again we see US military intelligence agents appeal for bigger or more productive interrogation systems on the grounds that they can produce the endless ‘bits’ or ‘grains of truth’ needed to attain strategic supremacy. This construction of martial knowledge has performative force, helping to explain the ubiquity of machine space. In each empirical episode that follows, planners construct interrogation apparatuses as if they were a managed process of information manufacture. Further, its political agents and subject ‘sources’ are identified as mechanically moving components of a data machine that separates pieces of knowledge about space, territory, and politics from the subjects that hold them. Bodies and minds are subsumed into this process, which includes the location, ‘extraction’, and compilation of datapoints for entry into banks of intelligence. The importance of these war machines means that their working parts must be expertly oiled in order to gather indeterminate, high-dimensional subjective information, so that new, smoothed out and spatialised data may be catalysed. Ordered registries are disseminated from machine space as if they were parts of a larger ‘intelligence mosaic’, or a database of geospatial or socio-political chunks of verified knowledge. The ‘given’ truth of war as it is.

Since 1945, machine spaces have inspired new modes of thinking that turn those who are interrogated into informational subjects, fleshy resources to be ‘broken’ open and ‘mined’ for

intelligence.³ This dissertation explores US mass interrogation by focusing on the ways in which its historical trajectory as a technology of later modern war reimagines and reperforms the problems—and beguiling promise—of its informational subjects (interrogatees) and information-producing subjects (intelligence officers). The conversion of human experiences and bodies into sets of data for military use stands as a key imperative driving the revitalisation of interrogation. The chapters thus loop back to the specific technical and labour arrangements that furnish intelligence handling with the sense that it is a process of assimilating what is simply ‘true’ and given about war. But much depends on the contingent backgrounds upon which these ambitions play out. So we will find that these practices of interrogation information production tell us much about the changing ways of later modern war, how their spaces of expert calculation are differentially performed, and how its broader execution is conditional upon unpredictable circulations of people, information, and material artefacts of knowledge.

Three major arguments are developed through the dissertation. First, I argue that mass interrogation is a *spatial practice*. Its historical performances in later modern war do not only reveal genealogies, but geographies as well, with US forces occupying and remaking space by constructing archipelagos of expert sites of capture, detention, interrogation, and intelligence processing. These disclose their own extended and ‘machinic’ spatialities and prove again that it is not just frontline combat units that ‘take place’ in industrial-managerial modes of war. In addition, interrogation is intensely geographical in the other sense that representing the space of war is a necessary precondition for waging it. In the following chapters, paradigmatic shifts in mass interrogation’s cartographic, representational, and informational cultures are shown to influence and reflect the wider changes altering the contours of US warfare.

Second, I show that the politics of interrogation cannot be separated from its material means of production. While mass interrogation systems are fundamentally concerned with the accumulation of information, they are not reducible to abstract sets of principles and policies for ‘knowing the enemy’. Rather, they involve *techne*, knowledge that is crafted, in this case mechanically. As ‘doings’ in machine space, the practices of mass interrogation systems

³ Rebecca Lemov, "Guantánamo's Catch-22: The Uncertain Interrogation Subject," in *Modes of Uncertainty: Anthropological Cases*, eds. Limor Samimian-Darash and Paul Rabinow (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2015), 88--104, <https://doi.org/10.7208/chicago/9780226257242.003.0006>.

convolve equipment, architectures, instrumentation, and technical elements to significant social effect. In this dissertation I argue that such systems can be understood as *technopolitical apparatuses*, highlighting how historically specific political and technological elements attune to each other.

Finally, as noted, I contend that the spatial practices and technopolitics of mass interrogation apparatuses function as *machines for aggregating subjects, technologies, and information*. ‘Mass’ denotes not just something large in scale, but a collection of objects that has the appearance of continuity, an integrated body. In the early cold war, in the war in Vietnam, and during the ‘war on terror’, forces of US military occupation assembled disparate elements and people so that interrogation appeared to produce a united system of military insight: bits and pieces of intelligence of little worth individually could, when aggregated, disclose powerful ‘*truth effects*’. Interrogation becomes more than the sum of its parts. It is an alluring device for peering into enemy space, understanding adversaries and their capacities, and facilitating control of the geographies and bodies of war.

In the final section of this chapter I summarise the research methods adopted through the course of the study. First, however, we begin with three vignettes from the historical geography of mass interrogation. Presaging the empirical arc of the study, each illustrates a performance of US military interrogation and directs attention to its interplay with the broader pattern and ambitions of a paradigmatic formation of later modern American war. In this manner they activate the themes of the study, showing how they cut across the entire post-War period. Further, each of the three vignettes incorporates a didactic text—two films of military instruction and a hortative service memoir. Like military orientation, we begin with mass indoctrination, a moment of heightened confidence in military interrogation as a new systematic discipline for an expanding US Army Air Forces in an industrial ‘world’ war.

Mines of wartime information, 1943

At the height of the Second World War, the US Army Air Forces (USAAF) built a modern intelligence school at Harrisburg, Pennsylvania.⁴ Part of its function was to train new recruits

⁴ Robert C. Ehrhart, Thomas A. Fabyanic, and Robert F. Futrell, "Building an Air Intelligence Organization and the European Theater," in *Piercing the Fog: Intelligence and Army Air Forces Operations in World War II*, ed. John F.

with foreign language skills in an unfamiliar specialisation: Air Interrogation Officer. At Harrisburg, as well as other indoctrination sites, student-soldiers were presented with a film introducing them to their new careers. *Interrogation of Enemy Airmen* begins by explaining what the expert task of systematic military interrogation involves.⁵ The first step is to apprehend mass interrogation's most common human sources, prisoners of war, and to understand them as reservoirs of knowledge. As a brassy overture and title card fade, the film begins on a windswept plain, the camera panning down a seemingly endless line of marching, bedraggled figures (see figure 1.1). The narrator explains:

This is the enemy. An enemy no longer to be feared. An impotent enemy, whose fighting days are over. Prisoners of war, who by their capture have been *transformed* from instruments of destruction into one of the most valuable sources of intelligence.

Kreis (Washington, DC: Air Force History and Museums Program, 1996), 127--130, <https://apps.dtic.mil/sti/pdfs/ADA442835.pdf>.

⁵ First Motion Picture Film Unit Army Air Forces, *TF-1.3326: Interrogation of Enemy Airmen* (War Department, 1943), 16mm film, from Australian War Memorial [AWM], Accession number F02373, MPEG video, 28:22, <https://www.awm.gov.au/collection/C189483>.



Figure 1.1 Image sequence from *Interrogation of Enemy Airmen* (1943), First Motion Picture Film Unit, Army Forces.

Upon capture, trainee interrogators are told, enemy airmen are instantly ‘transformed’, becoming docile and intimate witnesses to war. Now subject to almost complete control, their questioning by specialist officers could well provide USAAF planners with a new martial power: the ability to peer beyond the battlelines by systematically ordering and mapping human intelligence. However, even with their valuable knowledge, enemy airmen are imperfect sources. The accounts of individual interrogatees are inevitably partial and potentially untrustworthy, so this spatial technology requires disciplined handling. As an Army intelligence handbook from the period notes:

Prisoners are not considered a wholly reliable source ... all information must be checked against that obtained from other sources. However, once a true evaluation has been made, the intelligence is often of great value as the prisoner has actually operated in the situation he describes.⁶

The truth value of interrogation information is not automatic, but made, an effect of labour and expert organisation, methodical accumulation, and verification. Rather than a romantic hunt for a few epiphanous discoveries, or something like a scientific breakthrough, reliable ‘air intelligence’ is a synthetic product—a mass of information—that gradually materialises out of the collective, grinding efforts of analysts, detention administrators, and other specialists.

Technical ingenuity on the part of intelligence officers is key. The training film cuts to a montage that splices together shots of prisoners staring forlornly from behind camp fences and Army personnel searching their bodies and papers. The narrator outlines the challenge:

Each of these prisoners is a potential mine of information about the enemy, though under international law, all a prisoner is required to reveal is his name, rank, and serial number. But the cases where this information alone is forthcoming are the exception rather than the rule ... like other prisoners [enemy airmen] can be made to talk; not by violence but through a *technique of interrogation carried out by a group of specialists*—Air Interrogation Officers.

⁶ Department of the Army, *Field Manual 30-5: Combat Intelligence* (Washington, DC: United States Department of the Army, 1951), 98.

Mines of information, techniques, specialists. To write the space of war, the film suggests, mass interrogation enrolls a diverse cast of technicians. In large part, their ‘techniques’ include novel and specialised means of drawing out responses from disinclined interrogatees, integrating this new information with what is already known, and spatialising it for the purposes of fighting a war. This process of intelligence production involves anything from psychological profiling schemas and curated interrogation rooms, to visualisation and cartographic tools, rationalised organisational procedures for tracking report production, and directories of reference materials with up to date geographical, military, and socio-cultural knowledge of the enemy.

To reinforce the polymorphous challenge of knowledge compilation, the film moves back to ‘Intelligence School’. In a classroom, apprentice interrogation officers fix their attention on a senior instructor at a dais. He explains that their new specialisation, ‘prisoner of war interrogation’, is ‘one of the most important functions of intelligence’. That function concerns geography, a discipline born as a military science in the nineteenth century and now taking new forms in an era of total, industrial war.⁷ This umbilical connection is thrown into stark relief by the prominent map of Germany displayed behind the instructor. The film cuts to another trainer standing in front of another map, one of Europe. He delivers a lesson in regional geography, explaining that, before commencing an interrogation, intelligence officers should absorb everything possible about the enemy at hand. In this case, trainees must internalise a martial understanding of Germany by studying its history, its political economy, urban centres, and specialised knowledge of war such as its ‘military language’, the Luftwaffe’s structure, and much more. Intelligence staff should expect a ‘lifelong education, crowded into just a few weeks’ just as others are taught the same thing in relation to Italy and Japan. America has been thrown into a total, industrialised, ‘world war’, and it requires total, industrialised intelligence, including whatever can be extracted from human sources in custody.

⁷ Trevor J. Barnes and Matthew Farish, "Between Regions: Science, Militarism, and American Geography from World War to Cold War," *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 96, no. 4 (2006): 807--826, <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-8306.2006.00516.x>; Hugh Clout and Cyril Gosme, "The Naval Intelligence Handbooks: A Monument in Geographical Writing," *Progress in Human Geography*, 27, no. 2 (2003): 153--173, <https://doi.org/10.1191/0309132503ph420oa>; Neil Smith, "History and Philosophy of Geography: Real Wars, Theory Wars," *Progress in Human Geography* 16, no. 2 (1992): 259--262, <https://doi.org/10.1177/030913259201600208>; Rachel Woodward, "From Military Geography to Militarism’s Geographies: Disciplinary Engagements with the Geographies of Militarism and Military Activities," *Progress in Human Geography* 29, no. 6 (2005): 721--724, <https://doi.org/10.1191/0309132505ph579oa>.

The film is at pains to remind trainees that the information they will produce is not for some remote or theoretical application. It is for immediate use by others in the military machine, geography ‘sternly practical’.⁸ The frames in figure 1.2 illustrate how interrogation intelligence is a kind of military geographical *techné*. They are taken from 1945 footage of the Fifth Army’s interrogation system in Italy and show USAAF officers cross-questioning German prisoners. These interrogations needed to be methodical and rapid because they were aimed at ‘securing target information on the Brenner Pass’ in order to break into Austria as soon as possible. Interviewees are almost literally walled in by area maps and aerial photographs as they are pressed into the geographical challenge of crafting targets for aerial bombing.

⁸ David N. Livingstone, "A ‘Sternly Practical’ Pursuit," in *The Geographical Tradition: Episodes in the History of a Contested Enterprise* (Cambridge, MA: Blackwell, 1993), 216--259.



Figure 1.2 Image sequence from Fifth Army Headquarters film, *Interrogation of Prisoners of War, Italy*, March 1945.⁹

Mass interrogation rarely encourages officers to arrive independently at grand explanations. Rather, the military wants new bits of knowledge about enemies produced by pragmatic, compartmentalised labour. That work results in tableaux of bounded national spaces, maps, regional knowledge, and databanks compiled from a maximal quantity of information

⁹ United States Army Signal Corps, *Interrogation of Prisoners of War, Fifth Army Headquarters, Italy* (War Department, March 21-22, 1945), 35mm film, from National Archives and Records Administration II, College Park, Maryland [hereafter NARA II], Local identifier 111-ADC-4012, RG 111 (Records of the Office of the Chief Signal Officer, 1860-1985), WMV video, 11:16, <https://catalog.archives.gov/id/17814>.

sources. However, even if mass interrogation is a ‘sternly practical’ military geographical discipline, its capacity to represent hitherto subjective knowledge as useful intelligence products is not a matter of straightforwardly recording interrogation answers. This preliminary material must be hardened into chunks of technical and geographical intelligence as, for example, coordinates forming the basis of new bombing targets.

For this reason, as the USAAF’s instructional film makes clear, the labour of mass interrogation—how information is ‘secured’—is coded as a contest that plays out on psycho-cultural terrain. *Interrogation of Enemy Airmen* jumps to a series of extended mock interrogations wherein a range of expert techniques for eliciting responses are taught. Each is directed at a stereotype of a certain national enemy whose prisoners require specific and tailored psycho-cultural ‘approaches’ in order to be opened up. In ‘North Ireland’, dignified and broad-shouldered German airmen are questioned in clerical offices filled with filing cabinets and more maps. In this case the enemy is northern European, and it seems unremarkable that information can be got simply through rapport-building, rather than through threats, trickery, or humiliation (though the narrator tells us that the desk lamps in the interrogation room are bugged, making the process more certain). The civility, even nobility, of this enemy is seen once he recognises the courteous American interrogator’s encyclopaedic knowledge of the Luftwaffe. But the psycho-cultural challenge of ‘air interrogation’ shifts palpably when we cut to the grilling of a less gracious national enemy. In ‘North Africa’, watery light filters into a clay-brick cellar, where an Italian-speaking officer soothingly introduces himself to a filthy, wounded prisoner.¹⁰ In this case, the Italian prisoner is much more reticent, less cerebral. In turn, American compassion turns to cunning threats. If answers do not flow, the Air Interrogator warns, the prisoner’s US-residing uncle may become the subject of a spurious Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) inquiry. The trick works, the prisoner is rattled and his resistance collapses. Answers flow. Finally, we move under a muggy tarpaulin in New Guinea, where a sweaty Japanese officer is morosely deferential to the point of cliché, suicidal in defeat. Consequently, in this interrogation, paternalism and civilisational hope offer the keys to unlocking intelligence from the subject. A cool Air Interrogator promises a restorative new life in detention, ‘much better than at your base in Rabaul’. To access salvation, all the prisoner must do is talk.

¹⁰ This scene is probably suggestive of the USAAF’s new Air Interrogation Center in Algiers, see Ehrhart et al., “Building an Air Intelligence Organization,” 161.

Further examples of ‘interrogation techniques’ are mobilised through the rest of *Interrogation of Enemy Airmen*. They include the most basic kind, ‘direct interrogation’, which involves simple questioning, but nonetheless requires guile and technical supports, such as the miked-up desk lamps; the sympathetic approach involves pathos laid on thick; the ‘indirect approach’ involves deception, exemplified by the use of a stool pigeon. (A bedbound interrogator with phony bandages pretends to be the compatriot of an unwitting convalescent on the next hospital gurney, prodding responses from him.)

In sum, these techniques, and the film as a whole, suggest how, from around the Second World War, US mass interrogation was represented to its political subjects as a calculus of interpersonal invention, procedural discipline, bureaucratic responsibility, cartographic skill, and cross-cultural intuition. Officers should be mechanically disciplined military geographers, providing sternly practical intelligence. But they should also be imaginative psychological agents, ready to draw from a raft of doctrinally authorised ‘approaches’ to educe answers from sources. The narrator finally invites us to ‘dream up’ our own solutions to the problems of mass interrogation. This is because, while every prisoner may present a ‘different problem’ of nationality and psychology, whether ‘Jap, or German, or Italian, all are human underneath’. As the final film footage returns us to real-life shots of crowds of war prisoners, the administrative problem is rendered incarnate:

Our interrogators’ job is to play upon those [human] weaknesses, to dig out the important formation of the enemy’s situation and capabilities, to help make up the complete intelligence picture. On this depends every vital action, from here to victory.

With these words, the inventive impulse is tempered by the systematic demands of industrial, datacentric strategic warfare. Interrogators’ ‘sole purpose’ is to ‘provide information with the maximum of completeness, accuracy, and speed’ to high command and relevant tactical units. While mass interrogation is an apparatus requiring a disciplined collective effort in ‘mining’ human sources, interrogators must think of their work as something like the repetitious carting of coal, rather than fossicking for a diamond in Golconda. In an industrial-economic world war where strategic air targeting must be systematic, they serve a larger apparatus of rationalised knowledge production.

Mass interrogation and industrial-economic war

Historians of intelligence and other national security scholars commonly conceive of military interrogation as a low-technology feature of war with origins in the ancient world. However, the preceding vignette suggests that, since at least the Second World War, actually existing military interrogation have been stamped with the imprint of modern war, which is a profoundly bureaucratic-managerial enterprise. And so, since the early-twentieth century, military interrogation has been repeatedly performed as a large-scale, bureaucratically complex, and rationalised infrastructure of martial knowledge production. I call these apparatuses of *mass interrogation*, a concept I explore in **chapter 2**. There I began to assemble the argument that the fundamental precepts and facilitating technologies that make up mass interrogation are inextricably tied to broader shifts in the conduct of later modern war. By approaching mass interrogation as a spatial practice and a technopolitical apparatus, we may begin to see how its presentation to recruits in the USAAF film as an industrial-scale, bureaucratic, and mechanical discipline—one carried out in machine space—was symptomatic of a broader common-sense conception of human intelligence taking hold in advanced militaries at the time.

But the origins of systematic intelligence interrogation as a military discipline extend back further than the Second World War. In **chapter 3** I lay the foundations for recuperating the genealogies and geographies of mass interrogation by specifying several political, technological, and spatial dynamics present at its inception. My story begins not in the ancient world, as commonly suggested, but with the totalisation and industrialisation of war in the early twentieth century. As the bureaucratic intelligence machinery powering Europe's advanced armies was revolutionising, new technologies were called upon to delineate the rapidly changing geographies of war. The chapter profiles several key episodes in the proto-history of systematic human intelligence production in war, each of which contributed crucial elements that would be central to US mass interrogation after 1945. They are: the massification and systematisation of prisoner questioning in the First World War, the aligning of interrogation around the principles of mechanical production during the Second World War, and their mediation by the metaphor and the bureaucracy of the 'intelligence cycle' from roughly 1945 onwards. Together these three historical conditions made possible later performances of machine space, a requirement and effect common to later large-scale military interrogation initiatives conducted by US national security agencies.

In **chapter 4**, the study of US mass interrogation remains focused on its connection to industrial-economic warfare but explores its rationalisation and systematisation in the early cold war period. In this chapter I examine in detail how the newly independent United States Air Force relied on large-scale interrogation for the strategic planning of a possible global, nuclear air war against communist enemies. In Project Wringer, Air Force intelligence administrators reactivated some of the techniques and disciplinary arrangements dramatised in the USAAF training film described above. This programme was one of the largest US military interrogation missions ever undertaken. As part of USAF's plan to spring into action in the event that the cold war turned hot, Wringer involved locating and mapping the vital strategic nodes of enemy vulnerability by interrogating hundreds of thousands of ex-prisoners returning to Europe and Japan from the Soviet Union. As in the USAAF film, in this case, the threat and promise of widescale aerial bombing seemingly required 'the complete intelligence picture' to be produced from elemental information about an entire society, its political economy, and military capacity. To prepare for a potential bombing campaign of unprecedented proportions, a targeting index capable of planning it was constructed, with mass interrogation supplying the infrastructural and bureaucratic means of collecting the innumerable geographical datapoints necessary to spatialise from a distance a vast, sealed-off ideological enemy.

But mass interrogation has served other modalities of later modern war too. In addition to responding to the demand for industrial-economic intelligence for use in a total war, its genealogies and geographies also interlink with those of modern counterinsurgency. As the political ambitions driving American warfare changed, so did the technopolitical apparatuses and the disciplinary mechanisms arrayed to draw in its expert subjects and direct violence against its victims. In mid-century counterinsurgencies, mass interrogation's human 'inputs' were now non-Western and increasingly victim to spectacular bouts of neo-imperial violence. The space of warfare it was expected to map and dominate was now more partial, a 'twilight zone'.

Grains of truth for counterinsurgency, 1968

By the middle of the twentieth century, mass interrogation's zone of applicability had grown significantly. A 1969 US Army field manual noted that in addition to its use in 'general war', such as described in the first vignette, large-scale interrogation apparatuses could now also

support the prosecution of newer forms of ‘limited war’, as well as in ‘cold war situations’. This included, potentially, ‘nuclear warfare environments’ but also, and more likely, ‘stability operations’. For this reason, much of the manual recomposes the technical attributes and spatial practices of large-scale military interrogation for a most urgent form of warfare: counterinsurgency.¹¹

Similar human intelligence techniques had been utilised against insurrectionaries by European colonial armies and the US Army in earlier imperial ventures. For example, in previous decades in the Philippines American forces utilised interrogation to gather information, with torture methods employed with little compunction. However, as we will see in chapter 6, in the ‘limited war’ in Vietnam, mass interrogation was put to work on a much expanded and systematic basis. This development coincided with other ‘population-centric’ challenges that beset liberal armies facing the spiralling problem of ‘asymmetric warfare’. As European and American forces increasingly encountered stiff resistance to imperial rule, colonial populations became an ever-more salient terrain for warfare and civic action. A new breed of counterinsurgency experts built careers out of the ability to report on inhabitants in detail, often using static and mobile interrogations to render colonial populations ‘studied, categorized, known’.¹² This ambition inspired several of the key imperatives defining neo-imperial occupation in Vietnam: the conduct of civil administration from a distant metropole and the ‘pacification’ of restive settlements by putting out roving police patrols and enlisting the services of proxy forces, the compilation of information about unfamiliar equatorial environments and the

¹¹ Headquarters, Department of the Army, *Field Manual 30-15: Intelligence Interrogation* (Washington, DC, March 1969), Item Number 1070317001, Glenn Helm Collection, The Vietnam Center and Archive, Texas Tech University [hereafter VCA-TTU], https://vva.vietnam.ttu.edu/repositories/2/digital_objects/74304, §1-1. By this time systematic interrogation had been taken up by US national security agencies outside the Department of Defense as well. The Central Intelligence Agency sought to develop similar counterinsurgency mass interrogation programmes and techniques, either by working through US AID’s Office of Public Safety or, especially in South Vietnam, by helping local agencies coordinate a national system of regional and provincial interrogation sites. While these initiatives are relevant to this study, and certainly constituted ‘militarised’ interrogation, they were also murkily covert, organisationally dissipative, and very often centralised killing as an objective. For these reasons they depart from the profoundly rational-bureaucratic systems that are front and centre in this dissertation. See Alfred W. McCoy, *A Question of Torture: CIA Interrogation, from the Cold War to the War on Terror* (New York: Henry Holt, 2006), 60--107; Douglas Valentine, *The Phoenix Program: America’s Use of Terror in Vietnam* (New York: Open Road, 2014).

¹² Laleh Khalili, *Time in the Shadows: Confinement in Counterinsurgencies* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2013), 43.

marking out of enemies' hidden infiltration routes and bases, the indexing of settlements according to their varying loyalties, and the performance of enlightened, calculative rule through the imposition of strict military proceduralism across the colonial state.

Once again, an instructional text provides a window into this mid-century evolution. This time the Army's 1969 *Training Film 30-3986: Interrogation Techniques* depicts it as one solution to the cascading problems of subjugating restless rebels and spatialising an alien landscape (see figure 1.3).¹³ The film begins in media res, dropping trainee viewers into a generic Latin American town undergoing attack by guerrillas (the parallels with anticolonial warfare in Vietnam are manifest). A suited man dashes down a portico, anxiously checking his surroundings. He crosses a plaza strewn with debris and our point-of-view moves over the shoulder of a sniper on a balcony. The guerrilla draws a bead and pulls the trigger. As the victim performs a stagy collapse and bystanders crowd mournfully around his body, the camera picks out an older man leaning pensively on a cane. His face suggests a secret knowledge of events.

¹³ Department of the Army, *TF 30-3986: Interrogation Techniques: Part I* (Department of Defense, 1969), film reel, 28:34, local identifier 330-DVIC-28917, Series "Motion Picture Films and Video Recordings on Five Decades of U.S. Military Activities Around the World, ca. 1950 -- ca. 2000," RG 330, NARA II. Also available online as "Interrogation Techniques (1968) US Army Training Film," YouTube video, posted July 15, 2017, <https://youtu.be/tv2yvsXrwFo>.



Figure 1.3 Stills from *Training Film 30-3986: Interrogation Techniques (Part I)* (1968), US Army.

The urban chaos and paramilitary nature of the scene make it clear that Army intelligence must respond to a transformed military geography. 'In this kind of war', the narrator declares, 'there is no telling who in a village is a guerrilla or a guerrilla sympathiser'. Asymmetric conflicts demand that mass interrogation address the populace and, so we are told, even the old man may 'prove valuable in providing vital information' that could 'very well affect our whole tactical situation'. In this case, contra the previous vignette, rather than pointillist strategic intelligence about an industrial-economic national enemy, counterinsurgents prevail when they combine the legal and governmental features of a humanitarian mission, the data collection methods of policing, and the efficiency of rapid-fire search-and-destroy missions in the field. Suspicious individuals must be detained, and myriad names and ideological allegiances compiled. However, this requires assembling strategic tools for mapping routes of infiltration and intercepting rebel plots. Again, mass interrogation can be called upon, but in a renewed form. Data must still be mechanically and professionally collected, but it is socio-culturally embedded, part of the neo-imperial burden of pacification. In a counterinsurgency, the targets of military interrogation become the identities and locations of political enemies.

To convey this lesson the film cuts to a group of blindfolded prisoners of war ostensibly responsible for the shooting and wider urban uprising. As they are led by US military police (MPs) down a rubble-strewn road, the narrator introduces the enemy as guerrilla 'suspects'. They are taken for questioning by Army intelligence in a converted colonial-era villa and, as in the earlier episode, this makeshift mass interrogation centre is at once a bureaucratic and carceral political technology organised along the lines of a production process, a machine space. Outside, the interrogatees are in prison, blindfolded and shackled in a sunlit courtyard. Inside, however, information is produced in a busy and organised modern workplace. The intelligence centre contains spartan interrogation rooms, but also filing cabinets and office furniture. Again, maps and aerial photographs festoon the walls and stacks of reports pile up on desks. The overarching lesson is one of sweeping yet systematic inquiry: captured guerrillas' informational potential will be realised when their accounts are integrated and communicated as data dossiers.

The film stresses the manifold nature of the interrogation-intelligence cycle by rehearsing the range of 'approaches' available to officers. Again, this is a procedure carried out with an innovative ethos: prisoners are psychologically and emotionally diverse, so they require a variety of experimental plans. At the same time, the larger apparatus of information production is highly

regimented and systematic, with data recorded precisely within standardised formats and spatialised wherever possible. We learn these lessons alongside a novice interrogator who is being briefed by a senior officer. His impending interrogation, we are coached into understanding, should cover a wide swathe of intelligence topics relevant to defeating guerrillas. Effective interrogators quickly extract subjects' biographies and units, but go further, mining their motivations, sympathies, and political insights. Ultimately, and once again, this is a geographical task. In a counterinsurgency, mass interrogation involves the large-scale mapping of lines of infiltration and hidden enemy cadres. The senior officer summarises the 'latest tactical intelligence' for the interrogator, tracing his hand over a marked-up wall map. The interrogator is ordered to use tactical sheets to 'find out about the movement of units ... locate supply points'. However, the superior officer also reminds him to balance comprehensiveness with industriousness: 'remember', he says, 'time is a big factor'.

The film's instruction moves outside. In the concrete courtyard, MPs pull the handful of prisoners to their feet and order them into a line-up. The soldiers move down the line, inspecting limbs and clothes, turning out pocket litter, scrutinising prisoner tags. The narrator establishes that during counterinsurgency interrogations, subjects' bodies and demeanour are crucial:

Interrogations start with a thorough search of personal effects: the contents of a wallet, a diary, or a map. From them can come valuable grains of truth. And, as often happens, a prisoner can stub his toe hard on the smallest bit of truth. What largely determines the selection of the interrogation technique to be used is the subject himself: his temperament, mood, background, age.

Returning inside, we find interrogation officers are calculating their next moves in a bureaucratic-cartographic space. Now that interrogatees' bodies have been searched, these experts select their psychological interrogation techniques and prepare the recording practices they will use to turn these 'grains of truth' into larger patterns and intelligence products. Each interrogation, the narrator explains, is framed as a battleplan for breaking sources, one designed cooperatively by the military intelligence team. Its members compare notes, drawing from their 'Interrogator's Guide', aerial photography, and maps. Also integrated into the plan is updated information about enemy space, the latest intelligence about 'the area of operations' provided by the intelligence branch's Order of Battle section. In an insurgency, much martial knowledge is

directed at producing a geography of war that pinpoints localised targets, such as dangerous settlements or even individuals. For this reason, also on hand is a folder labelled ‘Personality Targets’. It is a registry similar to the infamous ‘blacklists’ used in South Vietnam to list suspected political enemies designated for capture, interrogation, or simply ‘neutralisation’.¹⁴

As in the earlier film, extended mock interrogations rehearse the range of psychological ‘approaches’ available to trainees. These carom between techniques that are performatively humanitarian and those that employ aggression, testing the limits of legality. To demonstrate the latter, in one scene an officer faces off against an evasive ‘suspect’ in jungle fatigues who (rightly) insists that under the international laws of war he is compelled only to share his name, rank, service number, and date of birth. The interrogator appears to lose his temper (‘Oh, you know the rules of the Geneva Convention, do you?! ... There’s only one way to treat guys like you!’). He flips over his worktable and pins the prisoner against the wall. Instantaneously, a second officer storms into the room to defuse the situation. The fuming interrogator demands they ‘break a few heads’ but is castigated and dismissed. As the senior officer mollifies the young captive with coffee and kind words our narrator looms in to inform us that we have just witnessed a ruse, an expert ‘Threat and Rescue’ performance ‘commonly known as the ‘Mutt and Jeff’’. It involves alternately ‘belittling’ and then bond-making, the object being ‘to make the prisoner feel so grateful that he will cooperate’.¹⁵

This display exemplifies the way in which mass interrogation’s machine spaces discipline intelligence officers as well as their detained subjects. In Vietnam, one US Army interrogator, Sedgwick Tourison, remembered being drawn into an expert environment with a technical material culture that guided behaviour. The ‘tools of our trade’, he said, were relatively mundane, and included ‘maps, pencils, papers, interrogation report blank forms, and prisoner logs ... tactical interrogation report forms’.¹⁶ These were all directed at the workaday task of ‘listing ... targets of immediate intelligence interest’ (I will return to Tourison’s account in chapter 6). More immediately, the 1969 Army training film, with its obvious allusions to the

¹⁴ Valentine, *The Phoenix Program*, epub e-book chaps. 7--8.

¹⁵ The current US Army Field Manual describes the interrogation techniques available to Defense and federal civilian agencies. Controversially, it still permits the ‘Mutt and Jeff’ routine in certain circumstances. See Department of the Army, Headquarters, *FM 2-22.3: Human Intelligence Collector Operations* (Washington, DC, 2006), 8--17, <https://www.loc.gov/item/2011525337>.

¹⁶ Sedgwick Tourison, *Talking with Victor Charlie: An Interrogator’s Story* (New York: Ivy, 1991), 97.

ongoing and tragically real war in southeast Asia, encapsulates the kind of geographical knowledge interrogators are meant to pursue during liberal counterinsurgencies.

'*Can you read a map?*' The same bull-headed interrogator snaps at a frightened young prisoner in another run-through. 'Where are you on the map? Show me where you were *born*', he demands. This time we learn to appreciate how mass interrogation discloses the power to spatialise the dynamic locations of enemies and any sympathisers in the population surrounding them. It does so by training interrogation on the problem at the heart of counterinsurgency warfare: isolating insurgent populations from the social environments within which they are embedded. As a commander of French Occupation Forces in Indochina wrote seventy years earlier, 'the [rebel] is a plant which will grow only in certain soils, and the surest method is to make the soil uncongenial to him'.¹⁷ In the US Army training film, the young fighter is asked to divulge and spatialise that geography when he is given a pencil and a map. He is pressed into a process of personal and political cartography, compelled to locate his hometown, and identify the insurgent territory familiar to him. He is pushed further to draw the path over which his local rebel unit is likely heading but begs in injured tones: 'Please, I have no information!' But he does, of course. His story is compromised by leads from the earlier, combative interrogation and a letter to his brother, found by a search of his body. It is the quintessential 'grain of truth', exposing a smattering of biographic clues, his 'People's Liberation Army' unit and its possible movements.

The officer's forceful repetitions prevail, and the 'suspect' now spills forth a cascade of tactical information. The narrator intones that the 'direct approach has achieved its purpose', the young detainee has been brought to 'the breaking point' through emotional pressure and by accumulating leads from other intelligence sources. Now fully acquiescent, the guerrilla grimly traces his finger along his unit's proposed line of travel, from the fork in the road where he was captured, to a northern province. The narrator concludes the film with several dictums:

By repeating questions, a good technique, an interrogator causes the subject to blunder into the truth, bearing out the maxim that it is easier to remember the truth than a lie ... With interrogation techniques properly applied, *grains of truth begin to sift into a pattern* of potentially vital information.

¹⁷ The line is taken from the 1895 writings of General Duchemin, commander in chief of French Occupation Forces. Quoted in Khalili, *Time in the Shadows*, 23.

As in the earlier example, arrays of information are ‘sifted’, integrated from numerous human subjects and psychological cues. Again, this is not a science, but an exhaustive and mechanical process, a matter of determined production. However, now we begin to sense the transformed technical and political framework within which US interrogators must make sense of their work. In this case, the ‘intelligence picture’ is a population-centric mosaic, a means for neutralising an illegitimate and subversive political enemy.

Mass interrogation and counterinsurgencies

By the time USAF’s intelligence administrators were winding Project Wringer down, the ambitions driving American warfare were transforming. The early cold war obsession with planning a total war against an industrial-economic superpower was giving way to a new state anxiety about wars of national liberation. As the problematic of counterinsurgency increasingly consumed the American war machine, so mass interrogation evolved, its technological and political innovations redirected to interceding in colonial rebellions. In **chapter 5** I tell the backstory behind this transition, examining how human intelligence apparatuses were at the heart of later modern colonial warfare. The objects of mass interrogation evolved accordingly, becoming increasingly likely to include knowledge of the populace, seditious individuals, and threats to metropolises during a *mission civilisatrice*. In this modality of later modern war, the machine spaces of mass interrogation still occasionally churn out industrial and economic targets, but they are more likely to map a more ephemeral military geography—infiltration routes, for example—or to index a non-metropolitan political environment that must be pacified by listing suspects or suspicious hamlets. As the chapter shows by surveying the use of interrogation by British counterinsurgency forces in Malaya, French colonial warriors in Algeria, and in the Philippines by one of the forebears of American counterinsurgency, Edward Lansdale, in this modality of late modern war, its productive functions are redirected to spatialising ‘asymmetric warfare’. To this end, mass interrogation in colonial rebellions often takes two forms: as part of mobile performances of power by patrols roving the countryside, and statically, in highly complex, specially built carceral-intelligence facilities.

Both of those apparatuses were utilised extensively in America’s war in Vietnam. In **chapter 6**, I show how, from the mid-1960s, mass interrogation represented a crucial component of the intelligence machinery assembled to wage counterinsurgency there. Either on patrol, or in

purpose-built carceral facilities, interrogations were vast in number and directed at efficiently compiling a maximal volume of intelligence datapoints. As the chapter explains, in both forms, US mass interrogation in South Vietnam disclosed apparatuses that supported the orchestration of managerial technowar, the ‘production model of war’. Recast as a means for sparing American lives while locating enemies in a high-technology, capital-intensive strategy of search-and-destroy, interrogations became moments of economic production. According to the head of US intelligence in Saigon, tactical and strategic information reports were the crucial ‘nickels and dimes’ that made the intelligence business ‘profitable’. While, for technowar’s labourers, foot soldiers on the ground, interrogation was the way to ‘make money’ on patrol. That meant ordering an air strike and getting a hit on an enemy’s hidden location. These are just two of the myriad examples where economistic discourse mediated apparatuses of intelligence production in America’s war in Vietnam, a conflict in which interrogations generated violent geographies at an immediate and extended scales. However, as vital as interrogation was in southeast Asia, it was in the next century, as human intelligence became central to America’s ‘everywhere war’, when the violence of mass interrogation took its most brutally intimate form. During the ‘war on terror’, it would be applied according to expert techniques and principles of liberal torture, wherein pain and suffering was understood to be measurable and clinically monitored, legally authorised by virtue of its medical sanctioning.¹⁸ In this performance of mass interrogation, the biological body of the interrogatee became a source of war’s vital ‘bits of truth’ as never before.

Bits of truth in the desert, 2004

In the early years of the US war in Afghanistan, an Army interrogator writing under the nom de plume ‘Chris Mackey’ reflected on his recent work there with the Military Intelligence Corps. Today the book constitutes an archetypical example of an early twenty-first-century literary form—the ‘war on terror’ service memoir. *The Interrogator’s War* is smothered in jingoism and potboiler grandiosity, its prose full of threadbare Hollywood clichés (‘the more a prisoner hates

¹⁸ In this dissertation I place the ‘war on terror’ in scare quotes in order to recognise the contested nature of the expression and to distance the conflict’s events from the public relations sloganeering that packaged it up. They are occasionally dropped for the purposes of accurate quoting and clarity.

America, the harder he will be to break’, ‘the spy game is messy and brutal and unforgiving’).¹⁹ Nevertheless, as an authorised account, with its research assisted by the military historical agencies, it is another instructive and self-representative window into US mass interrogation as a spatial practice. In the immediate afterburn of the Abu Ghraib abuse scandal, it is also a deliberate recuperation of the figure of the professional intelligence interrogator, a vital expert labouring at the coalface of later modern war. The book finds a willing audience. In an approving review, Robert Kaplan celebrates the skills and sensibilities of human intelligence’s expert practitioners. While the interrogator may edge down the slope towards torture, Mackey’s small victories prove that it is a risk worth taking, and an ennobling task at that. ‘Sadly, it is no use saying [it] never works’, Kaplan argues. ‘Good men bent on doing good must know how to be bad’.²⁰

During the ‘war on terror’, mass interrogation did indeed involve judgements of good and evil. But they were not just moral ones, made by hopefully ‘good men’. They were calculative and instrumental, juridical and biological, concerned with the measuring out of precise quantities of violence so that intelligence could be produced at the thresholds of legality.²¹ Such a calculative approach required the construction of expert apparatuses. As chapter 7 shows in detail, during this conflict the Central Intelligence Agency’s (CIA’s) mass interrogation system hinged upon specialist knowledges of the biophysical body. Once again, systematic interrogation supported a US counterinsurgency and, as a modality of liberal warfare, it was again prosecuted through legal frameworks and appealed to humanitarian sensibilities. However, the US’s ‘war on terror’ interrogation programmes folded together dramatic expressions of neo-imperial and sovereign power, as well as novel combinations of disciplinary and administrative procedure. In an age of ‘life as information’, this included the training of physicians’ powers of somatic observation and technical instrumentation upon victims’ bodies so that acceptable (‘legal’)

¹⁹ Chris Mackey, with Greg Miller, *The Interrogator’s War: Inside the Secret War Against Al Qaeda* (London, John Murray, 2005), xxiii, xxvi.

²⁰ Robert D. Kaplan, “The Interrogators’ and ‘Torture’: Hard Questions,” *New York Times*, January 23, 2005, <https://www.nytimes.com/2005/01/23/books/review/the-interrogators-and-torture-hard-questions.html>.

²¹ Eyal Weizman, *The Least of All Possible Evils: A Short History of Humanitarian Violence* (London: Verso, 2017).

thresholds of pain and suffering could be monitored and arbitrated during harsh interrogations.²² By precisely measuring agony and degradation, medical experts were key players in the broader recasting of the extensive machine space of mass interrogation into a series of sites of clinical-legal observation.

Mackey's 2004 book does not focus on the role of medical officers. Nevertheless, it confirms that interrogatees' biological bodies (rather than just their subjectivities) are central. Mirroring the two earlier vignettes, Mackey's interrogators are once again gatherers of clues. They still seek tactical data and strategic knowledge of the enemy in elemental form. But the geography of war has again mutated. War, Mackey says, is 'no longer embodied by armies and weapons, but by individuals' crafting 'plots' anywhere on Earth.²³ Now, in addition to strategic and localised military targets on the ground, interrogators must uncover and spatialise inchoate threats to the American body politic. Of course, the conspiracies upon the homeland detailed in the book are incorrigibly hazy. Yet, even as sketchy guesswork, they index something tectonically wrong in Afghanistan's cultural and political substrate. As in the 1969 training film, individual interrogations involve the decoding of smoke signals in an asymmetric conflict. Also similar is the disparity between the opaque nature of tactical terrain and the solidity of strategic purpose. Tactical targets are unfolding, ever-contingent upon the support of a resolutely enigmatic 'population' while the geopolitical backdrop—the ultimate strategic purpose interrogations serve—is perfectly clear. Interrogators are there to identify the menacing spectres that cannot 'be detected by satellite or deciphered from interrupted communications'.²⁴ Consequently, at the book's heart is the tension between the military's 'technological wizardry' and a more analogue 'weapon of war on terrorism' that can be wielded by only the 'relative handful of soldiers and spies trained in the dark art of getting enemy prisoners to talk'.²⁵ Mackey explains that this is a surprisingly recent development:

Interrogation is as old as war, but interrogators—that is, soldiers specially trained to question prisoners—are a relatively recent addition to military

²² On the biopolitics of militaristic-humanitarian interventions in a time where life is represented as information, see Michael Dillon and Julian Reid, *The Liberal Way of War: Killing to Make Life Live* (Abingdon, OX: Routledge, 2009).

²³ Mackey, with Miller, *The Interrogator's War*, xxii.

²⁴ *Ibid.*

²⁵ *Ibid.*

ranks. Through most of military history, when prisoners were captured, they were questioned by whoever was on hand ... [it] was regarded as low-skilled labor, a tedious task that commanders tended to assign to troops who couldn't be put to more productive use doing something else.²⁶

Now, though, 'clean-uniformed intelligence troops' are called into action armed with expert 'instruction'. They possess sophisticated 'doctrine to follow' and a suite of 'choreographed "approaches"' upon which to draw during interrogations, a toolbox that has expanded since the war in Vietnam. However, in Afghanistan, these 'specially trained' soldiers' uniforms do not remain clean. Written with the assistance of journalist Greg Miller, episodes in the book include: threatening a Syrian boy with indefinite imprisonment (he was 'maybe seventeen years old ... it was a textbook case of a Fear Up' technique);²⁷ forced shaving;²⁸ and 'monsterring' (the continuous interrogation of subjects for twenty-four hours or more).²⁹

And yet, even as the exposition falls over itself in prurience and pulpy histrionics, it also suggests the tedium of industrial-scale military intelligence, how Mackey's work serves a sprawling bureaucracy with a voracious appetite for information. It imparts onto interrogators a crushing urgency for substantialised information within a constrained field of procedure:

Our job was twofold. First, we were to interrogate prisoners for "tactical" intelligence, meaning information that could help the commanders in charge of running the war. We weren't supposed to play detective or pursue big-picture questions on the organization of Al Qaeda. *If we tried to get too fancy in our reports, we'd get scolded by the colonels at Camp Doha, Kuwait: "We'll do the analysis."* We were supposed to function like a M*A*S*H unit, *performing intelligence triage* on the prisoners who came through and then sending them off to Guantánamo for detailed debriefings. And that brought up the second part of our job: sorting who was to be sent to Cuba. The criteria were worked out at the highest levels

²⁶ Ibid., 25--26.

²⁷ Ibid., 154--156.

²⁸ Ibid., 340--341.

²⁹ Ibid., 422--423; see also Tara McKelvey, *Monsterring: Inside America's Policy of Secret Interrogations and Torture in the Terror War* (New York: Carroll and Graf, 2007).

of the Pentagon and were spelled out for us in guidelines issued by Central Command...³⁰

Reporting, triage, sorting, guidelines. In Afghanistan, counterinsurgency interrogation once again loops between obviously corporeal encounters and mechanical, even machinic, bureaucracy. While the terror ‘plots’ Mackey must sound out remain stubbornly nebulous, they do not melt into air as unsubstantiated rumours. They become incremental reports. Indeed, his time on duty is spent *mainly* reporting. The (partially imagined) geography of this labour and its artefacts is worth quoting at length:

Report writing is the most miserable part of the job for interrogators. It’s tedious. The protocols are arcane, hewing to formats that date back to a time when the information was transmitted by a kind of Teletype machine, and the approval process is generally humiliating. Every report is submitted to the reports editor—my job when I wasn’t sneaking off into the booth—whose main objective always seems to be to tear apart people’s best efforts, redacting, rewriting, and ridiculing everything he comes across...

Ultimately, however, ‘there is a purpose to all this’, because

interrogators may write lengthy narratives that are nice stories but have little intelligence value. They may list geographic coordinates in a confusing order, write their accounts in the present tense when everything should be cast in past, and put prisoners’ comments in quotation marks when the arcane rules of intelligence report writing dictate that quotation marks are to be used only around the name of a ship...³¹

Filing and reporting can be as much about performance as product, of course.³² In Kafka’s *The Trial*, Joseph K.’s magistrate writes interrogation reports forbidden to be read but suggestively voluminous: ‘He’s always writing ... Such long reports as that surely can’t be quite

³⁰ Mackey, with Miller, *The Interrogator’s War*, 85, emphases added. ‘M*A*S*H’ refers to a Mobile Army Surgical Hospital, the US Army’s system of combat field hospitals.

³¹ *Ibid.*, 130.

³² Cornelia Vismann, "Out of File, Out of Mind," in *New Media, Old Media: A History and Theory Reader*, eds. Wendy Hui Kyong Chun and Thomas Keenan (New York: Routledge, 2006), 97--104; Matthew Hull *Government of Paper: The Materiality of Bureaucracy in Urban Pakistan* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2012).

unimportant'.³³ Similarly, after a failed thirteen-hour interrogation in Kandahar, Mackey wrote two IIRs (Intelligence Information Reports) 'about practically nothing just to keep face'.³⁴ Once a report cleared the first line editors, it was 'dragged ... into a folder that made it pop up on the computer screens in the Ops Section next door', subject to a 'mini-review board', another stratum of formatters who 'scrubbed the document again'. Then, it would be walked (on 3½-inch floppy disks) to the tactical operations centre where a 'pudgy older' contractor encrypted it and 'beamed it to the Coalition Forces Land Component Command in Kuwait', the 'real headquarters for the ground war.' Finally, or so its originators surmised, from there it would be transmitted 'back to the States, where security-cleared "little old ladies" would check all the formatting, click a button, and blast everything off into the ether, making it instantly available to the alphabet soup that is the U.S. intelligence community.'³⁵ At times it seems that the purpose of interrogation reporting in Afghanistan was simply to turn the wheels of this sprawling organisational machinery.

Yet, this information/war machine needed to be powered by a source from without. Through imagery similar to that of the earlier training films described above, Mackey understands his role as both psycho-behavioural and mechanical. Interrogators 'open' up a figurative space in their 'sources' as if they were not quite human subjects at all but armoured vessels. That carapace needs to be infiltrated for the routinised harvesting of raw, elemental data for analysis elsewhere, across an extended material geography of war that is also an abstract space of expert-administrative processing. 'Entering' it, interrogators in America's 'everywhere war' collect 'bits of truth' that they pass on as a 'few thousand puzzle pieces' for assembly by 'someone above':

By the time of our departure from the baking, arid plains of Bagram, we could boast that virtually no prisoner went unbroken. And we didn't do it by pretending to wire a prisoner up or using the MPs to humiliate them.

Broken does not mean that we uncovered all that there was to know. In the movies, one key evil genius knows all and conveniently spills the pertinent information in a quick two-minute stretch. Real espionage doesn't work that way. Interrogators find tiny bits of the truth, fragments

³³ Franz Kafka, *The Trial* (New York: Modern Library, 1964), 86.

³⁴ Mackey, with Miller, *The Interrogator's War*, 156.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, 129--130.

of information, slivers of data. We enter a vast desert, hundreds of miles across, in which a few thousand puzzle pieces have been scattered. We spend weeks on a single prisoner, to extract only a single piece—if that. We collect, and then we pass the pieces on, hoping that someone above us can assemble them.³⁶

No doubt Mackey's fustianism delivers an inflated sense of his importance even in this ('espionage') process. Nevertheless, read alongside the two preceding vignettes, *The Interrogator's War* suggests both important continuities and significant transformations in the production of US mass interrogation's subjects and objects in Afghanistan, especially with regard to what counts as a 'bit of truth'.

As earlier, a sense of urgency installed an unrelenting pressure for the rapid compilation of immediately useful information. In the 'war on terror', however, military interrogation included a new mode of corporeal evaluation borrowed from the world of forensic medicine. Beyond oral responses, sketches from memory, maps, and pocket litter, detainees' biophysical bodies became not just sources of knowledge but data. The expert-legal performance of brutal mass interrogation led to its incorporation of biomedical language and thresholds, monitoring techniques, and measuring devices associated with the health disciplines. Distinctions between the functions of military interrogation, medical observation, and criminal procedure blurred. Indeed, Mackey's book opens with a series of encounters of detainment, processing, and interrogation that border on the 'corpographic' in their centralisation of the senses other than sight.³⁷ In these spatial-disciplinary expositions, apprehended people's bodies are not only identified as sites *within which* intelligence might lie and *upon which* it might be gathered. Somatic observations were now an index of intelligence itself.

To illustrate I end this prologue with Mackey's own. The book's opening thrusts us into an anxiety-inducing middle-of-the-night scene at 'the Abattoir', a triage zone constructed out of a series of hastily erected pens and army tents at a freezing Kandahar airport. A cargo plane descends from the darkness and a 'ragged train' of shocked, hooded prisoners is ordered down its ramp and through the floodlit 'reception area'. As in earlier iterations, subjects are to be pushed through a space of 'processing', so that the 'human underneath' can be perceived. But in

³⁶ Mackey, with Miller, *The Interrogator's War*, xxv.

³⁷ On corpography—the heightening of senses other than sight to apprehend and navigate unfamiliar fields of war—see Gregory, "Gabriel's Map: Cartography and Corpography in Modern War," 111.

Kandahar, both reader and captive are violently flung into a new kind of assembly-line that vanquishes subjects so that they matter ‘*only* as bodies: as biopoliticized bare life’, deliberately exposed to harm and made available to biomedical scrutiny:³⁸

With a mighty *thud* the prisoners were hurled, one by one, into a three-sided sandbag “pin-down.” Rubber-gloved MPs armed with surgical scissors made them lie on their stomachs and began cutting away the rags ... The pin-down was the entry point to an abattoir-like tent tunnel through which the prisoners would pass as they were processed into U.S. custody. This is where it began.

Once they had gone through a quick intelligence screening, the prisoners were examined by a doctor. He scanned the prisoners’ torsos, arms, and legs, moving a gloved hand quickly across their skin, searching for scars and fresh wounds that might need dressing. He checked their mouths with a gloved finger and searched their eyes with a flashlight, looking for any sign of disease. Then an MP would shout one of the few phrases he had mastered in Arabic: “*Wa’ all’an lill act el emptihan!*”—“And now for the ass inspection!” ... The doctor’s probe always prompted new shrieks from prisoners.³⁹

After coatings of anti-lice powder, photographs and fingerprints are recorded, FBI agents attempt to match a prisoner’s name to watch lists. Military police ‘scrawl a number across his chest in black marker—the prisoner’s new identity’. The human subject-objects of military interrogation may now be assembled, ‘opened up’, the ‘information’ latent inside them exhaustively extracted.

Medicine, mass interrogation, and the ‘everywhere war’

By the early twenty-first century, later modern warfare had mutated again, this time along the lines of a seemingly boundless ‘everywhere war’. In seeking to wage it at a vast geographical scale, its US managers promised that new systems of intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance could deliver the technical capacity to narrow its scope to a select few enemies, the ‘worst of the worst’. In **chapter 7** I examine how human intelligence was made one of those

³⁸ Derek Gregory, “The Black Flag: Guantánamo Bay and the Space of Exception,” *Geografiska Annaler. Series B, Human Geography* 88, no. 4 (2006): 415, <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.0435-3684.2006.00230.x>, italics in original.

³⁹ Mackey, with Miller, *The Interrogator’s War*, 4--5.

expert tools. During the early years of the ‘war on terror’, mass interrogation was a torture performance, its acts rehearsed in various clandestine sites around the world. However, while it constituted a spectacle of extraordinarily intimate political violence, this version of US mass interrogation was nonetheless still a moment in humanitarian liberal warfare. As such, it was premised not on the exclusion of violence but its expert regulation, measurement, and adjudication in calculative machine spaces. For this reason, the torture stage was occupied by a diverse cast of expert disciplinarians employed to ensure that brutal interrogations worked *through* law. To do this, chapter 7 shows, legal questions were translated into medical decisions, and the torture chamber was remade as a space of clinical observation.

As Melinda Cooper argues, this was a period in which the technical and discursive boundaries separating biomedicine and war were rapidly dissolving, hitherto discernible domains becoming blurred beyond recognition not just through institutional associations but subtler ‘conceptual exchanges’.⁴⁰ While Mackey’s ramshackle intelligence centres and filing posts do not permit the kind of detailed apparatuses offering to bring subjects into a ‘*molecular gaze*’, the emphasis on the surgical management of bodies as fields of intelligence certainly hints at the transformation of knowledge practices within interrogation. Mackey’s account provides an early insight into the ways in which military interrogation became an inflection point in this broader articulation of geopolitics, biomedical expertise, and the anatomo-politics of bodies in war. Yet, as we find in chapter 7, practices of state secrecy mean that some of the procedures, tools, and institutional passageways through which these counterterror interrogation systems ‘made life live’ for specific instrumental purposes are only now becoming available to documentary analysis.⁴¹ Recently released internal documents show that in the military and the CIA, security and biomedical technologies were joined in such a way that interrogation sometimes even played out as a process of knowledge accumulation on a bio-informational field. Not only did medical personnel contribute their skills and knowledge, but the entire mechanical, mass military interrogation procedure took on the qualities of *industrialised war medicine*. Indeed, Mackey

⁴⁰ Melinda Cooper, "Pre-Emptying Emergence: The Biological Turn in the War on Terror," *Theory, Culture & Society* 23, no. 4 (2006), 114, <https://doi.org/10.1177/0263276406065121>.

⁴¹ On the articulation of geopolitics and the biopolitics see Bruce Braun, "Governing Disorder: Biopolitics and the Molecularization of Life," in *Global Political Ecology* edited by Richard Peet, Paul Robbins and Michael J Watts, (Abingdon: Routledge, 2011), 389--411.

described his system as a kind of ‘intelligence triage’, with his interrogation team functioning ‘like a M*A*S*H unit’.⁴²

As in earlier incarnations, in Afghanistan, the interrogated body is a site of evidence production. Now, however, interrogation’s ‘bits of truth’ have altered in kind. Sources are ‘construed and constructed informationally’, as ‘biohumans’ to be monitored and mediated by the datacentric tools and languages of the securitised human sciences.⁴³ For this reason, after being moved from Kandahar, Moazzam Begg wrote that interrogation in Guantánamo Bay extended beyond oral questioning, becoming an extended regime of ceaseless observation and logging:

The soldier sitting guarding me meticulously recorded in the logbook every move I made. When the soldiers came on duty, they picked up the book and began noting every detail: each time I ate, slept, used the latrine, went for recreation and showered, read the Quran, had a medical visit, had an interrogatory visit or made any requests, or complaints—which I seldom did.⁴⁴

Mohamedou Ould Slahi was another subject of perpetual interrogation and observation in America’s everywhere war, first in Bagram and then Guantánamo. He also experienced intelligence triage, describing being thrown into a system reminiscent of a ‘car production line’. As in earlier periods, it was a rationalised, infrastructural system of information compilation: like Joseph K.’s magistrate, ‘interrogators always want to write’, Slahi discovered. And it is not incidental that he recalled how, in the ‘war on terror’ system, informational subjects

⁴² Mackey, with Miller, *The Interrogator’s War*, 85. It is worth pointing out that during the ‘war on terror’ it was not uncommon for US interrogators in Afghanistan to submit subjects to questioning during periods of hospital convalescence or even during surgeries, see Laurel E. Fletcher and Eric Stover, *The Guantánamo Effect: Exposing the Consequences of U.S. Detention and Interrogation Practices* (Berkeley, CA: University of California, 2009), 36. Mackey (pp. 445–447) also claimed that his team deliberately aimed to question wounded prisoners when they were recuperating in military trauma wards. Here, we learn that interrogation schemes sometimes reflected the contours and tempos of an orderly hospital itself.

⁴³ Dillon and Reid, *The Liberal Way of War*, 22–23.

⁴⁴ Moazzam Begg with Victoria Brittain, *Enemy Combatant: A British Muslim’s Journey to Guantanamo and Back* (London: The Free Press, 2006), 204.

‘experienced the first interrogation inside the clinic’. Rather than maps and psychological approaches, the first tools utilised were a ‘medical check’ and a ‘biological description’.⁴⁵

The three vignettes and chapter synopses above suggest that a recognisable pattern obtains across the last seventy-five years of US mass interrogation operations. Clearly it is a remarkably adaptable apparatus whose complexion has shifted as a variety of disciplinary, political, carceral, and information technologies are aligned in the pursuit of new kinds of knowledge. But while its specific techno-discursive arrangements have evolved significantly, they have continued to serve an enduring strategic ambition. In each phase of American war, interrogation information is conceived of in a broadly similar way: as elemental ‘bits’ of intelligence which radiate out of machinic spaces. Human intelligence is an apparatus understood to require the organisation of an industrial process of production. Data, human sources, and administrative channels are to be rationalised and logically arranged, imagined as synchronised assembly lines or managerially rationalised systems. In each case, intelligence fabrication requires engaging with sources on a psycho-cultural terrain in order to ‘extract’ materials for writing the space of war and for illuminating strategic blind spots—the organisational structure of enemies, their geographies, territories, intentions, capabilities, and more.

As information that is at once *analytical* and *representational*, interrogation intelligence simultaneously decomposes and synthesises. It breaks subjects and accounts down into constituent elements, rebuilding them as new pieces of the picture-puzzle of war for superiors to consume. This technical and informational culture has performative effects. The constellations of people, objects, and concepts that make up mass interrogation systems are guided by ideas and technologies mediated by the image of a mosaic or a volumetric assemblage of elements. In the following chapters I present a historical geography of this particular military approach that identifies human subjects as ‘mines of information’—containers filled with ‘grains’ or ‘bits’ of ‘truth’—that must be collected and recombined in order to write military geography and win a

⁴⁵ Mohamedou Ould Slahi, *Guantánamo Diary: The Fully Restored Text*, edited by Larry Siems (Edinburgh: Canongate, 2017), 33, 120.

war. To approach such a heterogenous and long-enduring practice, the next chapter lays the foundation for examining the historical geography of mass interrogation despite its radically contingent nature. As a specific technopolitical apparatus, rather than an abstract event essential to war in general, we may understand how military interrogation discloses a range of spatial practices and recurrent, yet overdetermined, disciplinary features.

Methods

The following study is a wide-ranging analysis of mass interrogation in later modern war, beginning in the early twentieth century. The bulk of the original research is dedicated to the three historical geographical episodes in chapters 4, 6, and 7, with most of the primary material sourced from military and state archives. Those chapters examine in detail how US military agencies assembled complex sociotechnical systems for producing vast quantities of human intelligence in three distinct conflicts. In all cases, however, mass interrogation apparatuses are bureaucratic and machinic collectives. This means that all the following chapters—including the more synthetic analyses provided in chapters 2, 3, and 5—are the product of extensive documentary research. Analysed together, these documents do not convey a linear or integrated political history of mass interrogation. Rather, to capture the historical geography of a concrete practice the sources are presented with their rough edges intact.

A certain degree of untidiness is perhaps inevitable when drawing from military intelligence archives. After all, they are especially utilitarian state repositories, the remnants of practical actions that aren't curated for public viewing. In addition, the administrative density and technicalisation of later modern war extends to its archiving practices. Many collections rarely admit the kind of loquacious 'writerly forms' that might reveal moments of personal reflection on the part of the agents of US imperial rule.⁴⁶ Secrecy, poor documentation, and excision renders many collections irremediably partial, spoiling most attempts to infer the precise decision-making processes that animate the work of war. In many cases, the records of principal coordinators are clearly missing while a huge quantity of bureaucratic traffic remains in

⁴⁶ On the 'writerly forms' of empire, and what they may reveal about its managers dispositions, see Ann Laura Stoler, *Along the Archival Grain* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2009).

the form of unexpurgated and seemingly authorless piles of mundane memoranda, schedules, and work slips.

At times, this material provides a deep, but disobedient historical humus. Nevertheless, in some rare cases, the plans for mass interrogation apparatuses are open to public viewing. This is literally the case with regards to the sections describing the Combined Military Interrogation Center in Saigon, the sketched schematics for which are published for the first time in chapter 6. For systems constructed earlier on, however, such as the Wringer programme (described in chapter 4), US military agencies were subject to less centralised administrative and record keeping regulations. In this case, the record is patchier, and gaps must be filled by drawing material together from several archival collections and secondary sources. Very recent initiatives often remain obscured by secrecy rules. For example, some of the key materials informing the analysis of the CIA's 'war on terror' interrogation practices in chapter 7 have only been recently declassified, and many of the most damning remain hidden or have been destroyed.

However, the empirical episodes in this dissertation also focus attention on routine documents out of methodological conviction. In 1924 the Irish portraitist, Patrick Tuohy, warned his subject to sit still so that he might better capture 'his soul'. The sitter, James Joyce, was a writer of earthy detail who found such lofty talk irksome. 'Never mind my soul, Tuohy', he replied, 'just make sure you get my tie right.'⁴⁷ For Joyce, it was worth treating abstractions with a heavy dose of scepticism, particularly when they seemed to be arrived at following easy detour around the banal routines and contradictory, fleshy facts of life. Speculation was a privilege won through the hard graft of noticing a mountain of precise minutiae.

The genealogical-historical method demands a similar attention to minute particulars. Michel Foucault famously reactivated Nietzsche's claim that, rather than there being 'a timeless and essential secret' to larger truths (or something like a soul), reason has a history and it is 'born in altogether "reasonable" fashion—from chance'.⁴⁸ Because regimes of knowledge are mutable, he argued, it is safe to assume that they never simply arrive on the scene fully-assembled. Rather, they permeate out into the world as an accretion of 'apparently insignificant truths', the result of endless and haphazard conflicts. For Foucault, genealogical study was about

⁴⁷ Declan Kiberd, introduction to *Ulysses*, by James Joyce (London: Penguin Classics, 2000), xvi.

⁴⁸ Michel Foucault, "Nietzsche, Genealogy, History," in *The Foucault Reader: An Introduction to Foucault's Thought*, ed. Paul Rabinow (London: Penguin, 1991), 76--77.

seeing history as a process of ‘long baking’, finding out how truth hardens into a form that is ostensibly unalterable.⁴⁹ Given that its power is largely a function of its contingent capacities to produce and organise truth, a genealogical approach demands we paint the apparatus of mass interrogation in fine brushstrokes. Rather than racing to ‘capture the soul’, we should focus on putting down a multitude of precise brushstrokes.

Such an approach, Foucault warned, requires that a researcher plunge into a ‘vast accumulation of source material’. Only then can one patiently draw out the numerous ‘insignificant truths’ through which knowledge and power ‘becomes’. Indeed, it will become clear that mass interrogation apparatuses do not just produce records but are themselves edifices of administrative correspondence, templates, doctrinal procedures, and dry legal frameworks. Focusing on their production allows us to notice the modest initiatives, errors and ‘faulty calculations’ that go into assembling modern military apparatuses of truth and power.

Recently, several scholars have suggested that such a disposition is particularly vital to researching the dynamics of modern war.⁵⁰ Modern war is, they argue, especially resistant to transhistorical regularities or normative framings because it is radically dispersive, inherently destructive, uncertain. This means that it is reinvented whenever it is practiced and so must be assessed by adopting a radically open-ended approach, which they label ‘martial empiricism’.

‘Empiricism’—the philosophy that sanctions new knowledge only when phenomena is observed with scientific rigour and through the senses—is surely the wrong term in this context. A critical *empirical* study of war, however, does involve suspending abstract propositions about its causes and ideal principles in favour of examining how it ‘becomes’. That is, how its ‘various bodies, objects, ideas, practices and affects’ concatenate in broader formations of collective violence.⁵¹ Such an approach promises to capture how war is at once chaos and beautiful planning. It offers some methodological direction for understanding this paradox as it seems to manifest in the archives. Most important, it suggests that we approach how modern apparatuses enact warfare in some sense ‘by design’, while yet never quite operating as ‘tools’ with predictable effects. Patently, military action unfolds indeterminately, in relation to the social and

⁴⁹ Foucault, "Nietzsche, Genealogy, History," 79.

⁵⁰ Antoine Bousquet, Jairus Grove, and Nisha Shah, "Becoming War: Towards a Martial Empiricism," *Security Dialogue*, 51, no. 2--3 (2020): 99--118, <https://doi.org/10.1177%2F0967010619895660>.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, 5.

political orders that surround and inspire it. Accordingly, the following chapters approach the records of mass interrogation not just as descriptions of it, but as functional to it, part of its broader ‘instrumentality’.⁵²

This is simply to say that the insignificant truths of military bureaucracy are part of history’s long baking process, not merely signifiers of some deeper logic. Because they remake the socio-political contexts in which they describe, the archival forms of American military power will be the primary objects of empirical attention in chapters 4, 6, and 7. In chapter 4, that process centres on the complex stenographic production of target codes and indexes by means of disciplined interrogation. Materials related to the USAF’s Project Wringer and the Bombing Encyclopedia system were sourced from several repositories. The most important were the US National Archives II facility in College Park, Maryland (hereafter, ‘NARA II’) and the records of the Air Force Historical Research Agency (AFHRA), located at Maxwell Air Force Base, Alabama. Some materials on the contributions of contracted behavioural scientists to the Wringer effort were also found in the Columbia University Archives. As well, several crucial military documents otherwise seemingly missing from state archives (such as USAF’s ‘Air Interrogation Guide’) were located in this university collection, indicating how much can be gained by shuttling between a variety of collections.

In chapter 6, I explore several modalities of military interrogation as performed during the long American war in Vietnam. This episode moves between empirical sites, from highly structured strategic interrogations in Saigon to mobile, tactical intelligence production ‘in the field’ and on patrols. The central thematic is the way in which US mass interrogation during this conflict was heavily mediated by metaphors and logical presuppositions that identified circuits of reports and human sources as part of a swirling economy of information that must be submitted to the rationalising techniques of modern scientific management. The bulk of the archival research for this study was carried out at NARA II and through the digitised Vietnam Center Archive, at Texas Tech University. This research was supplemented by examination of several important contemporaneous texts by prominent military intelligence agents and interviews conducted with two former employees of the RAND Corporation, Joseph Carrier and Ralph Strauch in 2017. Their contributions were originally planned to support a study of RAND’s own

⁵² Ibid., 7.

prisoner interrogation programme in South Vietnam, but which could not be completed as part of this research programme. Their insights were nonetheless very important for framing my conception of the purpose and administration of interrogation during America's war in Vietnam.

In chapter 7 the story moves to the CIA's use of medical personnel to guarantee the 'safety' of its 'war on terror' torture archipelago. The pressing matter at hand is the ways in which their clinical observations and recordings were vital to the calibration of putatively 'legal' thresholds of pain and suffering as interrogational torture was meted out. The key records here were sourced from the American Council of Civil Liberties' extraordinary digital Torture Database. Most vitally, two recently declassified texts are examined in detail for the first time. They are the CIA Office of Medical Services' (OMS's) guidelines for medical officers and the OMS chief's reflections on participation in the torture program. The former is reproduced in truncated form as appendix A. As well, a dispersed state archive of the 'war on terror' interrogation apparatus is now effectively available in the form of numerous and lengthy state and military investigations. A range of studies are referred to in this chapter, but the most crucial 'archival' document remains the declassified executive summary of the Senate Select Committee for Intelligence's study of the CIA's detention and interrogation programme, released in 2014.

For Ann Laura Stoler, all these documents are 'diacritics' of empire.⁵³ They disclose not just what was accounted for explicitly as administrative action but something about the nature of rule itself, the dispositions it engenders, and social imaginaries that inhered in practices of management. Treating archives as indexes of rule, rather than simply accumulations of documents, encourages us to attach an ethnographic sensibility to a martial empiricist approach. The documents treated in the following chapters are those that empire has left behind. Far from simply sources to be mined for their text, their shape and form also conveys something about how warfare was supposed to become, and where it was supposed to be directed. As Stoler argues, 'state sovereignty resides in the power to designate arbitrary social facts of the world as matters of security and concerns of state'.⁵⁴ Even if the data-filled records of late modern military intelligence may be among the driest and most atomistically reductive inscriptions, as managerial filing systems they nonetheless show how 'facticities' are produced and meant to be

⁵³ Stoler, *Along the Archival Grain*, 7.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, 26.

consumed, the contingent assemblages that coordinate information, and the grids of intelligibility that allow the space of war to come into view.⁵⁵

⁵⁵ Ibid., 33.

Chapter 2: Machine Space

The technopolitical apparatus of mass interrogation

No physical or mental torture, nor any other form of coercion, may be inflicted on prisoners of war to secure from them information of any kind whatever. Prisoners of war who refuse to answer may not be threatened, insulted, or exposed to any unpleasant or disadvantageous treatment of any kind.⁵⁶

Geneva Convention Relative to the Treatment of Prisoners of War

Be this as it may, a State which has captured prisoners of war will always try to obtain military information from them. Such attempts are not forbidden; the present paragraph covers only the methods to which it expressly refers.⁵⁷

The Geneva Conventions of 12 August 1949: Commentary 1960, International Committee of the Red Cross

The vignettes in chapter 1 suggest that mass interrogation systems gather political force when they corral hundreds, or even thousands, of subjects and disparate materials into productive order. The result is the supply of intelligence to war planners, analytical information that can be used to extend military power through improved knowledge of enemies and control over space. In many orthodox studies, this capacity is explained by reference to interrogation's rational 'techniques' and tools. Advanced militaries, we are often told, compile accurate intelligence because they have access to a panoply of expert systems and policies for deploying them in a logical manner. In such accounts, military interrogation is conceived of in essentialist terms. By

⁵⁶ *Geneva Convention Relative to the Treatment of Prisoners of War*, August 12, 1949, 75 U.N.T.S. 135, article 17, paragraph four, <https://ihl-databases.icrc.org/ihl/full/GCIII-commentary>.

⁵⁷ Jean Pictet, ed., *The Geneva Conventions of 12 August 1949: Commentary* (Geneva: International Committee of the Red Cross, 1960), 163, <https://ihl-databases.icrc.org/ihl/full/GCIII-commentary>.

that is meant that certain characteristics are deemed intrinsic to it regardless of time and place. As the following section explains, in certain expert discourses this approach is taken for granted, with interrogation defined by reference to timeless, universal features. Its power to produce true knowledge depends on its agents' abilities to capture and represent the world as it really is, 'tiny bits of the truth', as Chris Mackey put it. One consequence of essentialism is that military practices become imbued with inherent, singular qualities. They may deliver 'better' results, or 'bad' intelligence, but the basic forms and ideas that make war up seem to pre-exist in essence their emergence in practice.

Throughout this dissertation I will trouble this notion by adopting a non-essentialist approach to the practices of war. It does not start by describing interrogation with reference to logical propositions about what its forms are in an abstract, transhistorical sense. Rather, a non-essentialist conception of the ideas and practices of war regards them as much more circumstantial and prone to accident. They are whatever their practitioners effectively claim they are, their truth power is contextual, and their forms do not precede their performance.

Such an approach helps to explain the radical contingency that pervades the vignettes in chapter 1. While these systems exhibit a range of recurring features, rather than a single 'technique' whose disciplinary elements have become more refined over time, they suggest that mass interrogation has transformed in fundamental ways. What counts as salient 'bits of the truth' and expert practice for collecting them varies enormously over time and space. Their power to yield 'actionable intelligence'—rational, abstract knowledge about battlefields and enemies—evolves in tandem with the broader changes reshaping the political geographies of war. To understand these processes of reinvestment we must examine how intelligence interrogation—an idea as well as a set of military practices—is endowed with the capacity to produce truths in war even as its technologies, cultural frameworks, specialist languages, and spatial circuits constantly break down and reorganise. The historical contingency of truth and the more determinate nature of material warfare must be held together.

In addition to providing contextual background, the following chapters offer three key empirical episodes, each focusing on a performance of mass interrogation by US agencies. A non-essentialist approach allows us to get inside them, to understand how the idea of interrogation itself is remade every time it is put into action. Rather than progressively modernising manifestations of a single policy, or an integrated set of procedures recurring over

time, I examine them as discrete ‘technopolitical apparatuses’. This conceptual device offers a means for simultaneously attending to the enduring features of US military interrogation while allowing for significant contingency. The idea of a technopolitical apparatus identifies a military (and other) system not as a timeless solution to an ancient problem, but an overdetermined assemblage of ideas, expert discourses, spatial practices, and technical supports. Their conceptual frameworks and subjectivation processes are historically and geographically conditioned. At the same time, constructed repeatedly by US national security agencies during wars, I argue that mass interrogation apparatuses disclose a recognisable series of *performative geographies*. Most notably, the vignettes in chapter 1 introduced us to the ‘machine spaces’ that they set in motion, their tendency to bring into being architectures, processes, and procedures for mechanically ‘processing’ many human subjects and manufacturing into hard intelligence the subject materials hitherto enclosed within them.

This genealogical approach is not how intelligence interrogation is conventionally analysed. By way of context, the next two sections summarise its predominant constructions in two specialist fields: orthodox military studies and international humanitarian law. These expert registers identify some of the crucial technical and institutional characteristics of mass interrogation. However, both largely take the concept of military interrogation for granted, abstracting its principles and ideals out of time and space. Consequently, while the two fields tell us much about the technical features of military interrogation programmes—or mandate how they should be practiced—we discover little about the historical and geographical conditions of possibility for its emergence as a form of expertise in modern war. The fourth section addresses this problem by arguing that interrogation intelligence is a ‘situated’ form of knowledge. Mass interrogation systems are particularly powerful means by which modern states, and their armies and experts, produce and wield truth in war. The intelligence they produce should not be taken for granted as mere data, abstract information about the world gathered from the spectator’s point of view. Rather, it is the outcome of concrete practices for producing knowledge that *seems* expert and detached from its processes of production.

The fifth section extends this idea by exploring how mass interrogation achieves abstract power through two key forms of geographical performance. First, its systems *call into being extended spaces* of control, discipline, and power. Second, and relatedly, these political-material structures produce new artefacts that *represent space*. In these two ways mass interrogation

reflects the broader idea that ‘geography serves firstly to wage war’.⁵⁸ However, that work does not occur in a vacuum either. Calculative spaces of interrogation and intelligence production must be designed and laid down before spatialising operations can be undertaken.

There are no geographers in this story, at least not those formally trained as such. However, mass interrogation enrolls its own professionals, tools, and expert sites in the collective effort to represent and control the spaces of war. The sixth section examines how these systems operate as technopolitical apparatuses. Here I enter the case for thinking about military interrogation as a *political technology*, one used preponderantly by a single modern state, the United States, and its armies, in order to produce and wield truth in war. These apparatuses do more than just compile information and apply material forces. They disclose equipment around which interpellated specialist subjects comport themselves and through which they discover their new capacities. The argument culminates in the seventh section, which argues that these apparatuses and spatial practices make possible the collective logic of *machine space*. Within these zones, disparate elements, mechanical procedures, and calculative disciplines are arranged in order that multitudes of human sources can be ‘processed’, intelligence data products sloughed off them and circulated, and abstract knowledge about the space of war divined, seemingly from a spectator’s point of view. These concrete knowledge practices need to be analysed for their performative effects, their tendency to produce the world that they describe.

An ancient and essential practice?

Intelligence historians and national security analysts typically approach military interrogation in the singular. While they pursue a diversity of empirical interests, both treat interrogation as transhistorical, an ‘essential’ feature of war.

In doing so, intelligence scholars uphold a foundationalist ideal of interrogation, writing concrete episodes to fill in ‘its’ history while at the same time rubbing out its geographies. In the orthodox telling, this history is a sweeping, Eurocentric arc that maps onto the even grander story of war itself. As one of ‘the oldest of intelligence disciplines’, or even ‘one of humankind’s

⁵⁸ The maxim originated with the title of Yves Lacoste’s *La géographie, ça sert d’abord à faire la guerre* (Paris: Maspéro, 1976), quoted in Daniel Clayton and Trevor J. Barnes, “Continental European Geographers and World War II,” *Journal of Historical Geography* 47 (2015): 12, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jhg.2014.12.003>.

oldest practices’, the search for interrogation’s origins in antiquity is a recurring motif.⁵⁹ For example, Steven Kleinman—previously one of the most senior interrogators at the Department of Defense and now a leading figure in human intelligence research—begins one disciplinary survey in ancient Egypt with the armies of Pharaoh Ramses II. Kleinman tells us they were known to have extracted ‘invaluable information from captured Hittites during the battle of Kadesh’.⁶⁰ His account is informed by an influential early-1990s doctoral dissertation written by Paul Fein, also an experienced military interrogator. Fein’s study also begins in the age of ‘classical warfare’, but he includes the case of the Greeks questioning a prisoner in Armenia, drawn from Xenophon’s chronicle of the Persian expeditions.⁶¹ For Fein, examples such as this prove that ‘human intelligence’ in war has ‘occurred throughout the ages’.

Crucially, however, Fein cautions that such anecdotes were not easy to hunt down. Comparable pre-modern examples are ‘sporadic and relatively amateurish’.⁶² In fact, before the advent of industrial warfare, historical texts disclosed ‘hardly a word regarding anything even remotely resembling an interrogation’ in the modern sense. Yet, the notion that it is an antediluvian practice—and therefore a universal concept available to historians of war and intelligence—lives on. In a recent introduction to his field-defining collection, *Interrogation in War and Conflict* (edited with Simona Tobia), Christopher Andrew, an eminent intelligence historian, again conceives of interrogation in epic terms. Because it is so fundamental to war, he writes, it makes sense to root its ‘long, understudied history’ in ‘the ancient world’. (Andrew prefers to begin during the Gallic Wars in 58 BC. Upon Julius Caesar’s personal interrogations of enemy prisoners, he learned the plans of the Germanic ruler Ariovistus, facilitating his decisive victory the next day).⁶³

⁵⁹ See for example John A. Wahlquist, "Introduction," in *Interrogation: World War II, Vietnam, and Iraq*, ed. William Spracher (Washington, DC: National Defense Intelligence College, 2008), 7, 2, <https://fas.org/irp/eprint/interr.pdf>.

⁶⁰ Steven Kleinman, "The Promise of Interrogation v. the Problem of Torture," *Valparaiso University Law Review* 45, no. 4 (2009): 1579, <https://scholar.valpo.edu/vulr/vol43/iss4/2>.

⁶¹ Paul Fein, "We Have Ways...: The Law and Morality of the Interrogation of Prisoners of War" (PhD dissertation, Georgetown, 1994), ProQuest Dissertations, 9526148, 71--72.

⁶² Fein, "We Have Ways...", 72.

⁶³ Christopher Andrew, "Introduction: The Modern History of Interrogation," in *Interrogation in War and Conflict: A Comparative and Interdisciplinary Analysis*, eds. Christopher Andrew and Simona Tobia (Abingdon, UK: Routledge, 2014), 1.

The deep vagueness surrounding the ‘ancient’ origins of military interrogation—over a thousand years separates the above examples—suggests that little may be lost by jettisoning the argument. Indeed, as we will discover over the following chapters, intelligence interrogation’s technical and political forms are irreducibly modern, tracking the broader industrialisation of warfare and the emergence of a tradition of expertise in the putting down of colonial rebellions in the imperial armies of Europe. Yet, for orthodox military studies, essentialist arguments serve an important conceptual purpose, even when they are mythic. The effect of Andrews’ sprawling story is to present intelligence interrogation as low military technology, a mode of knowledge production of practically infinite flexibility and available to any state or ruler. Whether chaotic or ‘better organised’, non-coercive or violent, or dedicated to such dissimilar political ends as the crushing of Gallic tribes on antique battlefields, the medieval Inquisition,⁶⁴ directing artillery on the Western Front, facilitating the Cheka’s domestic political warfare in the early days of the Soviet Union, or brutally serving the interests of terror states such as the Khmer Rouge or the Bush Administration, interrogation is a taken for granted constant. It is virtually any process involving the questioning of human subjects by agents of power, who record confessions or knowledge about threats to rule, order, or military supremacy.⁶⁵

In national security histories of this sort, the concept of intelligence interrogation is comparative and richly capacious, but it is also prone to charting the march of progress. As we will see in the examples that follow, over the last century war planners’ thirst for ‘human intelligence’ has indeed sparked more complex interrogation apparatuses. But too often those transformations have been examined from the standpoint of the present, observing only outward technical features rather than moving inside apparatuses so that they can be examined as grounded social practices meaningfully performed by political subjects. In doing so, the history of interrogation is read not as one of irruptions and chance developments, but the discovery of

⁶⁴ John Wahlquist, a Second Iraq War interrogator and consultant to the US Government’s Intelligence Science Board’s major 2006 study on interrogation, observed that ‘how-to’ manuals written by fourteenth-century Roman Catholic inquisitors included ‘complicated and sophisticated techniques for interrogating suspected heretics’ and thereby ‘anticipating modern-day interrogation guides such as CIA’s “KUBARK Counterintelligence Interrogation” manual and the U.S. Army Field Manual 34-52’ by suggesting that interrogators use “manipulative and deceptive behavior” to obtain a confession’, see “Commentary: Educing Information: Interrogation—Science and Art,” in *Educing Information: Interrogation: Science and Art*. Center for Strategic Intelligence Research (Washington DC: National Defense Intelligence College, 2006), xxi.

⁶⁵ Andrew, “Introduction: The Modern History of Interrogation,” 1--2, 12--14.

new ‘techniques’ for producing ‘better’ intelligence. For instance, in Andrew and Tobia’s collection, processes of ‘modernisation’ steer military interrogation from its ‘undeveloped’ state at the beginning of the twentieth century to the cutting-edge innovations used in advanced warfighting apparatuses today.⁶⁶ Consequently, while it brings together finely researched case histories, the idea of intelligence interrogation itself remains stubbornly external to analysis, largely escaping historicisation. At their most teleological, other studies depict interrogation as a summit mounted by heroic figures who perfect ‘tradecraft’ by wielding ‘recipes for success’.⁶⁷

From this essentialist perspective, the historical stabilities of intelligence interrogation are less antiquarian than instrumental. Ancient origins, conceptual unity, and disciplinary continuity mean that, as an empirical problem, military interrogation is an idea with a thin history and absolutely no geography. Rather, for Kleinman—the government-aligned figure keen to promote its scientific improvement—these features underscore the persistent *technical* challenges faced by all national security interrogators anywhere, preparing the field for abstract theorisation. Within this problem space, interrogation is not an endlessly varying war practice, but the timeless rehearsal of an ‘intensely interpersonal process’ that is primarily contingent upon individuals’ behavioural characteristics and psychological chemistry.⁶⁸ Kleinman draws from the CIA’s infamous cold war-era KUBARK manual for ‘useful insights into the dynamics of intensive intelligence interrogation that can lead to principles applicable to current challenges’. Recognising the ‘disturbing legacy’ of the brutal methods it prescribes, he nonetheless praises its ‘fundamental definition’ of interrogation, which is resolutely generic:

There is nothing mysterious about interrogation. It consists of no more than obtaining needed information to questions.

⁶⁶ Andrew, "Introduction: The Modern History of Interrogation," 2.

⁶⁷ See the contributions in the US government agency study *Interrogation: World War II, Vietnam, and Iraq*, ed. William Spracher (Washington, DC: National Defense Intelligence College, 2008). <https://fas.org/irp/eprint/interr.pdf>, especially 138.

⁶⁸ Steven M. Kleinman, "KUBARK Counterintelligence Interrogation Review: Observations of an Interrogator: Lessons Learned and Avenues for Further Research," in *Educating Information: Interrogation: Science and Art*, Center for Strategic Intelligence Research (Washington DC: National Defense Intelligence College, 2006), 108.

An interrogation is not a game played by two people, one to become the winner and the other the loser. It is simply a method of obtaining correct and useful information.⁶⁹

From this starting point, interrogation can be abstracted from concrete practice and logically disassembled. Elsewhere Kleinman and his psychologist co-researchers schematise it as a cycle of idealised phases and list taxonomically the many interrogation techniques developed around the world over the centuries (an exhaustive review yielded seventy-one and an abstract model of their preferred ‘rapport-based’ interrogation technique, see figure 2.1).⁷⁰ New techniques have been ‘discovered over time and old ones better understood’. In theory they are applicable anywhere and at any time, their utility is dependent upon the psychological profiles of subjects, commanders’ intelligence requirements, and the state of the field.

⁶⁹ Central Intelligence Agency, "KUBARK Counterintelligence Interrogation," July 1963, released January 1997, <https://nsarchive2.gwu.edu/NSAEBB/NSAEBB27/docs/doc01.pdf>, quoted in Kleinman, "KUBARK Counterintelligence Interrogation Review," 96.

⁷⁰ Christopher E. Kelly, Jeanée C. Miller, Allison D. Redlich, and Steven M. Kleinman, "A Taxonomy of Interrogation Methods," *Psychology, Public Policy, and Law* 19, no. 2 (2013): 165--178, <http://doi.org/10.1037/a0030310>.

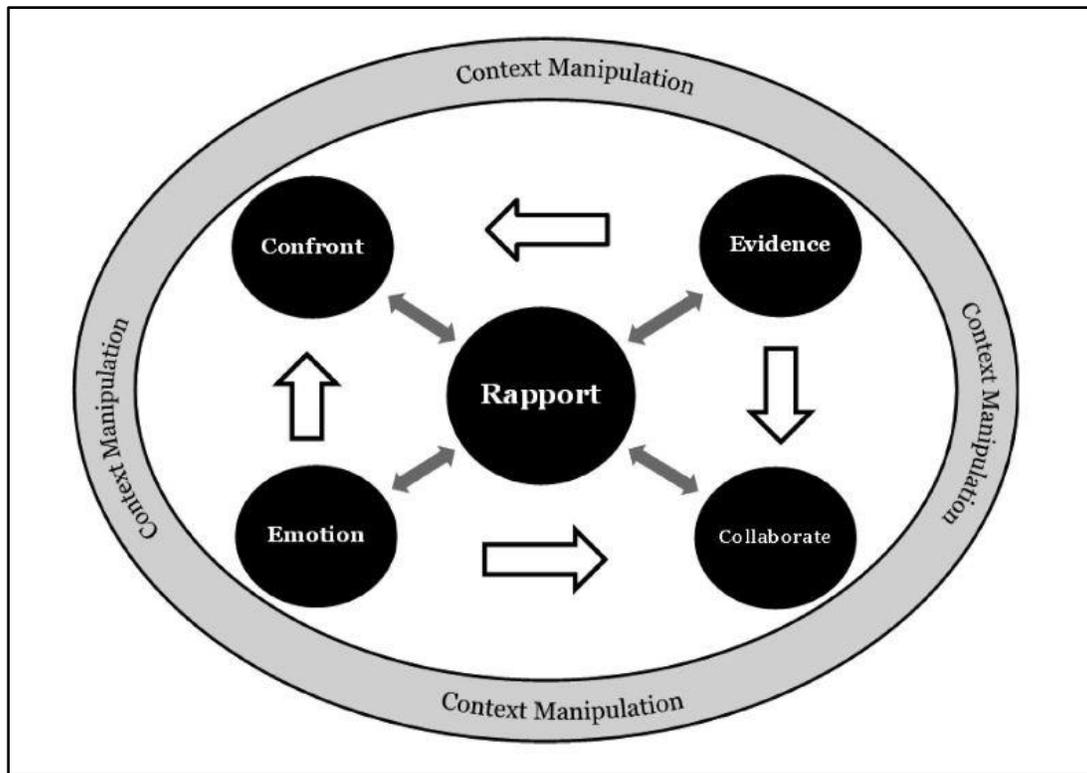


Figure 2.1 A theoretical model of intelligence interrogation constructed by a group of psychological researchers and a historian-practitioner of interrogation.⁷¹

To be sure, the positivist figure above is not the kind of artefact that would make its way into granular accounts by intelligence historians such as Andrew. But across both these scholarly registers the important point is the presentation of a similar conception of interrogation. It exhibits an essential coherence across millennia as any interpersonal encounter involving the questioning of subjects in state-based conflicts. Rather than a political technology, it is a timeless abstraction: interrogation as recognisable by logical propositions, interrogation as a given facet of war and conflict, not a grounded practice and an idea that must be constantly reinvested with power through expert performance.

The implications here are not just academic, but normative and ethical. When war practices are described in essentialist terms, they appear organic to modern conflict, purely technical. Tobia, another key figure in the field, concludes that given interrogation's historical prevalence, it must be recognised for what it is: 'essential ... a vital necessity not only during

⁷¹ Ibid.

conflict, but in its aftermath as well'.⁷² Any human subjects falling into the hands of state agencies or armies spontaneously change into informational resources that cannot be ignored, with enemy prisoners especially prime targets. One is reminded of the Second World War-era film described in the chapter 1, which declares that interrogatees—hitherto hostile 'instruments of destruction'—are, in custody, passivised, 'transformed' into 'one of the most valuable sources of intelligence'. As this dissertation illustrates, much political work is left out of this formulation. Yet, because war planners have always had an especial interest in procuring detailed knowledge from close witnesses to battlezones, we are often encouraged to assume that such 'transformations' are automatic and therefore an inevitable moment in *future* conflicts as well. Indeed, the Luftwaffe's 'master interrogator', Hanns Scharff, reckoned that 'as long as wars have been waged on this earth, captors have taken the right to question captives. As long as [prisoners of war] are interrogated, they will talk'.⁷³ For Scharff, a heroic figure in Kleinman's accounts, interrogation's specific technical features are obviously in flux—he sought to radically improve them—but such developments were surface details, alterations of an abstract, atemporal form.

The 'transformation' of interrogation's subjects into reservoirs of information may indeed occur. But that is a technical and cultural accomplishment, not automatic. When such acts become 'essential' to war they don't just lose their history, but their political geography too. For if military interrogation is a 'necessity', the locus of responsibility for it disperses into impersonal forces and abstract techniques. There is no reason to believe that wars could be prosecuted otherwise. Rather than critically analysing the political bases of military interrogation itself, we are encouraged to evaluate which 'questioning systems' are better at 'extracting information' than others.⁷⁴ Plainly, some are worse than others, as the violent recent history of the 'war on terror's' proves. But for Tobia it is largely a technical matter—a century and more of modern war proves that brutal interrogation apparatuses are counterproductive. Initiatives

⁷² Simona Tobia, "Conclusions: Interrogation, Interviewing and Questioning in the Twentieth Century," in *Interrogation in War and Conflict: A Comparative and Interdisciplinary Analysis*, eds. Christopher Andrew and Simona Tobia (Abingdon, UK: Routledge, 2014), 268.

⁷³ Raymond Toliver, *The Interrogator: The Story of Hanns Joachim Scharff: Master Interrogator of the Luftwaffe 119* (Fallbrook, CA: Aero, 1978), quoted in Steven Kleinman, "The Promise of Interrogation v. the Problem of Torture," 1581.

⁷⁴ Tobia, "Conclusions: Interrogation, Interviewing and Questioning in the Twentieth Century," 285.

yielding the most intelligence are those embracing modern rationalisation. Rather than relying on raw coercion, they have incorporated

complex systems of intelligence networks, professional intelligence officers or highly specialized prosecutors, and the existence of various centres and cross-checking systems ... [and these] structures were also successful when based on good training systems, which created excellent interviewers. Violence, as we have seen, was most likely to be employed by the least experienced and more resentful interrogators and it rarely led to the collection of reliable information.⁷⁵

Like Andrew and Kleinman, in Tobia's reading, interrogation is an inevitable practice because it is primeval and militarily fundamental. But that does not mean administrators should avoid modernising interrogation, subjecting it to greater specialisation, professionalisation, and complexification. To add more 'cross-checking systems' and rigorous training. In short, to increase the level of expertise.

But as the following chapters show, this is to reproduce the basic precepts of modern military interrogation since 1945, especially when it is performed by US national security agencies. There are no guarantees that expert techniques attenuate the violence of war. Moreover, even brutal modern interrogation apparatuses are virtually always run *as if* they were expert and are ever information saturated. The pressing political questions are these: how did the idea of a complex interrogation apparatus come to seem obvious in the first place? How do they interpellate their specialist political subjects through performances on the ground? How is 'reliable information' made so? And, often ignored, how does interrogation intersect with the broader geography of war? After all, whether they utilise brutal methods or 'excellent interviewers', military interrogation seeks to activate and extend modern war's violent circuits. In this light, we can begin to construct a counter-narrative. It rejects the idea of a continuity between Caesar's personal questioning of enemies in the ancient world and the modern form and practices of interrogation. Intelligence interrogation is not an 'essential' feature of state rule and warfare. First however, it is necessary to survey how it is performed as a context-free military practice in another kind of specialised military discourse: the laws of war.

⁷⁵ Tobia, "Conclusions: Interrogation, Interviewing and Questioning in the Twentieth Century," 289.

The laws of war

Military interrogation is rehearsed as an ahistorical abstraction in another powerful discourse: international humanitarian law. As the chapter epigraphs indicate, its use by states is subject to the positive laws of war—treaties and similar binding covenants. The first such codification dates to the American Civil War-era ‘Lieber Code’, when Lincoln promulgated that:

Honorable men, when captured, will abstain from giving to the enemy information concerning their own army, and the modern law of war permits no longer the use of any violence against prisoners, in order to extort the desired information, or to punish them for having given false information.⁷⁶

Clearly something approximating contemporary forms of military interrogation was in the works by this point, though at a much-reduced level of formality compared to what would follow in the next century. The Lieber Code article has been immensely influential. It served as a direct precedent for similar safeguards for war victims in the 1907 Hague Convention and the 1949 Geneva Conventions. However, as is the case with the laws of war more generally, the architects of these instruments aimed for universal applicability. For this reason, they do not frame interrogation as it is (or was) concretely practiced by armies pursuing specific political ambitions in contingent situations on the ground. Rather, the Geneva jurists sought to construct humane interrogation and its opposite, torture, as legal archetypes within a totalising, logical system of abstract concepts.

The important point here is that the laws of war establish several basic historical ontological propositions about the nature of military interrogation and its role in military conflicts. Most importantly, they recognise interrogation as an *unavoidable feature* of modern warfare. It is not so much a socio-spatial practice as a *politico-legal event* in need of formal regulation so that inhumane treatment does not occur at the *immediate scale*. On these terms, the law’s central ambition is to deter the infliction of cruelties upon interrogatee’s bodies.

⁷⁶ *Instructions for the Government of the Armies of the United States in the Field, Prepared by Francis Lieber, LL.D, and Revised by a Board of Officers*, (New York: D. Van Nostrand, 1863), article 80, page 21. Promulgated by President Lincoln, 24 April 1863, and first issued as "General Orders No. 100" by Adjutant-General’s Office, <https://web.archive.org/web/20010407120840/http://www.civilwarhome.com/liebercode.htm>.

The Geneva Convention Relative to the Treatment of Prisoners of War ('Geneva III') contains several relevant features that construct the idea of military interrogation in a narrow, but imprecise, way.⁷⁷ Captives afforded the status of lawful combatants are entitled to the broad protections of articles 13 and 130. Throughout the duration of captivity, they must be 'humanely treated', and any wilful torture or cruelty should be considered a 'grave breach' of international law. On the matter of interrogation itself, article 17 is especially pertinent. It limits the tactics available to interrogators, banning the use of force to extract information from detainees:

No physical or mental torture, nor any other form of coercion, may be inflicted on prisoners of war to secure from them information of any kind whatsoever. Prisoners of war who refuse to answer may not be threatened, insulted, or exposed to any unpleasant or disadvantageous treatment of any kind.⁷⁸

Parties to the Conventions assume similar duties to civilians caught up in war zones. Article 27 of the Geneva Convention Relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War ('Geneva IV') declares that these subjects are also entitled to 'humane treatment'.⁷⁹ However, as with prisoners of war, Geneva IV permits warring powers to intern civilians and to question them—article 27 further spells out states' prerogative to 'take such measures of control and security in regard to protected persons as may be necessary as a result of the war.' If this occurs, civilians must not be interrogated harshly. Article 31 proscribes the exercise of 'physical or moral coercion' for the purposes of obtaining information from them. Similarly, article 32

⁷⁷ Stanley J. Glod and Lawrence J. Smith. "Interrogation Under the 1949 Prisoners of War Convention," *Military Law Review* 21 (July 1963): 147.

⁷⁸ *Geneva Convention Relative to the Treatment of Prisoners of War*, August 12, 1949, 75 U.N.T.S. 135, article 17, paragraph four, <https://ihl-databases.icrc.org/applic/ihl/ihl.nsf/vwTreaties1949.xsp>. Though they need not be explicated here, other features of the Convention are relevant to matters of interrogation. For example, Articles 13 and 16 prohibit reprisals and the unequal treatment of prisoners. Articles 21, 22, and 25 describe minimal living conditions, proscribe solitary, unhealthy, and close confinement. By providing for humane conditions during captivity these articles limit the lengths to which captors may manipulate detention environments in order to condition prisoners for interrogation. See also Jennifer K. Elsea, *Lawfulness of Interrogation Techniques under the Geneva Conventions*, Congressional Research Service Report for Congress, 8 September 2004, CRS-2--CRS-4, <https://www.fas.org/irp/crs/RL32567.pdf>.

⁷⁹ See *Geneva Convention Relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War*, 12 August 1949, 75 U.N.T.S. 287, articles 27, 31, 32, and 42 [hereafter 'Geneva IV'], <https://ihl-databases.icrc.org/ihl/full/GCIII-commentary>; see also Jean Pictet, ed., *The Geneva Conventions of 12 August 1949: Commentary: IV Geneva Convention* (Geneva: International Committee of the Red Cross, 1958), <https://ihl-databases.icrc.org/ihl/full/GCIV-commentary>, 219--220.

permits the detainment of ‘non-combatants’ where ‘security requirements’ demand it, allowing capturers to interrogate them as long as ‘pressure’ is not employed.

Article 17 in Geneva III delimits the forms of information that prisoners are bound to provide to their captors upon pain of restricted privileges (they must provide their name, rank, date of birth, army, and regimental or personal serial number). Some international legal scholars have argued that by including this list alongside a proscription of ‘disadvantageous treatment’ for interrogatees who refuse to answer further questions, article 17 asserts a broader ‘right not to be interrogated’. However, this position is almost impossible to sustain. In expressing its concern to *limit the tactics* available to capturing powers, article 17 ‘implicitly acknowledges that interrogations of a prisoner are expected and inevitable’ under the international laws of war.⁸⁰

Indeed, during article 17’s formulation, jurists concluded that a wholesale ban on interrogation would be unpracticable. The Special Committee’s notes during the drafting of the provision relate its members’ dawning realisation that ‘[i]t was idle to harbor illusions. A state which had captured prisoners of war would always try to obtain military information them’.⁸¹ Like the intelligence historians and practitioners noted above, the Geneva drafters deemed it better to regulate cruelty out of an inevitable military practice rather than forbid it altogether. Years later, interrogation continued to be thought of as an inescapable fact of war. In interpreting how article 17 might be practically applied during the fraught exigencies of operations, the ICRC’s influential 1960 *Commentary* again averred that, such is the strategic and tactical value of the ‘military information’ they hold, a state agency with prisoners of war on its hands will ‘always’ try to obtain it from them by some means.⁸²

That may be the case, but in universalising the applicability of its provisions to an unavoidable wartime event, the architects of Geneva III and IV had to construct a very vague conception of lawful interrogation indeed. It is defined in exceptionally generic terms, as virtually any attempt to question prisoners and civilians without employing torture. The ICRC’s

⁸⁰ Neil McDonald and Scott Sullivan, "Rational Interpretation in Irrational Times: The Third Geneva Convention and the "War on Terror"," *Harvard International Law Journal* 44 (2003), 308.

⁸¹ "Preparatory Works of the Geneva Convention, 5th Meeting of Committee II, Friday 29 April 1949," in *Diplomatic Conference for the Establishment of International Conventions* (Berne, 1949), quoted in McDonald and Sullivan, "Rational Interpretation in Irrational Times," 308.

⁸² Pictet, ed., *The Geneva Conventions of 12 August 1949*, 163.

recently updated expert commentary resists the temptation to specify what interrogation in war actually involves, noting that it is

not possible to establish a definitive list of permissible and prohibited interrogation techniques. Such an approach would inevitably fail to include potential coercive techniques yet to be developed. Further, it is misleading to assess detention and interrogation regimes according to checklists designed to ensure that every element of the interrogation regime, in and of itself, remains within the permissible parameters. The cumulative effect of all the elements that make up the internment and interrogation regime must be taken into account.⁸³

The ICRC's 2020 Commentary now notes that there are 'certain types of interrogation techniques' that are 'clearly prohibited'. The examples offered include the 'deliberate denial of required medical treatment', 'truth serums', and hypnosis. However, international legal practitioners have again resisted the urge to weigh in further. On the one hand, specifying in greater detail the historical uses and political ambitions that drive military interrogation may permit sound rulings on the use of a range of dubiously 'humane' methods for obtaining information—such as through the use of trickery, extended separation from other detainees, or the imposition of moderate discomforts. On the other hand, however, leading jurists have generally agreed that such a proactive interpretation of interrogation would make it difficult to enforce, diluting the universal relevance of the Conventions' formulae of cruel, inhumane, or degrading treatment. The result may be abstraction and interpretational latitude but, as a former Special Rapporteur on Torture at the United Nations Commission on Human Rights put it, the categories and definitions governing interrogation must be 'elastic and capable of evolving interpretation over time'.⁸⁴ The laws of war are strong when they are capacious and practical.

The edifice of positive international humanitarian law thus means to banish from military interrogations some of the unconscionable barbarisms that have plagued its conduct in modern war. They effectively proscribe physical and mental torture from the interrogation encounter. *However, nowhere is a general ban on interrogation attempted and its use in mobilising the*

⁸³ ICRC, "Commentary of 2020, Article 17: Questioning of Prisoners," International Committee of the Red Cross, June 2020, <https://ihl-databases.icrc.org/ihl/full/GCIII-commentary> at 1827.

⁸⁴ Quoted in William R. Levi, "Interrogation's Law," *Yale Law Journal* 118 (2009): 1464, <https://digitalcommons.law.yale.edu/ylj/vol118/iss7/6>.

wider violence of war is left undescribed and unchallenged. Within the framework of liberal humanitarian law, it is again accepted as a foundational practice inherent to modern war. Consequently, in order to regulate military interrogation, expert juridical discourse rehearses it as an abstract, largely ahistorical constant. The consequences of this formulation are far-reaching. Today personnel entering combat zones are reminded that it is their legal duty to know what they must tell interrogators, and to understand that upon capture they should ‘expect to be questioned’ by ‘whatever means available’.⁸⁵ More pertinent to this study, the key texts articulating the international laws of war remain silent on the history and geography of interrogation. To learn the historical geography of this common-sense expert military practice, we must look elsewhere.

Situating interrogation

It is one thing to draw war in broad strokes in order to extend the reach of international humanitarian law. But it is quite another to commence analysis from the assumption that its practices are historically or customarily ‘essential’. Something is missing from the picture in both the constructions sketched above. If military interrogation is ‘ancient’, abstract, and timeless, then its logical bases seem to precede their performance; it becomes less a human performance than a ‘force of nature’ as Monica Kim puts it.⁸⁶ Yet, war is too overdetermined for universal logics, too radically unstable. Its processes and material forces are not propelled by abstract principles freed from history and geography. Rather, as critical military scholars have recently argued, war ‘becomes’ as unstable concatenations of a socio-spatial practices, mutually attuning ideas, cultural schemas, logical arrangements, subjectivation processes, esoteric languages, and material forms.⁸⁷ We risk presupposing some or all of these elements when we abstract military interrogation as an ‘expert technique’, rather than a contingent political performance.

The intelligence scholars cited above may claim that, as a formal discipline, the history of interrogation is pushed ahead by leading figures and powerful military and scientific institutions.

⁸⁵ Elsea, *Lawfulness of Interrogation Techniques under the Geneva Conventions*, CRS-1.

⁸⁶ Monica Kim, *The Interrogation Rooms of the Korean War: The Untold History* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2019), 2.

⁸⁷ Bousquet, Grove, and Shah, "Becoming War: Towards a Marital Empiricism," 5.

To be sure, organisational forces and the agency of planners cannot be ignored; the formal field of expert military interrogation is a formidable one, whose technical conventions and professional idioms have escaped their local origins (largely in the US national security state, and to a lesser extent agencies in Europe), travelling to other advanced militaries while maintaining coherency. Nevertheless, as this dissertation shows, in practice its performances involve the uncertain borrowing of elements from disparate domains and unexpected mixings with other institutions and material energies. The historical geography of national security disciplines cannot be written by simply holding a mirror up to the decisions of authority figures or the processes by which contemporary precepts have been ‘discovered’ through ‘best practice’. When the production of expert knowledges are examined up close, they invariably seem less global, unitary, and inevitable, and more localised, politically tactical, and unstable.⁸⁸ Yet, due in part to its obscurity, national security intelligence continues to evade this kind of detailed practice-based analysis. Still today its agencies are often analysed by sociologists and orthodox historians as if they are ‘highly bordered producers of objective national security’ information.⁸⁹ However, as critical intelligence scholar Sophia Hoffman argues, studying the micro-practices occurring inside them reveals a much more complicated picture. Like any other discipline, the epistemological conventions of intelligence always filter through socio-political meshworks and are ever-subject to wider historical-geographical contingencies. It is not simply pure, factual ‘information’, she says, but ‘contextual knowledge’.

At the same time, rehearsing interrogation as a series of expert ‘techniques’ or ‘a vital necessity’ certainly makes it seem *as if* intelligence interrogation was an effort in objective knowledge production. Its data printouts, detailed maps, and biological readings all seem to describe ‘bits of truth’, the world as it really is. As Timothy Mitchell argues, these processes of expert abstraction are precisely what must be made subject to empirical examination. Expertise, he argues, involves the stripping of ideas of their contextual origins, the ‘varied circumstances that produce them’. Its knowledge products are ‘ways of speaking’ but whose principles and logics acquire a ‘general, disembodied circulation’, a quality of ‘lightness and transportability’,

⁸⁸ Bruno Latour, *Reassembling the Social* (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 2007); Timothy Mitchell, *Rule of Experts: Egypt, Techno-Politics, Modernity* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2002).

⁸⁹ Sofia Hoffman, "Arab Students and the Stasi: Agents and Objects of Intelligence," *Security Dialogue* (2020), published electronically March 31, 2020, <https://doi.org/10.1177/0967010620904305>, 2.

and the sense that they are universally valid. This process is made possible by specific practices.⁹⁰ Rhetorical manoeuvres are required to translate local knowledge into global truths, technical and discursive devices are martialled in order to sediment improvised exercises into common-sense customs. Put another way, claims to epistemic authority, such as interrogation expertise and intelligence, must be *made* convincing through processes of political investment, sharpened and integrated into ‘power-knowledge circuits’ by means of persuasion, experimentation, hierarchisation, and successful circulation.⁹¹ In the context of national security practice, when these processes succeed, the cumulative effect is the separation of ‘intelligence’ from the material conditions to which it refers and from which it emerges. Its contingent claims to truth seem to float free as abstract knowledge of the world.

In order to trace mass interrogation’s capacity for abstract reason—how its power-knowledge circuits operate—this dissertation tells a story very different to the one offered by military historians and legal jurists. It is less concerned with foundational features or the universal laws driving and regulating a military practice than the contingent and contextual invention of techniques and systems that make it *seem* expert, obvious, and legal.

Keeping ideas, practices, and matter together means situating knowledge.⁹² It means identifying in time and space how contingent technical and rhetorical performances calcify into standard procedures and abstract knowledge. This is an urgent task because for too long the ‘violence’ of interrogation has been radically attenuated in scholarly analyses, restricted to the interpersonal encounter. Over the following chapters we will see that even when it is ‘humane’ in the legal sense, in practice it is inseparable both from war’s wider circuits of power, knowledge, and violence. Rather than a timeless or organic part of war, those connections are conditional upon interrogation’s rehearsal as such. This is achieved when technopolitical apparatuses are constructed that imbue its subjects with the sense that they are participating in a

⁹⁰ Timothy Mitchell, *Carbon Democracy: Political Power in the Age of Oil* (London: Verso, 2011), 69.

⁹¹ John S. Ransom, *Foucault’s Discipline: The Politics of Subjectivity* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1997), 98; Michel Foucault, “Two Lectures,” in *Power/Knowledge: Selected Interviews and Other Writings 1972--1977*, edited by Colin Gordon (New York: Vintage, 1980), 78--108.

⁹² On ‘situated knowledges’ see Donna Haraway, “Situated Knowledges: The Science Question in Feminism and the Privilege of Partial Perspective,” *Feminist Studies* 14, no. 3 (1988): 575--599, <https://doi.org/10.2307/3178066>. On the US military’s rehearsal of Haraway’s ‘God trick’ see Derek Gregory, “War and Peace,” *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers* 35, no. 2 (2010), 160--161, <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1475-5661.2010.00381.x>.

compartmentalised, churning, and bureaucratic machinery. Inside it, officers must work human sources over in the production of endless intelligence products, ‘bits of truth’.

Intelligence is a way of conceiving and representing the world, a way of speaking. Mass interrogation is a means of making contextual knowledge acquire lightness and incorporeality, the capacity for disembodied circulation. The specific practices required to achieve this transformation involve two performances of geography: the practice of mass interrogation as a series of disciplining spaces and as a technical means for representing space. When certain technopolitical apparatuses are constructed and filled with the right equipment, specialised subjects may be interpellated into the expert human intelligence production cycle.

The spaces of mass interrogation

While intelligence historians and jurists have analysed interrogation as a technique with a history, it has rarely been examined as a spatial practice.⁹³ Yet, the vignettes in chapter 1 indicate that when the machine of mass interrogation is fired up it acquires a geographical dimension in two ways. First, it exhibits a *spatiality*: zones of production, circulation, and regulation are generated, facilitating the exercise of power through political and territorial space. As well, in addition to organising new spaces of administrative-military production and control, mass interrogation exhibits a propensity to *represent space*. The US examples in chapter 1 are notable because they are all in some ways primarily motivated by the ambition to compile geographical material by drawing knowledge from human subjects. That material is used to spatialise warzones: enemy movements are charted, ideological rivals’ industrial-economic sites are

⁹³ James Tyner and Alex R. Colucci, "Interrogating the ‘Interrogation’ Fetish in Geography: Towards a Critical Interrogative Writing," *Progress in Human Geography* 39, no. 3 (2015): 246, <https://doi.org/10.1177/0309132514530319>; exceptions include Elliott Child, "Through the Wringer: Mass Interrogation and United States Air Force Targeting Intelligence in the Early Cold War," *Political Geography* 75 (2019): Article 102052, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.polgeo.2019.102052>; Gregory, "The Black Flag"; Ghazi-Walid Falah, "Geography in Ominous Intersection with Interrogation and Torture: Reflections on Detention in Israel," *Third World Quarterly* 29, no. 4 (2008): 749--766, <https://doi.org/10.1080/01436590802052706>. Of course, over the last few decades, extensive geographical analysis has been directed to the spatial politics of interrogational torture, particularly in its utilisation as a key phase in the US counterterror state’s global ‘war on terror’. It forms an important aspect of chapter 7, where we will examine the role of medical observers in the US torture archipelago. For now, it is important to emphasise that intelligence interrogation exhibits distinctive spatial characteristics that, in many cases, exceed and diverge from those of psychological torture per se, though they obviously overlap in practice.

sketched, insurgents' territories and environments delineated, and the shape and morphology of terrorist networks are plotted. Most commonly, spaces of interrogation often assist in the production of the most fundamental artefacts of military geography, the map and the target list. The following chapters show that these two kinds of spatial practice—the production and representation of space—are mutually constitutive and performative, facets of the technopolitical dynamic to dominate territory militarily by mapping it and calculating where force must be applied.

Producing space

Mass interrogation systems are made possible when disciplinary elements, logical schemas, material infrastructures, subjectivation processes, and architectures are linked into spatial arrangement. Much more than an 'intensely interpersonal' encounter, intelligence interrogation carves out an extended zone of operations that may include, for example, military headquarters, collection points, prisons and camps, patrol teams, debriefing rooms, intelligence offices, targeting bureaus, communicative channels for reporting intelligence data, and administrative centres of calculation. Strung together, these military constellations perform geography, produce it anew.

Mass interrogation systems thus do not just overlay space but remake it, connecting disparate sites and choreographing behaviour across an immanent socio-political horizon. Through this dissertation we will visit several systems run by US agencies which are stretched out and infrastructural, connecting disparate points of military-imperial power. They are each manifestations of what Mathew Hannah calls 'compound discipline'.⁹⁴ This is the species of power-knowledge that regulates behaviour through regimes linking spaces of *relative* confinement. To some extent, compound discipline normalises through compulsory confinement and direct surveillance. Sites of high security are part and parcel of the popular understanding of military interrogation, of course, and in the following chapters we encounter some settings wherein detained subjects are put under exquisitely tight control. In chapter 6, for example, prisoners of war are confined within and cycled around the Combined Military Interrogation

⁹⁴ Matthew G. Hannah, "Space and the Structuring of Disciplinary Power: An Interpretive Review," *Geografiska Annaler* 79 B, no. 3 (1997): 173--174, <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.0435-3684.1997.00016.x>.

Center in Saigon. In this mass interrogation space, interrogatees await and undergo questioning in a situation of almost total control.

However, confinement is not the only way in which power regulates the subjects of mass interrogation. Normalisation works more subtly too, through the encouragement of certain dispositions and conceptual frameworks. In chapter 4, the US Air Force's Wringer project in Europe and Japan is examined. In this case, much less effort is expended pinning down and monitoring interrogatees. Instead, for the most part they appear to be willing participants in the intelligence production process, relatively free to enter and exit the apparatus, though with some conditions and inducements. Likewise, in every empirical case study in this dissertation, intelligence officers are also voluntary subjects in the sense that they are expected to regulate much of their own behaviour across the interrogation system (given the usual norms of military discipline).

As Hannah explains, compound discipline can include elements from both ends of this spectrum of coercion. The key point is that it obtains within spatial forms that operate across a relatively extensive political geography, whose boundaries are somewhat permeable. Consequently, its capacities to regulate and control are often premised upon sophisticated logistical management techniques. This is the case for many mass interrogation systems where, rather than simply inhering *within* sites of intense observation, such as prisons (where discipline works at the scale of 'architecture', in Hannah's typology), compound space demands subtle reworkings of disciplinary logic through a more far-spread zone of regulation.

The performance of compound space is a salient feature of the US's 'war on terror' human intelligence production apparatus, which chapter 7 explores. This example illustrates how architectural and compound discipline may combine such that mass interrogation produces an entirely new spatiality, in this case an archipelago of sites that served to support an 'everywhere' war. From late-2001, hawkish US national security planners invoked a geopolitical 'new paradigm' in order to authorise the multiplication and interconnection of secret government networks of interrogation and intelligence collection. It was premised on the power to capture, circulate, and keep under surveillance certain 'Islamic terrorists', racialised enemies of the state, in a system built to confine the 'worst of the worst'.⁹⁵ This extensive space took the form of two

⁹⁵ David Cole, "Out of the Shadows: Preventive Detention, Suspected Terrorists, and War," *California Law Review* 97 (2009): 705, <https://ssrn.com/abstract=1407652>.

nominally separate networks—the CIA’s intercontinental web of ‘black sites’ and the Department of Defense’s (DOD’s) own off-limits interagency facilities. Through the mid-2000s, however, they increasingly operated as an integrated global war prison due to their material linkages, intersecting administration, and shared ambitions.⁹⁶ Elements of this worldwide apparatus persist today.

The CIA’s first black site facility was a small safe house tucked inside a Royal Thai Air Force base in northeast Thailand (codenamed site ‘Green’, we return to it as the location for Abu Zubaydah’s torture in chapter 7). Its operational life was brief, closing in December 2002. However, by this point a constellation of similarly panoptic interrogation sites had sprung up, including those pictured in figures 2.2 and 2.3. The network also included several desolate sites like the warehouse built by the CIA in rural Lithuania (codenamed site ‘Violet’, the last continuing black site in Europe upon its closure in March 2006) and the nightmarish prison in Cuba, Camp X-Ray. Perhaps this century’s apothecic manifestation of ‘architecture discipline’, it is an ultra-secure interrogation-detention facility at the Guantanamo Bay Naval Base where prisoners are subjected to almost total control and an unblinking eye of state surveillance. With their fence-lined security perimeters, secretive locations, and intense focus on information production, the sites in these images seem to suggest that, during the US’s ‘war on terror’, mass interrogation ‘took place’ as a series of meticulously bounded and guarded, detached spaces of acute observation.

⁹⁶ Derek Gregory, "Vanishing Points: Law, Violence, and Exception in the Global War Prison," in *Terror and the Postcolonial*, eds. Elleke Boehmer and Stephen Morton (Chichester, UK: Blackwell, 2010), 55--98, <https://doi.org/10.1002/9781444310085.ch2>.



Figure 2.2 Site ‘Violet’, near Vilnius, Lithuania, constructed by the CIA in 2004 for the warehousing and interrogation of detainees.⁹⁷

⁹⁷ Crofton Black and Sam Raphael, "Revealed: The Boom and Bust of the CIA's Secret Torture Sites," *The Bureau of Investigative Journalism*, 14 October 2015, <https://www.thebureauinvestigates.com/stories/2015-10-14/revealed-the-boom-and-bust-of-the-cias-secret-torture-sites>. Photography by Crofton Black.



Figure 2.3 Camp X-Ray, Guantánamo, one of the ‘war on terror’s’ most controversial and violent interrogation-detention facilities.⁹⁸

⁹⁸ Ibid. Photography by Crofton Black.

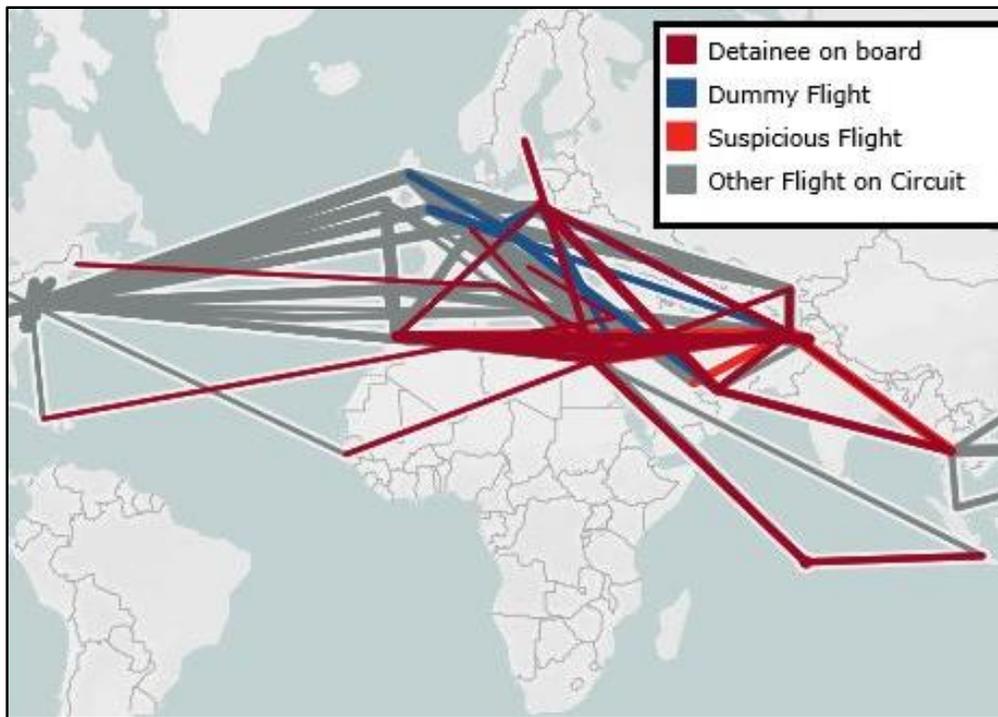


Figure 2.4 Likely paths of CIA rendition flights connecting black sites in Thailand, Cuba, Europe and the Middle East between October 2001 and March 2003.⁹⁹

Figure 2.4, however, illustrates a much less immediate, though no less crucial dimension to this geographical performance of interrogation space. This data-generated image represents the circuits of rendition that ferried interrogation subjects and CIA handlers (and with them knowledge and protocol) between black sites in Thailand, Cuba, Europe, and elsewhere between late-2001 and early-2003. Its criss-crossing vectors intimate that mass interrogation during the ‘war on terror’ did not just foment disciplinary architectures of site-specific constraint. In fact, with its nodes linked together by institutional, disciplinary, and military-technological passageways, it was also productive of a more networked, hyper-extended space of circulation. Trevor Paglen calls it ‘the black world’s geography’, one characterised not just by blank spots in

⁹⁹ Map produced using ‘Flight Database’, a platform built by The Rendition Project that draws together and visualises a vast quantity of data pertaining to the CIA’s rendition and secret detention programme. The online application is available at The Rendition Project, "Flight Database," 2020, <https://www.therenditionproject.org.uk/flights/flight-database.html#>.

maps, but in the law, enormous and hidden budgets, and basic procedures of democratic oversight.¹⁰⁰

Political geographers like Paglen argue that the black world's geography reveals a kind of plexus structure of power (the phrase 'archipelago of sites' is well-worn). Through it, the CIA's interrogation-detention regime and its power to confine, know, and regulate was premised upon its capacities to constantly morph into new branching shapes. And it could do this because it reactivated extensive (even global) spatialities of law and political violence that had colonial, proto-imperial, as well as cold war roots.¹⁰¹ For Derek Gregory, the torture archipelago was thus an extended, performative geography. Not only was it stretched out and vast, but it also breathed new life into a colonial template of power that included sites of imperial reach such as Guantánamo Bay, as well as newer institutional, legal, and logistical centres of calculation in the American homeland.

In this way, the war on terror mass interrogation system exemplifies discipline at the scale of the compound. It was not simply a singular space of total observation and complete confinement but a regime aiming to organise an arterial techno-legal space, one configured for the purpose of 'obtaining military and intelligence information' right across the globe.¹⁰² Broad legal privileges, hugely-funded intelligence machines and expertise, and military might all facilitated the circulation of torrents of new interrogation data produced from locations like Chris Mackey's booth in Bagram to the Pentagon. Large regions of the world, perhaps even the entire planet, became a space that CIA and DOD interrogators could realistically sweep for new subjects to interrogate and detain.

'Interrogation', Monica Kim argues, is a 'landscape rather than a contained space'. The encounter in the interrogation room is just 'one node of a complex ecosystem of violence,

¹⁰⁰ Trevor Paglen, *Blank Spots on the Map: The Dark Geography of the Pentagon's Secret World* (New York: Dutton, 2009).

¹⁰¹ Gregory, "The Black Flag: Guantánamo Bay and the Space of Exception"; Khalili, *Time in the Shadows*; Simon Reid-Henry, "Exceptional Sovereignty? Guantánamo Bay and the Re-Colonial Present," *Antipode* 39, no. 4 (2007): 627--648, <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-8330.2007.00544.x>.

¹⁰² David Cole, ed., *The Torture Memos: Rationalizing the Unthinkable* (New York: New Press, 2009), 4; "Memorandum for William J. Haynes, II, General Counsel, Department of Defense," February 26, 2002," in *The Torture Papers: The Road to Abu Ghraib*, ed. Karen J. Greenberg and Joshua L. Dratel (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 145.

intimacy, and bureaucracy'.¹⁰³ Delimiting analysis to the timeless 'technique' of interrogation as an 'interpersonal' process misses out on these geographical performances, its quality as a landscape of war. In spaces of compound discipline, Hannah explains, political subjects' voluntary participation in the regulation process is required, particularly when boundaries cannot be policed or all behaviours closely surveilled.¹⁰⁴ Indeed, chapter 1 suggested that interrogation officers ensure their own productivity in part through the internalised sense that they are imaginative conveyors of knowledge within a bureaucracy, authorised to help prosecute a national war by playing their specialist roles. The following chapters thus return to the ways in which the links and circuits making up extensive mass interrogation apparatuses must be constantly remade by officers and experts. As we will see, certain 'voluntaristic' elements of spatial and organisational management are key—the operational gears of US mass interrogation are turned by intelligence experts motivated by a sense of professional and patriotic responsibility.

Management at a distance

The compound spaces of mass interrogation include mechanisms for drawing trained subjects back into visibility and docility, especially when they are institutionally and geographically remote from central authorities. Indeed, much of the physical work of later modern mass interrogation is subject to the modern innovations of management at a distance. Techniques of rational organisation familiar to the modern capitalist firm are borrowed. These include calculative mechanisms of labour control, progress checking, registrations of movement along the production process, doctrine with clearly defined procedures and staging points, and so on. As Laleh Khalili argues, modern, bureaucratised military systems designed to 'process' people on a large scale commonly rely on regimes of managerial 'proceduralisation'. Within them, 'administration and procedure are viewed as standing in for ethics, and the "enterprise form" is

¹⁰³ Kim, *The Interrogation Rooms of the Korean War*, 8.

¹⁰⁴ Hannah, "Space and the Structuring of Disciplinary Power," 174. Of course, even sites of almost total control such as prisons are not 'confined' but are 'spatially interdependent', hooked into wider social practices and networks of government. On the interconnected spatial forms of imprisonment see Lauren L. Martin and Matthew L. Mitchelson, "Geographies of Detention and Imprisonment: Interrogating Spatial Practices of Confinement, Discipline, Law, and State Power," *Geography Compass* 3, no. 1 (2009): 459--477, <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1749-8198.2008.00196.x>.

generalized to all organizations’.¹⁰⁵ When confinement and interrogation are proceduralised, Khalili contends, the need for ‘independent reflection’ on the part of a human intelligence or confinement apparatus’s political subjects is minimised. A certain mechanical rhythm and rationality overtakes proceedings.

The corporation and the machine have proven to be extraordinarily versatile logical touchstones for modern war managers. Their elements reappear in the spatial arrangements of many of the specific practices that make later modern warfare possible. The machine and the corporation are mutually supportive techno-discursive formations—both are amenable to proceduralisation and both are concerned with the efficient orchestration of collective forces for instrumental ends. Inside advanced military organisations it is common for the figure of the machine to mediate and translate the ‘enterprise form’ due to its capacity to break down amorphous political ambitions into mechanical tasks and compartmentalised duties. The machine is perfectly suited to compound discipline and the factory settings it commonly calls into being, producing space in line with a range of traditional industrial imperatives: ‘standardization, rationalization, and the interchangeability of parts; the moving assembly line; volume production ... professionalised administrative hierarchies; managerial authority’ and functional specialisation.¹⁰⁶ This composite logic of managed and machinic production is in some ways the defining feature of US mass interrogation landscapes after 1945, a crucial means for managing war at a distance. It recurs in recognisable forms across the variety of rationalised military-infrastructural apparatuses for detaining, confining, and producing human intelligence during this period.

While the next chapter argues that the arc of modern mass interrogation begins earlier on, it is from the Second World War that machinic compound discipline revolutionised US military operations more broadly, and interrogation specifically. Richard Nisa argues that by the early-cold war period the common-sense idea had thoroughly taken hold across the US Army that mass detainment, prisoner processing, and interrogation were all susceptible to the productive technologies and efficient methods of industrial management. During the Korean War, prisoner capture became exquisitely proceduralised. In that case the Army’s ambition was not just the

¹⁰⁵ Khalili, *Time in the Shadows*, 240.

¹⁰⁶ Shoshana Zuboff, *The Age of Surveillance Capitalism: The Fight for a Human Future at the New Frontier of Power* (London: Profile, 2019), 347.

maximal removal of enemy combatants from the frontline but the establishment of extended spaces of collective and efficient production (of arrests, transportations, interrogations, intelligence reports, and more). The ‘detainment’ encounter was thus recast as a functional sub-unit of the larger ‘machine’ of war, Nisa argues.¹⁰⁷

In Korea, the US Army achieved this transformation by constructing a stretching infrastructure of detainment regulated by compound discipline. Abstract, managerialist schemas and training protocols were devised to represent anatomo-political detainment choreography that was to be rehearsed uniformly in any warzone. It was complex, but efficient, finely proceduralised. For example, in *Field Manual 19-40, Handling of Prisoners of War*, the detainment and evacuation processes are schematised, an idealised time-space path—figure 2.5 envisions it as a two-dimensional vector space. A linear course is described over which prisoners must be moved, with key moments for interrogating them pinpointed. Both source and intelligence are shown as abstract entities progressing over a topological carceral-intelligence zone of martial discipline and security. Once again, detention and interrogation are not momentary encounters, but landmarks in a regulated landscape across which an iterative process is regulated and normalised by remote means.

Figure 2.6 shows in even more abstract terms how control must be maintained through a series of organisational linkups. Units relay detainees through Army custody, funnelling them further to the rear and into new sectors of control and management. As this process unfolds, accompanying text articulates the precise means for systematically searching prisoners’ bodies for ‘documents or possessions of intelligence value’, for moving subjects to central holding facilities ‘as quickly as possible to permit an early interrogation’. By this point, interrogation doctrine had been developed to triage prisoners by order of importance, for segregating them so that they may not influence one another. Also circulated by Army authorities were lengthy descriptions of the technical skills to be mastered for the inter-subjective interrogation encounter itself, and for recording responses on customised forms and for transposing information onto maps and other documents for transmission into broader, pumping systems of military

¹⁰⁷ Richard Nisa, "Capturing the Forgotten War: Carceral Spaces and Colonial Legacies in Cold War Korea," *Journal of Historical Geography* 64, April (2019): 21, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jhg.2018.11.006>, see also Richard Nisa, "Capturing Humanitarian War: The Collusion of Violence and Care in US-Managed Military Detention," *Environment and Planning A: Economy and Space* 47, no. 11 (2015): 2276--2291, <https://doi.org/10.1068/a140104p>.

intelligence.¹⁰⁸ Detention and interrogation had become a chain of responsibility, with each unit commander challenged not just to house evacuated prisoners but to facilitate their progress over a space of logistical communication and knowledge production.

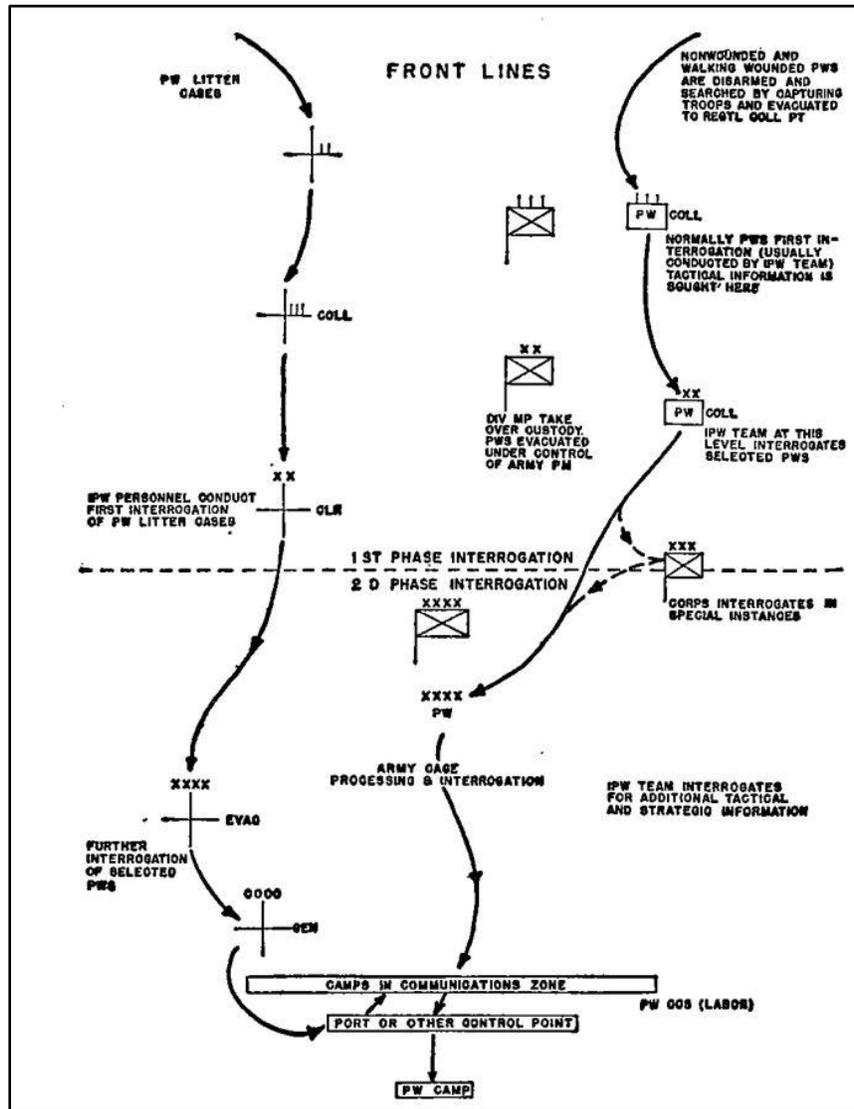


Figure 2.5 'Evacuation and interrogation of prisoners of war' procedures as laid out in absolute space in *FM 19-40 Handling of Prisoners of War*, the Army's key 1952 field manual on the subject.¹⁰⁹

¹⁰⁸ Department of the Army, *FM 19-40 Handling of Prisoners of War*, Washington, DC, 1952, https://www.loc.gov/rr/frd/Military_Law/pdf/Handling-POWs.pdf, 19, passim.

¹⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, 18.

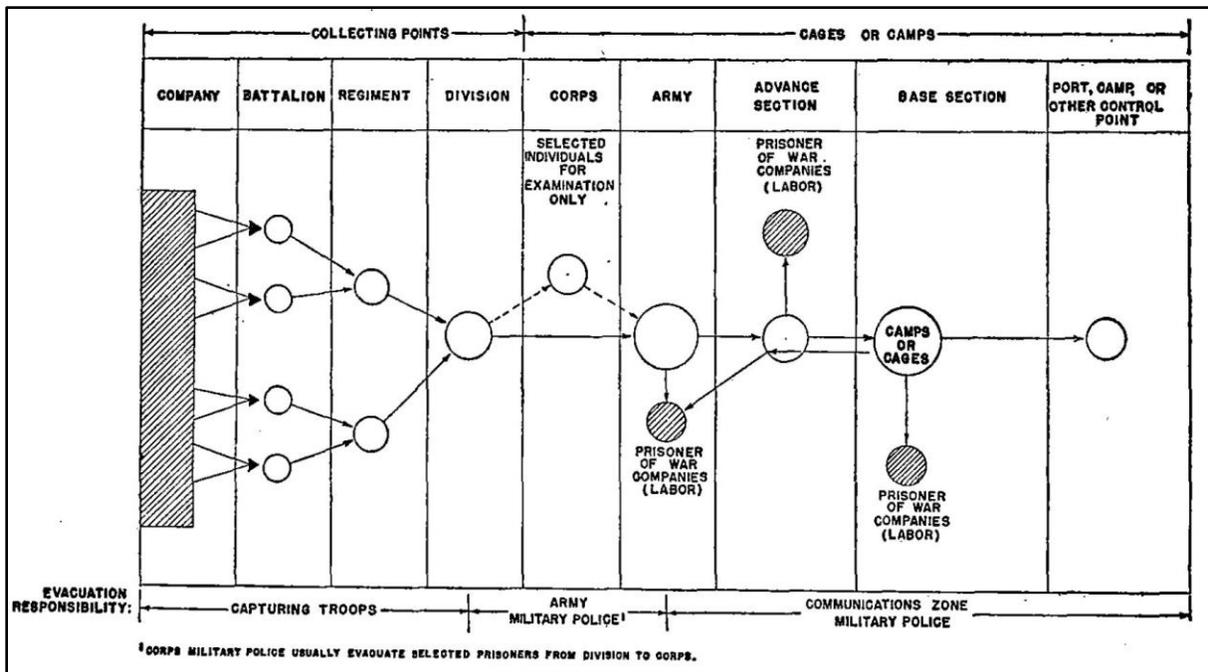


Figure 2.6 Schematic diagram of evacuation of prisoners of war, *FM 19-40 (1952)*.¹¹⁰

These representations indicate how, inside the US military in the post-Second World War period, attention was being increasingly paid to the reconstruction of mass confinement and interrogation as a rationalised discipline. It was to be performed as part of broader preparations of expertly managed space. And that space was an abstract one. Doctrinal materials were technical means through which officers were to recognise that they must handle captured bodies and extract interrogation intelligence anywhere they operated and in exactly the same way. Local geographical, political, and socio-cultural circumstances were to be sublimated by modern calculative instruments, plans, and discipline. In this way, as Nisa argues, wartime detainment and interrogation became a matter of ideals and abstract principles, knowledge that acquired lightness and disembodied circulation. Mass interrogation became a ‘machine’ that could be picked up and moved wherever it was strategically necessary.¹¹¹ A discourse of mechanical efficiency and value capture became ever more salient to Army descriptions of the space of intelligence operations, with a 1952 field manual declaring that:

¹¹⁰ Ibid., 34.

¹¹¹ Nisa, "Capturing the Forgotten War," 21.

The *systematic and methodical* interrogation of prisoners of war is one of the most *productive* sources of intelligence. The system of intelligence interrogation parallels that of evacuation. Interrogation takes precedence over rapid evacuation, except in forward areas where the prompt removal of prisoners of war from dangerous areas is prescribed by the Geneva Convention. Military police must understand the principles of interrogation in order to avoid the improper handling of prisoners of war and *the consequent reduction of their value* as a source of enemy information.¹¹²

As the next chapter explains, the idea of rationally managing the large-scale production of abstract military knowledge began to take hold within the armies of Europe decades prior. However, it was in the mid-century when US intelligence field manuals and other doctrinal pronouncements began to sediment into compound discipline. By the Korean War, US military detention and interrogation was a highly sophisticated, abstract field of reason that prescribed rules for the industrial-scale management of bodies and data. This technology of war would become a familiar feature in later US wars. Figure 2.7 is taken from Vietnam War-era Army doctrine that specifies how capture and tactical interrogation must be carried out in the battlezone. Promulgated the same year as the second film vignette in chapter 1 was produced, *Field Manual 30-15, Intelligence Interrogation*, once again ‘proceduralises’ interrogation. However, written to support a ‘war without fronts’, it conspicuously lacks the kinds of linear spatialisations used in earlier doctrine (future US land forces detainee handling manuals would eschew them in favour of highly abstract, topological representations also),¹¹³ while still filtering it through the mechanistic language of modern logistics: ‘The proper conditioning of PW for interrogation can be materially aided by a well-organized and smoothly functioning handling and evacuation system ... Troops must be completely oriented in the four Ss of PW handling: *Search, Silence, Safeguard* and *Secure*’. The compound discipline of mass interrogation

¹¹² Department of the Army, *FM 19-40 Handling of Prisoners of War*, 18.

¹¹³ On the abstraction of the prisoner and the battlefield in US military doctrine over the latter half of the twentieth century and into the twenty-first, see Richard Nisa, "Between Capture and the Camp: Apprehending Prisoners in America's Wars 1949--2011" (PhD dissertation, Rutgers, 2013), 94--126, <https://rucore.libraries.rutgers.edu/rutgers-lib/39658/PDF/1/play/>.

encompassed the interpersonal encounter and was again bedded down through references to rational, compartmentalised processes and strict adherence to routine. As *FM 19-40* reminded soldiers, conformity to procedure was something expected ‘not only of prisoners of war but also of capturing troops’.¹¹⁴

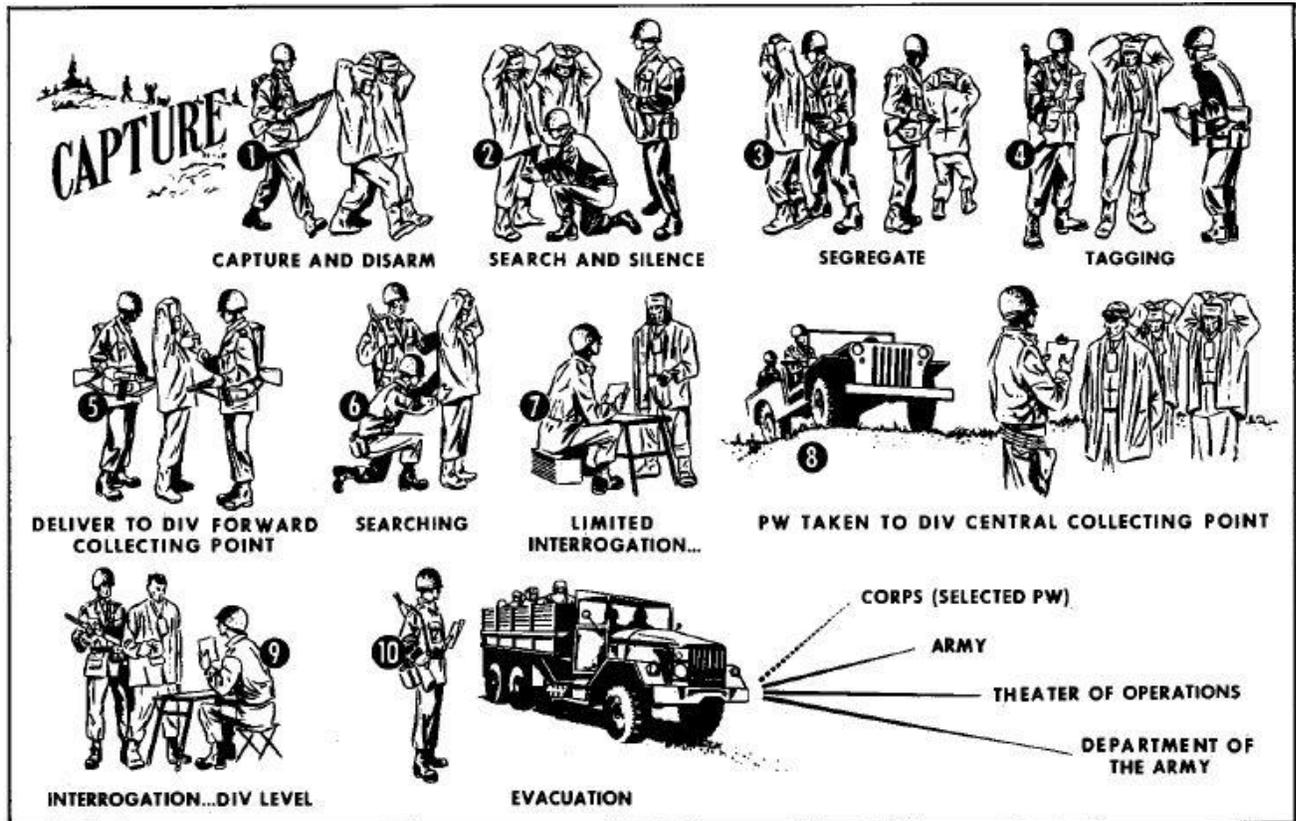


Figure 2.7 Handling and interrogation of PW at tactical levels according to the Army's *FM 30-15, Intelligence Interrogation* (1969).¹¹⁵

These examples suggest some of the ways in which US mass interrogation has worked through managerial proceduralisation and articulated a series of extended spaces of compound discipline for mass interrogation. Modern administrative and organisational techniques lay down schematised networks of surveilled sites. Across and within them military specialists are put to work to circulate and ‘process’ efficiently information and bodies. Mass interrogation is in this

¹¹⁴ Ibid.

¹¹⁵ Department of the Army, *FM 30-15, Intelligence Interrogation* (Washington, DC, March 1969), Item Number 1070317001, Glenn Helm Collection, VCA-TTU, §3-3, https://vva.vietnam.ttu.edu/repositories/2/digital_objects/74304.

way a spatial performance of American military power, permitting the machine of war to set up interrogation and detention apparatuses wherever it may be deployed. However, as the next subsection shows, mass interrogation does not just remake the space of war. It involves the representation of geography as well.

Eyes in the skies

The initiatives sketched out in chapter 1 were clearly inspired not only by the ambition to construct and control spaces of internal political regulation, but also to delineate and represent the wider geographies of war through the production of a particular form of representational knowledge: ‘intelligence’. Whether it is Second World War-era bombing targets, guerrillas’ ‘lines of movement’, or Chris Mackey’s reporting of terror ‘plots’ on a Teletype machine, mass interrogation is directed towards the fundamental geographical challenges that confront all compilers of military intelligence: determining the locations of enemies and describing their behaviours, calculating distances, mapping political geographical and topographical patterns, representing distant places, and so on. In each such case, intelligence functions as a geographical ‘aid to statecraft’.¹¹⁶

Mass interrogation is thus a spatial practice in the second sense that it delineates the geographies of war in order to intervene in and dominate them. Of course, any exercise of organisational power is necessarily entangled with space and knowledge. A large political geographical literature now takes for granted that none of these three facets of organisational power are subservient to any other. Rather, knowledge, space, and power emerge dynamically, mutually constituted through claims to rule and right political order. When a power-knowledge network is put into action, truths may be consolidated, spaces domesticated and produced anew, and novel forms of authority facilitated.¹¹⁷ The conduct of war is perhaps the most dramatic

¹¹⁶ On the provision of geographical knowledge as aid to statecraft and imperialism see Felix Driver, "Geography's Empire: Histories of Geographical Knowledge," *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space* 10, no. 1 (1992): 23, <https://doi.org/10.1068/d100023>.

¹¹⁷ See, for example, Michel Foucault, "Questions on Geography," in *Power/Knowledge: Selected Interviews and Other Writings, 1972--1977*, ed. Colin Gordon (New York: Vintage, 1980), 63--77; Stuart Elden and Jeremy W. Crampton, "Introduction: Space, Knowledge and Power: Foucault and Geography," in *Space Knowledge and Power: Foucault and Geography*, eds. Jeremy W. Crampton and Stuart Elden (Aldershot, UK: Ashgate, 2007), 1--18; Derek Gregory, *Geographical Imaginations* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1994).

expression of organised modern power, and it is also predicated on the generation of knowledge of geography.

As a primary means by which modern military power entangles space and knowledge, intelligence is a key political technology of war. It facilitates the translation of complex geographies into spatialised, circulatable, informational forms for direct military use. Gerard Toal observes that, through the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries, virtually every advanced military had enacted ambitious projects of spatial representation such that, by the close of the First World War, ‘each military machine fought with their own assemblages of geographic intelligence, including maps and navigational datums that were national products’.¹¹⁸ But this geographical enterprise does not require disciplinary geographers for its operation. From the Second World War onwards, and particularly in the US, the broader intelligence enterprise became embedded within a military-industrial-academic complex that mangled a whole range of other disciplines, reconditioning prior ambitions and sparking several new fields of expertise. During the cold war, a litany of expert knowledges other than geography were enrolled into the US state’s explicit and implicit efforts to apprehend the world by technical means in order to prepare for a potential nuclear world war with the Soviet Union, among other strategic threats.¹¹⁹

‘Human intelligence’ is just one of a range of modalities of modern warfare that have been developed in order to measure and technocratically analyse the space of the war in this way. To examine its role in the US national security state, we must identify how epistemic materials gathered by means of interrogation morph into something more firmly spatial, seemingly solid descriptions of the world freed from their subjective origins. To do this, Trevor Barnes adapts Bruno Latour’s classic refrain to argue for the need to examine ‘military intelligence in action’. He argues that understanding how intelligence represents geographically necessarily requires tracing its own geographies of production and circulation. This kind of state knowledge has little instrumental power in a vacuum. It must be cycled to calculative centres in order to facilitate

¹¹⁸ Gerard Toal, "Battlefield," in *The SAGE Handbook of Geographical Knowledge*, eds. John A. Agnew and David N. Livingstone (London: SAGE, 2011), 218.

¹¹⁹ Barnes and Farish, "Between Regions: Science, Militarism, and American Geography from World War to Cold War."

‘action at a distance’.¹²⁰ In adopting this practice-based approach to the geography of intelligence, Barnes shows how, during and after the Second World War, disciplinary geographers became increasingly shut out of these circuits. Their role in intelligence production declined over the cold war decades, particularly in the US.¹²¹ While over the twentieth century war may still have been ‘altogether based on geography’, scholarly geographers oftentimes played a limited role.¹²²

Instead, in advanced militaries after 1945, the spatialisations of later modern war have been more often performed by large-scale, multidisciplinary, technology-laden, and deeply bureaucratised state apparatuses. The same is true for mass interrogation. It has been a part of this century-long efflorescence of quasi-scientific, bureaucratised means for acquiring geographical information about enemies. Accordingly, the following chapters show that, rather than scholarly forms, its intelligence outputs are largely data streams emanating from calculative sites populated by a range of specialised, but non-academic personnel. They are in the industrialised business of translating subject materials into geospatial, locational, technical, industrial, and other intelligence *en masse*. Large numbers of human subjects are drawn in while stacks of information are circulated back out to centres of authority for further transformation. These spatialising processes may begin with the isolation and questioning of human subjects, the recording of their subjective responses. However, those ‘raw’ materials are usually messy and partial. Technical arrangements must be put in place in order to chisel indeterminate responses into robust artefacts of military knowledge. They are consolidated into new spatial forms: tactical maps, strategic targets, topographical information, tabularised data on enemy materiel and resources, biomedical readings of enemies and more. In this way, the geographic power of mass interrogation relies not on geographers, but the judicious application of spatial tools such as calculated distances, coordinates, topographic overlays, order of battle estimations, or transposition to sketch maps, which may show anything from insurgents’ possible line of

¹²⁰ Trevor J. Barnes, "Geographical Intelligence: American Geographers and Research and Analysis in the Office of Strategic Services 1941--1945," *Journal of Historical Geography* 32, no.1 (2006): 162, 151, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jhg.2005.06.001>.

¹²¹ See Elliott C. Child and Trevor J. Barnes. "American Imperial Expansion and Area Studies without Geography," *Journal of Historical Geography* 66 (2019): 43--54, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jhg.2018.08.001>.

¹²² H.B. George, quoted in Michael Heffernan, "Geography, Cartography and Military Intelligence: The Royal Geographical Society and the First World War," *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers* 21, no.3 (1996): 504, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/622594>.

movement to factories supporting the Soviet industrial economy. In most cases, by the time they become intelligence reports, the informational resources conveyed by mass interrogation systems are often highly schematic representations of the battlefield (or more recently, 'battlespace'), or they are galvanised with the logical rigour of a list of database entries.

The considerable work expended in achieving these transformations is made possible by compartmentalised labour. Far from an intellectual pursuit or an 'art', mass interrogation rests on the assumption that intelligence is a latent material lying 'inside' human sources. It can be realised by military officers who are trained in the mechanics of 'extracting' it methodically and ferrying it to other specialists who are responsible for spatialising new knowledge, transforming it into the kinds of abstract intelligence that represents battlespace from a detached perspective. These precepts have encouraged mass interrogation to become progressively more bureaucratised. Over the twentieth century, especially in the US military, the spatial-organisational distribution of its power and knowledge became increasingly bifurcated between an upper layer of military management, where planning expertise, decision-making, and programme development was concentrated, and a class of lower level intelligence and military police officers responsible for line management, the performance of routine activities, and repetitive tasks. These latter responsibilities not only encompassed the interpersonal interrogation encounter itself, but also the mass production of the resulting intelligence materials.¹²³

The next chapter charts a line of development for this bureaucratised discipline that begins in the early twentieth century. However, the example of the 'war on terror' again offers a graphic demonstration of the beguiling power of mass interrogation to spatialise the geography of war from a detached perspective. In a now infamous 2006 interview with the international lawyer, Phillippe Sands, the Bush Administration's Under Secretary of Defense for Policy, Douglas Feith, explained how, after September, 11, 2001, agencies of the US national security state gathered around a figurative 'table' to decide upon the best means for peering through the

¹²³ On the space of bureaucratisation see Peter Meusburger, "Relations Between Knowledge and Power: An Overview of Research Questions and Concepts," in *Power, Knowledge, and Space: A Geographical Introduction*, eds. Peter Meusburger, Derek Gregory, and Laura Suarsana (Dordrecht, NL: Springer, 2015), 61; and Trevor J. Barnes, "'Desk Killers': Walter Christaller, Central Place Theory, and the Nazis," in *Power, Knowledge, and Space: A Geographical Introduction*, eds. Peter Meusburger, Derek Gregory, and Laura Suarsana (Dordrecht, NL: Springer, 2015), 187--202.

fog of war. A global, networked space of ‘Islamic terrorism’ needed to be charted if it was to be intervened in and obliterated. With relative swiftness, the officials agreed that their primary mode of intelligence collection would have to be the ‘extraction’ of oral responses from imprisoned enemies, a policy that would be carried out at scale. Feith recalls the shared realisation that

we’ve been attacked, we’re concerned about the next attack. The only way to fight this war is to get the intelligence about what the enemy is doing. During the Cold War we could get that from satellites looking at armored formations. In this war the intelligence is all in peoples’ heads. So interrogation is as important as our eyes in the skies during the Cold War ... the intelligence is in the heads of these people. We need to extract it.¹²⁴

As we will discover in chapter 4, the implication that mass interrogation did not play a role in fighting the cold war is mistaken. However, more important here is Feith’s common-sense comparison of it to high-altitude photographic technology. Mass interrogation’s capacity to represent the space of war was mesmerising and self-evident, like a camera lens. Its technological capacities could be assumed by senior national security figures even when almost none of them had any experience with it at all. Indeed, in another vital moment in Sands interview, Feith shifts gear, claiming that despite his instinctive recognition of interrogation’s spatial function, he was proactively unaware of its operational aspects. He argued that he was merely part of a larger war apparatus whose complexity exceeded the comprehension of any one individual, his primary duty was merely to ensure that his superiors’ ‘policy interest’ was realised:

FEITH: I didn’t know the names of the people at Gitmo, I didn’t see their interrogation reports, I was not asked about their interrogation techniques ... In a bureaucracy you have your responsibilities, you’ve got to discharge your responsibilities, and you can’t be doing other peoples’ work, I mean, that gets you in trouble, right?

SANDS: Like any organization.

¹²⁴ Douglas J. Feith, interview by Phillippe Sands, transcript in *From the Department of Justice to Guantanamo Bay: Administration Lawyers and Administration Interrogation Rules (Part IV)*, Hearing Before the Subcommittee on the Constitution, Civil Rights, and Civil Liberties, of the Committee on the Judiciary, 110th Cong. (15 July 2008) (Appendix: Material Submitted for the Hearing Record), <https://www.hsdl.org/?view&did=33756>, 156--157.

FEITH: Right, there's a lawyer, and he's responsible for the law, and then the intelligence people ... once I decided that the intel people were essentially at the table, and the lawyers were at the table, at that point I was not going to second-guess the intel people on their judgments or the lawyers on their judgments...¹²⁵

As a 'policy person' and not one of the 'intel people', Feith's expert identity freed him of responsibility for the development and application of the various brutal interrogation techniques carried out by his organisation. In the exercise of military power, the nexus of knowledge and space involves certain investments in expert understanding as well as cultivated, compartmentalised ignorance. In this case, the 'war on terror' interrogation intelligence system needed both senior managers and those lower down the hierarchy who were responsible for actually compiling new spatial artefacts. The 'eyes in the skies' are a corporate organ, made possible through collective labour and a composite apparatus of disciplines.

Some figures are more directly responsible for intelligence production, of course. Indeed, over the last decade the Pentagon and the CIA have both martialled a core defence of their torture programmes, suggesting their geographic and other intelligence artefacts accurately represented the space of war. Interrogation intelligence, we are told, succeeded in spatialising the murky geography of a 'global terrorist network', after all. In 2014, when the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence finally handed down its long-awaited report into the CIA's torture regime, a group of Republican senators recapitulated the Agency's defence in their minority report. They bemoaned the public resources 'squandered' through the critical evaluation of the torture program, asserting that it was an exercise in staring into 'the rear-view mirror'.¹²⁶ Brutal methods, they contended, were regrettable but in some key cases justified due to the 'detailed tactical intelligence' that spun out of 'enhanced interrogations'. As proof, they disinterred a CIA representation to congressional officials in 2004. It claimed that the recent torture of Hassan Ghul in Afghanistan had delivered, if not 'eyes in the skies', then at least the partial vision from a distance that would eventually result in the assassination of Osama bin Laden in Pakistan:

¹²⁵ Ibid., 147--148.

¹²⁶ "Minority Views of Vice Chairman Chambliss, Senators Burr, Risch, Coats, Rubio, and Coburn, June 20, 2014," in Senate Select Committee on Intelligence, *The Official Senate Report on CIA Torture: Committee Study of the Central Intelligence Agency's Detention and Interrogation Program* (New York: Skyhorse, 2015) [hereafter *SSCI Report*], 520--677.

Shkai, Pakistan. The interrogation of Hassan Ghul provided *detailed* tactical intelligence showing that Shkai, Pakistan was a major Al-Qa’ida hub in the tribal areas. Through [the] use of ██████████ during the Ghul interrogation, we mapped out and pinpointed the residences of key AQ leaders in Shkai ... he sat down with ████████ experts and pointed to specific locations where he had met some of the senior al-Qa’ida members who the CIA was trying to find ... He used ████████ to give more details about the “Bachelor House,” the “Ida Khan Complex” ... Hassan Ghul drew a detailed map of the locations of a training camp/safehouse near Shkai, provided route information to the site, provided a detailed sketch of the compound and specified the rooms where explosives were stored.¹²⁷

Here we are urged to understand interrogation intelligence as both spatialised material and an acutely geographical performance. Its accumulation is driven by the desire to compile databanks of strategic-analytical information that can be used to represent enemies and visualise the battlespace in the form of maps, locational information, and other geographical data. Spatialisation also exceeded the strictly geospatial, diagramming the cultural and organisational space of the ‘global terrorist network’. For example, the CIA was explicitly keen to ‘map out’ detainees’ kinship structures during interrogations.¹²⁸ Indeed, much of the intelligence derived from Hassan Ghul’s interrogations was used not to represent a battlefield, but more indeterminate enemy territory: phone numbers, email addresses, names, and the living arrangements of enemy families.

Examining ‘intelligence in action’ reveals that there is a geography to the compilation and circulation of this epistemic material. The ‘extraction’ of knowledge from Ghul involved the cycling of his body through some of the nodes of information management and incarceration noted in the previous section. After he was initially captured and interrogated by Peshmerga forces in Iraqi Kurdistan, Ghul was questioned by CIA personnel in Afghanistan before being sent to a new black site in Romania, where he was brutalised. While its timeline of events is hotly disputed, the CIA based its defence of Ghul’s torture on the production of what Latour would call ‘immutable and combinable mobiles’—in this case inscriptions in the form of twenty-one standardised ‘intelligence reports’ which were sent digitally to databases at Headquarters in

¹²⁷ "Minority Views of Vice Chairman Chambliss," *SSCI Report*, 616--617, emphasis in original.

¹²⁸ *SSCI Report*, 382, n. 2155.

the US from Afghanistan.¹²⁹ As Latour argues, the mobility of geographical representations imbues them with a power of objectivity. They permit one location to ‘accumulate other places far away in space and time, and present them synoptically to the eye’ (though in this case not the public’s eyes, of course). The case of Hassan Ghul’s brutal treatment for the purpose of collecting geographical knowledge is just one example of the way in which mass interrogation works through the circulation of wartime knowledge, with spatial and other information dispatched from local sites to points of strategic calculation. Interrogation reports are epistemic products, a powerful and secretive means for militaries to ‘bring the rest of the world ... to the centre’.¹³⁰

The world as it really is

For mass interrogation to perform this power, however, its political subjects must gather spatialising materials, create immutable mobiles, and redistribute them as objective knowledge stripped of its contingent origins. Their ‘internal complexity’ must be rubbed out, as Latour puts it. To work as a geographical aid to statecraft, intelligence must appear as an authoritative index of the world. A range of technical manoeuvres must be martialled in order to achieve the effect of abstract, disembodied truth. This is not merely to say that ‘more accurate’ knowledge of the world must be attained through ‘better’ practice. Rather, for a mass interrogation system to appear successful, its operations, human subjects, and informational objects must be brought together as a rational, integrated calculative system. Its specialist subjects must be presented with a range of sound instruments to employ and compartmentalised procedures to follow in order for intelligence to be compiled and communicated, the world made known to authorities.

Put differently, the philosopher Martin Heidegger might say that mass interrogation’s political agents and administrators enter a world that is ‘enframed’ as a technological resource, something to be exploited as a ‘standing reserve’.¹³¹ ‘Standing reserve’ here does not simply imply something akin to a stockpile. It refers to the modern way of ordering and subordinating

¹²⁹ Bruno Latour, "Visualisation and Cognition: Drawing Things Together," in *Knowledge and Society: Studies in the Sociology of Culture Past and Present*, volume 6, ed. Henrika Kuklick (Greenwich, CT: JAI Press, 1986), 7--13; *SSCI Report*, 130.

¹³⁰ Barnes, "Geographical Intelligence," 152; Heffernan, "Geography, Cartography and Military Intelligence."

¹³¹ Martin Heidegger, "The Question Concerning Technology," in *Martin Heidegger: Basic Writings: From Being and Time (1927) to The Task of Thinking (1964)*, ed. David Farrell Krell (New York: Harper Collins, 1993), 322.

the world as something fundamentally technological. To employ Heidegger's terms, a complex, modern, machinic military apparatus commonly reveals the geography of war to its interpellated subjects as a 'whole structure' of things. It is a 'sphere of technological activity' defined by instrumental reason, a series of objects to be challenged and calculated from an external or detached position ('synoptically', as Latour puts it, or 'eyes in the skies' in Feith's phrasing).¹³² The space of mass interrogation is recurrently produced in ways that deliver for military intelligence personnel this sense that, upon entering it they can question human subjects, report their findings, and contribute to a collective grasping, indexing, and visualising of war and conflict as it *really* is.

For interrogation intelligence to deliver this power to represent geography objectively, its inscriptions and pronouncements must convey a capacity to hold space in a calculative, enframing way. Interrogation materials—like all intelligence—must *performatively* capture information from a detached perspective: the world must be represented by national security agencies seemingly without intervening in it. This capacity for an apparatus ostensibly to disclose reality while erasing the acts of distribution and construction required to bring it into view rests on the capacity to create 'the impression of a structure separate from its contents', in Mitchell's crisp description.¹³³ One means of creating this impression is for mass interrogation apparatuses to scrub spatial information free of its subjective origins.

Figure 2.8 conveys the kind of perspectival detachment adopted in many modern mass interrogation systems. It is an early-cold war report produced in a far-flung US Air Force (USAF) intelligence site, a 'memory sketch' of the massive 'Svetlana 211' factory in Leningrad, a facility producing metal tubes and casings, strategically important products. It was drawn in Germany, through the non-coercive interrogation of a soldier-cum-prisoner who had been forced to labour in Russia but had eventually been repatriated to Europe in the late-1940s. As I describe in detail in chapter 4, his interrogators wanted many such immutable, recombinable mobiles in the early cold war—rudimentary maps of sites in the Soviet Union—so that they could be circulated to the 'centre' (Washington, DC) for synoptic integration. In this case the disembodied

¹³² On Heidegger, calculative thinking, and geography see Jeremy W. Crampton, "Cartographic Calculations of Territory," *Progress in Human Geography* 34, no. 1 (2010): 94, <https://doi.org/10.1177/0309132509358474>.

¹³³ Timothy Mitchell, *Colonising Egypt* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1991), 79.

eye of military calculation envisioned lists of strategic targets in the event of a global and strategic air war.

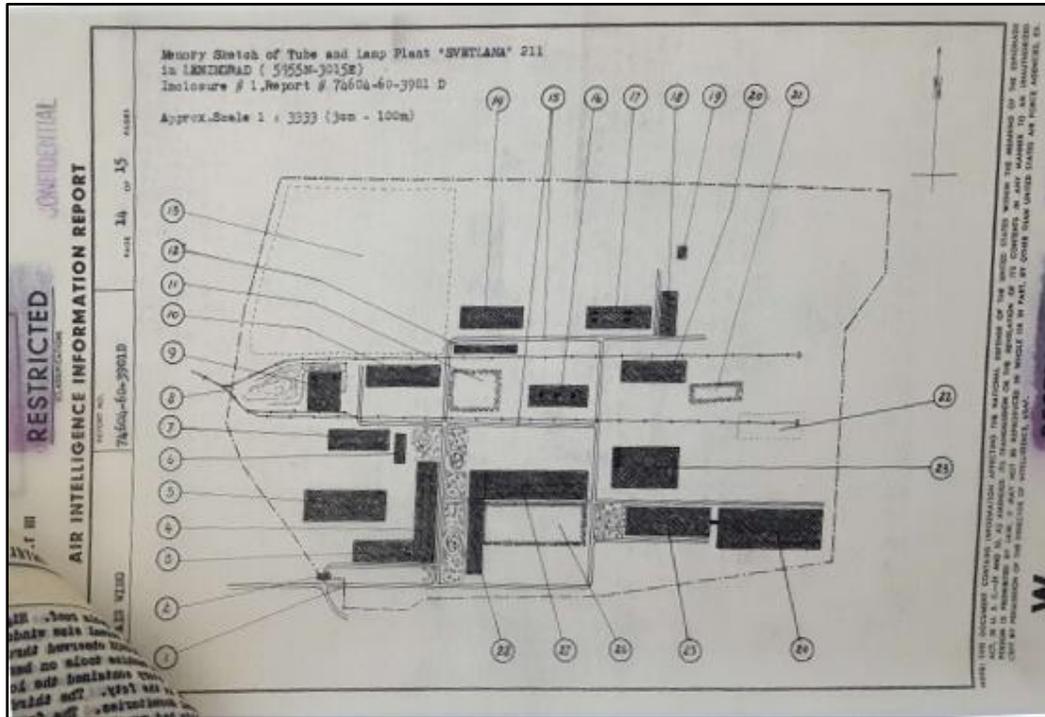


Figure 2.8 A ‘memory sketch’ of the Leningrad ‘Svetlana 211’ tube and lamp plant. Drawn by a detainee labourer in the Soviet Union upon his return to Germany and interrogation by USAF.¹³⁴

These human intelligence artefacts emerge from a process of informational alchemy. Once an abstract geographical representation is removed from the interrogation room, with its subjective origins stripped away, it acquires the lightness of data. It is free to wander and mutate. In figure 2.9, the Svetlana plant has been transformed into a new item of geographical knowledge, catalysed into a single, abstract line of geostrategic target data for the purposes of coordinating a possible air war. The story behind the production of this target code—almost certainly achieved through interrogation alone in the era before systematic aerial surveillance—will be returned to in chapter 4. For now, it is enough to note that it illustrates a crucial point

¹³⁴ Memory sketch from Wringer Report No. 74604-60-3901D, ‘Svetlana 211’ tube and lamp factory in Leningrad, available in Folder: Leningrad VII, Box 994, Entry no. A11006, Reports of Returning POWs and Detainees Under Soviet Control (“Wringer Reports”), RG 341, NARA II.

about mass interrogation as a spatial practice: its geographies are deeply performative, its political formations *in* space animating particular knowledges *of* space.

LENINGRAD RDO A INSTR P KAZITSKIY616	521				1	100	0153	0370	178
LENINGRAD RDO A INSTR P KAZITSKIY616	523				1	100	0153	0083	178
LENINGRAD RADIO AND TELEPHONE PLANT794	521	5953	03020		1	100	0153	0509	178
LENINGRAD RADIO AND TELEPHONE PLANT794	523	5953	03020		1	100	0153	0509	178
LENINGRAD SCIENTIFIC TECH INSTITUTE 49	524	5956	03022		1	100	0153	0440	178
LENINGRAD TV INST A P LESNOY NII 380	525	6000	03022		1	100	0103	0253	211
LENINGRAD TV INST A P LESNOY NII 380	529	6000	03022		1	100	0103	0253	211
LENINGRAD TV INST A P FONTANKA NII 380	525				1	100	0153	0239	178
LENINGRAD TV INST A P FONTANKA NII 380	529				1	100	0153	0239	178
LENINGRAD TPH A RADIO PLANT KR ZARYA	521				1	100	0153	0111	178
LENINGRAD TPH A RADIO PLANT KR ZARYA	523				1	100	0153	0111	178
LENINGRAD TUBE A LAMP PLT SVETLANA 211	525	6001	03020		1	100	0103	0051	211
LVOV RADIO PLANT	523				1	100	0232	1025	164
LVOV TEL AND TEL PLANT	521				1	100	0232	0284	164
LVOV TEL AND TEL PLANT	522				1	100	0232	0284	164
MINSK RADIO PLANT MOLOTOV	523	5355	02735		1	100	0168	0066	144
MINSK RADIO PLANT MOLOTOV	525	5355	02735		1	100	0168	0066	144
MINSK TELEPHONE AND TELEGRAPH PLANT	521	5354	02734		1	100	0168	0067	144
MINSK TELEPHONE AND TELFGRAPH PLANT	522	5354	02734		1	100	0168	0067	144

Figure 2.9 The Leningrad ‘Svetlana 211’ tube and lamp plant converted into a *Bombing Encyclopedia* target code line.¹³⁵

The following chapters explore other examples where mass interrogation spatialises the geography of war. In each case they are not automatic achievements of transcribing oral responses from human sources. To be useful in military operations as calculative intelligence, the maps and target lines created through interrogations must be understood to disclose cultural-political-geographical order as it really exists. It must command a sense of expert objectivity, what Donna Haraway calls the ‘god trick of seeing everything from nowhere’.¹³⁶ That magic trick requires the simultaneous deployment of expert techniques for inscribing space out of interrogations and simultaneously erasing those subjective origins in the process. As with other geographical devices that claim the limpid, universal vision of ‘radical abstraction’, these processes are highly political. Claims to global, abstract vision and reason go hand in hand with

¹³⁵ "Bombing Encyclopedia, Categorical Listing," Sixteenth Edition, Volume III, August 1955, prepared by Directorate of Intelligence, USAF, Folder: S-421-56, Box 2, RG 330, NARA II, 151.

¹³⁶ Haraway, "Situated Knowledges," 581.

claims to boundless power and authority.¹³⁷ The examples provided so far clearly suggest that mass interrogation's spatial practices are mediated by both technological and political forces. For this reason, before we embark on detailed examinations of these contingent acts of military reason, I will specify how mass interrogation is constituted as a technopolitical apparatus that regulates subjects and aligns technical features to instrumental ends.

The technopolitical apparatus of mass interrogation

As a part of its mass interrogation operation in Afghanistan, Chris Mackey felt a profound sense of responsibility for extending the US Army's political mission there, to taking an ideological war to the prisoners who 'hate America'. But in recalling day-to-day operations, his immediate objectives were tightly delimited, rules that broke political missions down into 'technical processes evacuated of political contestation'.¹³⁸ When it came down to it, his intelligence work was not really a 'spy game' at all. It was something much more economical and programmatic, a set of techniques for gathering 'slivers' of data and contributing them into a larger network of bureaucratised information production. Indeed, while his book embraces the fervent thinking-from-the-gut instincts that marked the contemporary American political climate more generally, he was also an enthusiastic contributor to the Army's canvas cage of 'proceduralism'. That is, as Khalili describes, the 'will to improve' through banal, managerial improvements that is 'immanent to all bureaucracies'.¹³⁹ At his Bagram Interrogation Control Element, Mackey admitted that a colleague 'chafed at the way I ran the place', which

was largely modelled on the work-everyone-to-the-bone world of public accounting. We had scrapped schedules in favor of minimum requirements that kept everyone in the Facility pretty much around the clock: two interrogations a day, every report finished within twenty-four hours. I kept statistics on the interrogators' productivity, tracking how many interrogations they completed, how many reports they stuffed into our records, and how many of those warranted dissemination to the

¹³⁷ John Pickles, *A History of Spaces: Cartographic Reason, Mapping, and the Geo-coded World* (London: Routledge, 2004), 6--7; Matthew Farish, *The Contours of America's Cold War* (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 2010), 46--47.

¹³⁸ Khalili, *Time in the Shadows*, 170.

¹³⁹ *Ibid.*

intelligence community as IIRs. The numbers were all posted on a bulletin board in the ICE. If an interrogator's ratio of IIRs to interrogations fell below 33 percent, I was on his case until his numbers started climbing. It was our equivalent of a batting average. Even the morning meetings were structured to pressure interrogators to work harder. Each day, every echo ['Human Intelligence Collector', Military Occupational Specialty 97E] had to recite what he or she had accomplished in the last twenty-four hours. If someone wasn't pulling his weight, he could expect hostile glares or worse from his peers. Just to keep up statistically, some interrogators had taken to catching up on rest in the booth. They wouldn't fall asleep, but would pick a prisoner who required only a few bits of follow-up and stretch the session out for hours, letting the prisoner prattle on about the Koran while they stared back with glazed eyes hiding a mind that had been cycled down to sleep mode.¹⁴⁰

In this system, Mackey responded to the bureaucratic imperative to supply an impersonal system with demonstrable products of work by devising rationalised techniques of organisational control. Its military and detained subjects were like technological components in a larger mechanism, with machine-like officers 'cycling down to sleep mode' when they were fatigued. Rather than a singular technique or an 'interpersonal encounter', here mass interrogation operates as a *technopolitical apparatus*. In this section I explain the elements of this conceptual framing. First, I describe in further detail what is meant by the terms 'technopolitical' and 'apparatus'. Second, I briefly note how this framing has been taken up in similar political geographical studies. Finally, I examine how the presence of technical equipment orients mass interrogation's political subjects to recognise its industrial-managerial rationality almost instinctively.

A social machine

An 'apparatus' is not a detached tool with a singular purpose. It is more like a political technology capable of setting and adjusting norms, one that concatenates materials and subjects in ways that permit new forms of agency, technical capacities, and organised power. Mass interrogation platforms can be thought of as 'apparatuses' because they are political technologies

¹⁴⁰ Mackey, with Miller, *The Interrogator's War*, 352.

whose internal dynamics are to some extent reconfigured by the subjects who inhabit and constitute them, agents as institutionally scattered as Chris Mackey and Douglas Feith. At the same time, apparatuses also have broader effects. They regulate the ‘multiplicities’—the collections of subjects—who operate them in recursive, co-productive relationships. Much more than a set of norms or authoritative concepts, then, these are systems made up of lively materials that affect regimes of communication and information production in unpredictable ways. The political effects of apparatuses are wide-ranging, extending from the formation of subjects’ specific identities to the prosecution of war.

No matter its scale, however, an apparatus relies, at least in part, on its political subjects to act as if they are constrained by a rubric of norms that hang together by some internal logic. Put differently, for an apparatus to become self-sustaining, some participants must actively submit to it, they must be creatively ‘rulebound’. This is seen in Mackey’s imaginative commitment to his ‘public accounting’ tools. Elsewhere in chapter 1 we met characters who were committed to following intelligence guidelines in order to move the Army forward collectively, ‘from here to victory’. In fact, in all the examples offered in this dissertation, intelligence interrogation works as a collective set of labour processes that are methodical and rationalised from the perspective of their political subjects.

At the same time, there is room for autonomy. These are specialised practices carried out in spaces of analytical expertise. The extension of managerial rationalities and commands does not transform intelligence officers into mere robots. Rather, the impersonality of procedures can produce and authorise ‘very personal forms of exercise of power’.¹⁴¹ For example, while Mackey followed orders and admitted that interrogation could be drudgery, sometimes descending into make-work, it also offered moments of exhilarating discovery and a semblance of autonomy. Rather than ‘low-skilled labor’, a mere cipher entirely subordinate to the whims of planners from on high, Mackey was proud of his Army intelligence officer cohort in Afghanistan, claiming he could ‘boast’ that no detainee went ‘unbroken’ on his watch. Indeed, the examples in chapter 1 give us a sense that, while mass interrogation’s circuits and diagrammed schemas resemble something mechanical, they nonetheless disclosed spaces wherein new kinds of ‘specialist’

¹⁴¹ Khalili, *Time in the Shadows*, 170.

subjects are brought into being in dynamic processes of self-acknowledgement, regulation, and material engagement.

In this dissertation mass interrogation systems are referred to as ‘apparatuses’ (and not tools) because they evince these indeterminate capacities to constrain and inspire. They are socio-spatial formations with strategic functions and propensities for animating certain forms of knowledge and power while keeping others at bay.¹⁴² The figure of the apparatus is most strongly associated with Michel Foucault’s studies of modern institutions and their dispersive powers of subjectivation (rather than ‘apparatuses’ he used the cognate term *dispositifs*). But Gilles Deleuze’s distilled restatement offers several handy extensions for consideration. He offers a schema built around the foundational ambition guiding the study of political apparatuses: the repudiation of universals in favour of immanent investigations of the social ‘machines’ to which subjects belong and receive direction, but which nonetheless constantly fracture and commingle.¹⁴³

Following Deleuze, and for the purposes of this dissertation, apparatuses are understood to display four integral elements. First, they *draw certain lines of sight into perceptibility*. That is, they structure the distribution of what is visible and invisible by enacting ways of ‘seeing without being seen’. Second, and relatedly, they constitute and make possible *regimes of enunciation*, so that the points of view from which subjects and objects are defined can be inaugurated and affirmed. Third, they operate within a *dimension of power*. By this is meant that apparatuses are not completely indeterminate. Rather, they exhibit a certain degree of stability (however tenuous) that results in internal ‘lines of force’ that tune their variables, imbue them with tendencies, imparting direction, and momentum. Finally, Deleuze argues that apparatuses are given shape and are instantiated through their capacity to set in train *non-linear (that is, non-deterministic) processes of subjectification*. They are only perpetuated when cycles of individuation and relations of Self are allowed to establish and recur. In other words, political subjects must creatively imagine their functional role in the machine if it is to work, not simply be coerced into its churning gears.

¹⁴² Michel Foucault, "The Confession of the Flesh," in *Power/Knowledge: Selected Interviews and Other Writings, 1972--1977*, ed. Colin Gordon (New York: Vintage, 1980), 194--204.

¹⁴³ Gilles Deleuze, "What is a *Dispositif*?," in *Michel Foucault: Philosopher*, translated by Timothy J. Armstrong, 159--168 (Hemel Hempstead, UK: Harvester Wheatsheaf, 1992). First published 1989 in French by Éditions du Seuil, under the direction of François Ewald.

To repeat: apparatuses are social machines that visualise and direct without being seen, their rule extending from impersonal forces; they make fields of rationality and speech possible, they generate discourses; they are predisposed to certain non-determinate ends, they do not simply melt into air but may be enduring, self-sustaining; and they are enrolled in processes of subjectivation, their political subjects supporting them through processes of self-identification. This combination of factors suggests that we should think of mass interrogation apparatuses as non-human, historical arrangements that will likely display two general conditions.

First, they will be functionally overdetermined. They convene as collections of processes and objects wherein each component ‘enters into resonance or contradiction with the others and thereby calls for a re-adjustment or a re-working of the heterogeneous elements that surface at various points.’ Second, these arrangements are, in Foucault’s terms, worked out in processes of ‘strategic elaboration’.¹⁴⁴ As seen in the examples in chapter 1, mass interrogation apparatuses do indeed coordinate and direct elements for the achievement of strategic measures (winning wars, knowing space, controlling sources, and much more). Yet these ambitions also exceed the comprehension of participants and precipitate unforeseen arrangements. Accordingly, we should also be sensitive to the ways in which apparatuses trigger the elaboration of entirely new and unpredictable milieus and domains of power and knowledge. To illustrate this point, Foucault describes the historical emergence of a hitherto inconceivable ‘delinquent milieu’. That space is now a common-sense field of expertise and social action but did not exist prior to the formation of the modern prison. At the same time, its novel appearance was not pre-programmed, or simply dreamed up. In Foucault’s words, it was not the result of a ‘strategic ruse on the part of some meta- or trans- historic subject’.¹⁴⁵

New, overdetermined milieus of reasoning and power were opened up through the extemporised development of ‘human intelligence’ expertise, as well. ‘Intelligence interrogation’ has emerged as a modern techno-discursive field of knowledge and practice over the last century, triggering new elaborations of expertise and experimentation along the way that would have been unimaginable at its foundation in prior decades. A striking example is the domain of ‘mind control’. It emerged as a novel milieu during the early-cold war and has proliferated in the form of numerous experiments, hypotheses, and political anxieties about the use of hypnosis and

¹⁴⁴ Foucault, "The Confession of the Flesh," 195.

¹⁴⁵ Ibid., 195--196.

pharmacology as aids to national security interrogation. As an apparatus of national security, this form of interrogation sought to dominate sources' psyches and fabricate hypno-chemical 'truth serums'. These were not just theoretical aspirations but direct operational objectives for the CIA's notorious Projects ARTICHOKE and MKUltra in the 1950s and 1960s.¹⁴⁶ Their administrators' underlying ambition was to 'own' an interrogation subject 'body and soul' using experimental chemical techniques.¹⁴⁷ But for this end to become even conceivable and tractable to national security planning, it first required a plane of expert interrogation knowledge and intelligence practice that would have been literally unthinkable just a few years earlier. Indeed, it is striking how few references are made to interrogatees' psyches across the historical record of interrogation, particularly before the Second World War.

Not every element of the CIA's cold war mind control-interrogation programme was completely new, of course. But the analytical point is that apparatuses such as the modern prison or mass interrogation are historically specific, overdetermined formations. The crucial empirical question cannot be reduced to the search for some originary locus, such as who 'discovered' them, or when they were invented. Rather, their technological and political features modulated each other to the extent that strategic elaborations encouraged the unpredictable concoction of new tools, institutions, and regimes of truth in human intelligence collection. To undertake a genealogy of the apparatus of mass interrogation therefore involves tracing the networked relations between its elements in time and space in the search for its unfolding capacities as a political technology to control, orientate, or enunciate.¹⁴⁸

Technopolitics and political geography

Expert technical knowledge and tools are crucially important to the conduct of mass interrogation. As the following chapter shows, since it began to emerge as an idea (albeit a tacit one) in advanced militaries in the early twentieth century, mass interrogation has not developed

¹⁴⁶ CIA, "Memorandum for the Record, Subject: Project ARTICHOKE," 31 January, 1975, National Security Archive, George Washington University, <https://nsarchive2.gwu.edu/NSAEBB/NSAEBB54/st02.pdf>; Alfred W. McCoy, *Torture and Impunity: The U.S. Doctrine of Coercive Interrogation* (Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin Press, 2012), 17--18.

¹⁴⁷ Tim Weiner, *Legacy of Ashes: The History of the CIA* (London: Penguin, 2008), 72--74.

¹⁴⁸ Giorgio Agamben, *What is an Apparatus? And Other Essays*, trans. by David Kishik and Stefan Pedatella (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2009), 7.

as a set of abstract precepts, as much as a common-sense field of practical extemporisation. As Edwards explains, within complex technological apparatuses, ‘tools shape discourse, but discourse also shapes tools’.¹⁴⁹ Technical equipment (physical or otherwise) folds into the political performance of mass interrogation by making action possible, shaping languages, and framing metaphors to material effect. Just as the field of expertise in ‘delinquent’ behaviour could not be imagined without the political and material technologies associated with criminology, information management, and prison architecture, one cannot imagine late modern military interrogation’s capacity to ‘extract’ from thousands of human sources their geographical knowledge of enemy territory without the technologies and instrumental logics that support the process (such as the computerised storage of resulting data), as well as the powerful informational metaphors (for example, intelligence as innumerable ‘grains’ or ‘bits’) that guide and mediate these encounters.

To bridge the technical, ideational, and political spheres, this dissertation utilises the figure of the ‘*technopolitical* apparatus’. It presupposes that power does not wield technologies as much as it moves *through* the technical sphere.¹⁵⁰ Concurrently, technologies exert certain material limitations—their possible uses and misuses are finite, baked into them. Consequently, rather than simply determining practice, a more nuanced approach must make sense of the capacities of technical things to reformat social reality as they are taken up in their performance. Accordingly, it is not the historical novelty of revolutionary tools or ‘breakthroughs’ in mass interrogation’s disciplinary knowledge that is central to the proceeding analyses. Rather, the idea of technopolitics directs attention to how objects and social relationships are reconfigured as technical regimes unfold in concrete situations.

The technopolitical is of interest to geographers who study how political regimes are formatted by large-scale technological assemblages. Particularly relevant to this dissertation are those recent studies approaching international relations, diplomacy, and later modern war as political and technical performances, contingent effects of material and cultural relations that are

¹⁴⁹ Paul N. Edwards, *The Closed World: Computers and the Politics of Discourse in Cold War America* (Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 1997), 30.

¹⁵⁰ Maximilian Mayer, "Nuclear Ontologies, Technopolitics in Postcolonial Spaces, and the Cold War as Transnational History: An Interview with Gabrielle Hecht," in *The Global Politics of Science and Technology*, eds. Maximilian Mayer, Mariana Carpes, and Ruth Knoblich (Berlin: Springer, 2014), 276, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-642-55007-2_16.

internal to state apparatuses.¹⁵¹ Gregory, for instance adapts a technopolitical analytic to analyse how combinations of tools, systems, dispositions, and supportive legal apparatuses permit whole modalities of later modern war to emerge, such as individuated warfare. This approach also helps to explain the inauguration of large-scale historico-military events such as the ‘vanishing battlefield’, the notional dispersal of battlespace by political and technical means that contributes to the generation of new spatialities of war.¹⁵²

Jason Dittmer eschews the term technopolitics in favour of assemblage thinking, but similarly searches out the non-deterministic ‘force relations’ between objects, institutions, and human subjects that formats military intelligence as a political technology.¹⁵³ In an evocative case study, he traces how the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation—a seemingly grand structural-geopolitical agent—gains force through the standardisation and integration of surprisingly ‘minor’, but extraordinarily mobile, forms of equipment, such as bullets, as well as mundane protocols, such as the linguistic-bureaucratic requirement for common languages to be adopted by joint forces.¹⁵⁴ Once ‘interoperable’ on a wide scale, the components of different nations’ militaries can be locked together as renewed technopolitical apparatuses (‘reterritorialised’ assemblages in his phrasing) that trigger phase-changes and permit new capacities, such as the ability of multinational forces to amass coherently on the battlefield, undertake at-sea rescue missions, or even remake political subjectivities, with policy ramifications for an entire continent.¹⁵⁵

The intimate technopolitical details of apparatus’ internal design features are thus vitally important to understanding how they channel political authority and knowledge, or produce ‘truth effects’.¹⁵⁶ Across the examples mentioned, the technical systems may be large in scale—advanced weapons and treaty organisations, for example—but their political capacities emerge

¹⁵¹ See, for example, Jason Dittmer, *Diplomatic Material: Affect, Assemblage, and Foreign Policy* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2017); Derek Gregory, "Drone Geographies," *Radical Philosophy* 183 (2014): 7--19, <https://www.radicalphilosophy.com/article/drone-geographies>; Chris Sneddon and Coleen Fox, "The Cold War, the US Bureau of Reclamation, and the Technopolitics of River Basin Development, 1950--1970," *Political Geography* 30, no. 8 (2011): 450--460, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.polgeo.2011.09.005>.

¹⁵² Derek Gregory, "Dirty Dancing: Drones and Death in the Borderlands," in *Life in the Age of Drone Warfare*, eds. Lisa Parks and Caren Kaplan (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2017), 44.

¹⁵³ Dittmer, *Diplomatic Material*, 8.

¹⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, 73--98.

¹⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, 77, 94.

¹⁵⁶ See Andrew Barry, *Material Politics: Disputes Along the Pipeline* (Chichester: John Wiley, 2013).

out of complex interactions between grand strategic schemes, subtle cultural frameworks, and fine-grained disciplinary expertise.¹⁵⁷ In the following chapters I focus attention on the intimate details of mass interrogation apparatuses, the alliances and passages they facilitate between their technical, human, and ideational elements. Rather than simply the products of ethereal high politics or the conduct of strategy in a vacuum, the locus of military and international politics shifts to everyday practice and specific concatenations of mundane knowledge and materials.

It makes sense to consider mass military interrogation systems as technopolitical apparatuses for two specific reasons. First, they are ‘machinic collectives’, convolving a host of materially and semiotically complex technical elements in processes of subjectivation to significant political effect.¹⁵⁸ The examples provided in chapter 1 indicate that US interrogation programmes constructed during wars are often designedly large-scale, networked systems of rational military organisation and spatialisation. Their technical settings are similarly geared to wide-scale effects: the apprehension of many human sources as objects to be processed in order to control space and win wars. Approached as apparatuses, their logics, tools, and subjects co-evolve: they interpellate multitudes of political subjects as trained administrators of procedure and enact means for writing geography ‘from a distance’, ‘seeing without being seen’ as Deleuze says. Rather than mere tools, however, they do this by establishing new regimes of enunciation, allowing new subjects (‘sources’, ‘interrogators’, ‘intelligence analysts’, ‘report writers’) and objects (‘sources’, ‘data’, ‘reports’ and geospatial information) to be inaugurated, defined, and affirmed. And they clearly operate within a dimension of power: they are centrally concerned with the politics of war. As extensive systems they are constructed in order to guide its circuits, and the movements, capacities, and behaviours of those within for the purposes of compiling and circulating significant volumes of intelligence. All of this falls away when intelligence interrogation is thought of as a timeless military practice; an approach that supposes analysis should stop when the interpersonal interrogation encounter concludes.

Second, and perhaps even more fundamentally, mass interrogation apparatuses are technopolitical in the sense that they are platforms that internalise and manifest a ‘technological

¹⁵⁷ Edwards, *The Closed World*, xiii.

¹⁵⁸ I borrow the term ‘machinic collective’ and elements of this broader formulation from Antoine Bousquet’s ‘machinic history’ of military perception in *The Eye of War: Military Perception from the Telescope to the Drone* (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 2018), 15--20, <https://doi.org/10.5749/j.ctv6hp332/>.

rationality'. Following Heidegger, this mode of thinking and acting centralises problem solving and logical analysis. It is a calculative worldview that 'treats everything as nothing more than mere objects to be controlled'.¹⁵⁹ Technology, Heidegger says, is in this way 'no mere means', but a 'way of revealing'.¹⁶⁰ Beyond unleashing political-technological forces in wars and conflicts, the internal work of mass interrogation is also revealed to its subjects as something intrinsically technological. For this reason, the material, mundane equipment that surrounds mass interrogation's political subjects is key.

The equipage of interrogation

In the vignettes in chapter 1, human intelligence production is unveiled to officers as a 'sphere of technological activity'. They must enter a proceduralised environment and become engaged with technical entities and challenges: upon detention, human sources are 'transformed' from 'instruments of destruction' to 'valuable sources of intelligence ... potential mines of information' that can be 'made to talk'. Interrogation officers' duties centre on the passing up of a 'few thousand puzzle pieces' for someone else to 'assemble'. In each of the chapters that follow, military-administrative instruments, artefacts, and other equipment play key roles in the technopolitical dynamic to know the enemy and spatialise the geographies of war. In this way, a plenitude of prosthetic attachments constitutes the 'equipage' of interrogation: the technical features of an apparatus that augment subjects' capacities and present human intelligence as a process of mechanical production. This includes small-scale implements such as map overlays, field radios, pulse oximeters, computerised databases, interrogation booths, as well as larger technologies like bureaucratic offices, detention centres, and rendition flights.

Technical equipment does not determine the course of interrogation, of course. But neither do military intelligence agents simply adjust themselves to their work through free will alone, with no material constraints. Instead, in technopolitical apparatuses, equipage and political subjects emerge in relation to each other through processes of 'transduction', dissolving the line

¹⁵⁹ Heidegger, "The Question Concerning Technology"; the quote here is from David M. Kaplan, "Philosophical Perspectives," in *Readings in the Philosophy of Technology*, ed. David M. Kaplan (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2009), epub e-book, "Part 1, Philosophical Perspectives".

¹⁶⁰ Heidegger, "The Question Concerning Technology," 318.

between them as they associate and co-produce.¹⁶¹ The equipage of mass interrogation is complicit in this process.

First, at the level of routine, technical equipment presents intelligence officers with a horizon of ready-to-hand prosthetic supports that make certain capacities imaginable and necessary. They are to be utilised in the spatial performance of intelligence interrogation. Second, equipage also works to format mass interrogation at a deeper level. It surrounds officers such that it discloses the technological problem in the Heideggerian sense: a zone of organised knowledge directed towards an instrumental purpose. Technocentric training and rationalised spaces encourage an intelligence apparatus' political subjects to consider human sources as containers to be 'opened', knowledge as 'data' to be 'extracted', and their work to involve the manufacture of new socio-spatial information products in a factory-like setting. At this level, we begin to understand how the technical features of mass interrogation are arrayed such that bodies become technological objects to be put to use as if they were a standing reserve.

On the first level, equipage includes things that make systematic mass interrogation a realistic technological proposition. In addition to doctrinal texts, cultural frameworks, and indoctrination regimes, interrogators are surrounded by tools that frame intelligence as a routinised, mechanical art. The challenges of 'processing' hundreds, or even thousands of sources, is overcome when intelligence officers are augmented with the right devices in the right way. However, specialists do not simply wield equipment by reference to common sense or pure instruction. Rather, the process of transduction means that all the elements within a technopolitical apparatus of military interrogation—including equipment, intelligence officers, apprehended sources, and communications networks—modulate each other. Interrogators learn on the job. For example, in chapter 1 we saw how the Army's 1968 film encouraged trainees to adopt an equipment-oriented disposition, to muster their creative instincts by taking into the interrogation room a choice of technical supports such as maps, stationary, coffee, as well as obligatory items like their uniforms and written orders. The room even discloses itself as equipment, with trainees encouraged to affect fury and flip a table, or to pin interrogatees to the wall if they became uncooperative.

¹⁶¹ Sam Kinsley, "The Matter of 'Virtual' Geographies," *Progress in Human Geography* 38, no. 3 (2013): 372--374, <https://doi.org/10.1177%2F0309132513506270>.

In Afghanistan, for example, Chris Mackey explained that much of his expertise owed to the learnt process of collecting, ordering, and understanding material implements. To comport himself, he readied for his encounters in interrogation booths by ‘prepping’, adapting a remarkably similar series of steps to those described in the 1968 film:

The schoolhouse definition of “prepping” is getting the maps you’ll need, preparing a questioning plan, looking up key words in a dictionary, picking your cover story, and organizing the booth space. But at Bagram, we began to use “prepping” in the same sense that the infantry preps a battlefield with artillery or air bombardment. For us it came to mean “reducing” the prisoner, softening him up.¹⁶²

The philosopher Bernard Stiegler would describe Mackey’s ‘prepping’ as a moment in unfolding relations of technicity. All subjects, he argues, make sense of themselves, construct their identities, and understand their tasks in relation to the technological world outside their heads.¹⁶³ Stiegler even proposes an ontological origins story of human being as an experience made possible through ‘technogenesis’, the process whereby human bodies only become cognising, memory-wielding, intentional beings because of foundational coupling to non-human tools and inscriptive devices. In their association with bodies, technical equipage presents an ‘exterior’ world to reflexive subjects as relatively stable and other.¹⁶⁴ Stiegler’s formulation is not an invitation to search for the technological determinants of social and political action. We may simply take inspiration from it in order to conceptualise how the idea of an ‘efficient interrogator’, for example, is learned not just as an abstract programme in a military classroom but in socio-technical becoming. It relies on officers’ self-identification with the capacities offered by a range of ‘prosthetic’ technologies in Stiegler’s language.

¹⁶² Mackey and Miller, *The Interrogator’s War*, 395.

¹⁶³ For a critical synopsis of the basic tenets of Bernard Stiegler’s early philosophy of technology and later activism see, Patrick Crogan, “Bernard Stiegler: Philosophy, Technics, and Activism,” *Cultural Politics* 6, no. 2 (2010): 133--156, <https://doi.org/10.2752/175174310X12672016548162>. Crogan summarises several major debates surrounding Stiegler’s work, including the cogent critique by Ulrik Ekman, amongst others, that in mournfully articulating human being as having ‘lost’ an essence through technical evolution, Stiegler confusingly installs a transcendental foundation into his explorations. However, as Crogan argues, ultimately this is to misinterpret ‘originary technicity’, the tragic ‘default’ in human becoming, as ‘an historical event’. For Stiegler, working in the aporetic tradition, originary technicity *is* history, and will forever be an open, unresolvable question that must necessarily re-emerge in any social and cultural examination.

¹⁶⁴ Bernard Stiegler, *Technics and Time I: The Fault of Epimetheus* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1998), 44--45.

The notion of prostheticity and the agency of non-humans shares some basic ontological commitments with actor-network thinking. One of its primogenitors, Bruno Latour, famously declared his determination to upset the anthropocentrism of sociology by ‘keeping the social flat’.¹⁶⁵ Rather than attempting another ‘science of the social’ that presupposed that humans possess some special, essential agency, he argued for a ‘tracing of associations’ between nonhumans, concepts, and subjects. A similarly radical ontological flattening can help to make sense of mass interrogation as sets of relations that are neither primarily conceptual, technical, or discursive, but all at once. This commitment to ontological ‘symmetry’ encourages us to interpret technopolitical apparatuses as constantly worked out in their becoming.¹⁶⁶ To be sure, concepts, texts, and ideas are vital. The examples provided so far indicate mass interrogation systems are exquisitely planned. But they also never seem to bear the traces of some deeper, unseen formal-metaphysical logic. Rather, technical elements and subjects emerge together in transitory relations, and their ‘truth effects’—the moments where intelligence no longer seems situated and partial but objective knowledge, the world as it really is—are performances that never take place outside the material world. They are processual, convolving equipment and subjects in arrangements that yield what Latour calls ‘moments of abstraction’ or the substitution of ‘signs’ for ‘things’.¹⁶⁷

An example from the American war in Vietnam illustrates how equipage mediates mass interrogation’s spatial practices so that ‘moments of abstraction’ become possible—what were hitherto unruly bodies and messy knowledge becomes ‘actionable intelligence’. In late-1965, as the Siege of Plei Me unfolded, the senior Army interrogator introduced in chapter 1, Sedgwick Tourison, was deployed to II Corps headquarters in Pleiku with another intelligence officer. They were made responsible for processing the enemy prisoners ferried there. After several days of tense anticipation, he was notified that a batch of North Vietnamese captives had arrived. He rushed to the base’s helipad as they were being unloaded:

I never saw such confusion in my life. All of a sudden we had prisoners,
twenty live bodies just waiting to talk to someone!

¹⁶⁵ Latour, *Reassembling the Social*, 5.

¹⁶⁶ Bruno Latour, *Pandora’s Hope: Essays on the Reality of Science Studies* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1999), 179--180.

¹⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, 49.

Dick and I assembled the tools of our trade: the maps, pencils, papers, interrogation report blank forms, and prisoner logs. We'd learned what we'd need through the two previous operations with the 173d Airborne Brigade, and this time we came prepared with tactical interrogation report forms already assembled, the result of arduous field testing and incorporating the basic source identification and a listing of targets of immediate intelligence interest. They were simple and efficient, everything was in both English and Vietnamese ... The answer required only one word or a check mark which could later be read by either Americans or Vietnamese who had no linguistic background. We used carbon paper to make two copies of each report, one for the G-2 advisory section and one to be used later in our after-action reports. The prisoner logs gave us an accurate guide as to whom we had talked and served as a composite list for use by the G-2 advisory section to determine the status of interrogations and redirect interrogation priorities to meet II Corps needs...

Lieutenant Thanh had his sergeant clerk go log them all in. As he finished with one, Thanh parceled out the body to an interrogator.¹⁶⁸

The inclusion of maps and bureaucratic forms here suggests that the transduction of subjects and tools may occur at a scale larger than the interrogation booth. As an enterprise for spatialising war and dominating political space, the equipage of mass interrogation stretches across the zone of compound discipline. It also is fundamentally directed towards the 'efficient' and mechanical production of new spatial knowledge (with progress logged and interrogation forms made reductive enough that officers could interpret them without any linguistic training).

Cartographic tools are also ubiquitous elements in the equipage of mass interrogation. After his busy day in Pleiku, Tourison, brimming with professional exhilaration, was tasked by commanders in the 1st Cavalry Division with deciphering a map captured during the day's combat. Its symbols were cryptic and its 1:100 000 scale was confusing, outdated in comparison to the more detailed 1:50 000 maps used by US forces for artillery targeting. However, Tourison explained that he was able to overlay the captured map onto an 'obsolete' sheet still in possession of his ARVN counterparts, and use it in 'reinterrogations' in order to decode the symbols and labels further:

¹⁶⁸ Tourison, *Talking with Victor Charlie*, 97--98.

It took us about an hour to use the old map and extrapolate to a 1:50,000 scale map that we and the Cav could use. When we had finished, we knew the location of every [enemy] unit committed to Plei Me and the location of the other two regiments and the Front headquarters ... With a real understanding of the enemy deployment ... Dick and I ran over to advise the II Corps G-2 advisory section. Then we dashed over the Cav's tactical operations at the [operations] pod...

"How'd you like to know where all the VC are?" I asked.

We showed him the map he had brought over earlier and told him how we'd resolved the problem the Cav had encountered...

He grabbed the phone and called the information out to the [Plei Me] tea plantation as Dick and I helped transcribe the targets and a crowd gathered around his table. *This was intelligence in action!* Right out of the textbooks! It was a classic example of using an overlay that compromised highly sensitive information. Dick and I went to bed happy...

The next day the reports filtered in to the [tactical operations centre]: the overlay had proved to be right on the button ... The body count continued to rise...¹⁶⁹

Maps, reinterrogation, extrapolation, transcription, communication, targeting, body count: 'intelligence in action' as both Tourison (and Barnes) describe it. Tourison's interrogation work was anything but a 'simple' encounter, as Steven Kleinman and the Kubark manual would have it. It played out on an expansive technological landscape and involved emotionally validating applications of equipment. The routine tasks of mass interrogation are literally unimaginable without this welter of tools of cartography, inscription, targeting, and injury that make up the circuits of late modern war.

But equipage discloses mass interrogation to its political subjects not just as a technically *mediated* exercise. At a more fundamental level it seems to function as an entire 'sphere of technological activities' in the Heideggerian sense. Equipment draws *human beings into the technological sphere*, disclosing them as a standing reserve, making them part of the production process.

¹⁶⁹ Ibid., 99--101, emphasis added.

A further example from the US ‘war on terror’ interrogation programmes illustrates this point. In the early years of the conflict, Army Major General Geoffrey Miller was coordinator of prison facilities at Guantánamo Bay, in Cuba. His administration was beset by endemic violence on the part of military police and other personnel under his command.¹⁷⁰ However, as is now well known, this abuse was not so much a result of runaway ill-discipline on the part of soldiers as it was a design feature of Miller’s management regime. Under his leadership a broad programme of harsh treatments was designed and operationalised, one that identified prisoners as mere objects in something approaching an organisationally rationalised stockyard. ‘Brutalization was bureaucratised’, made instrumental and technical, administered through the practical application of organised knowledge and methodical procedure.¹⁷¹

In 2003, Miller was transferred to Iraq. He was charged with overhauling the Army’s prison systems so that they could better respond to Defense Department planners’ cascading intelligence requests. He recommended that military detention facilities in the zone of occupation be reconceived as ‘enablers for interrogation’. Prisons were to be transformed from warehouses of confinement and surveillance to technologies of information production. Adopting the Joint Task Force Guantanamo’s (JTF-GTMO) operational procedures and techniques as ‘baselines’, his team encouraged the Joint Interrogation and Debriefing Center (JIDC) at Abu Ghraib to be managed as a technical ‘environment that supports the expeditious collection of intelligence’. Notoriously, this included deputising a detention guard force to violently set ‘the conditions for the successful interrogation and exploitation of internees/detainees’, in its euphemistic phrasing. As Mackey put it, there was an expectation that prisoners would be first ‘reduced’, just as infantry ‘preps’ the battlefield with artillery.

The consequence of Miller’s new ‘expeditious’ carceral-interrogation apparatus was that its military subjects found themselves under immense corporate pressure to improvise breakthroughs.¹⁷² This became apparent in Cuba, Iraq, and elsewhere as a punitive culture of

¹⁷⁰ Charlie Savage, *Takeover: The Return of the Imperial Presidency and the Subversion of American Democracy* (New York: Little, Brown, 2007), 188--192.

¹⁷¹ Khalili, *Time in the Shadows*, 170--171.

¹⁷² Seymour M. Hersh, "Chain of Command: How the Department of Defense Mishandled the Disaster at Abu Ghraib," *The New Yorker*, May 9, 2004, <https://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2004/05/17/chain-of-command-2>; Seymour M. Hersh, "Torture at Abu Ghraib," *The New Yorker*, May 10, 2004, http://www.newyorker.com/archive/2004/05/10/040510fa_fact.

improvised, violent, and frenzied searches for the ‘actionable intelligence’ necessary to ‘save lives’ took hold across the US global war prison.¹⁷³ However, in most cases interrogators and military police did not recognise themselves as sadists but as time-pressured technicians operating under expedient circumstances. They were entrusted to apply a body of expert techniques and institutionally sanctioned knowledge. Indeed, officers had access to an official ‘toolbox’ of methods of psychological attrition, a series of programmatic approaches that had been developed in Cuba and transferred to Iraq. Miller adopted the figure of the ‘Battle Lab’ to give a scientific patina to a ruthlessly brutal programme. As the Army later admitted, sites such as JTFO-GTMO and Abu Ghraib were understood by employees as ‘to some degree experimental’ and their lessons logically transferrable to other DOD sites as a kind of applied science.¹⁷⁴

But rather than a ‘science’, Miller’s system comprised a range of conceptual equipment and discursive manoeuvres that transformed interrogation into a more administrative-industrial sphere of technological activities. In Iraq, his survey team recommended that management structures be rationalised so that detention and interrogation procedures could be synchronised and ‘progress tracking’ formalised wherever possible. The team also recommended improvements to the confinement-intelligence system’s information technology, including faster internet, more computer terminals, and officers’ training in database management and ‘automated intelligence systems’ (‘the interrogation mission is hindered by an absence of analytical resources and reach-back data systems’, Miller’s surveyors pronounced). Finally, the introduction of supportive psychologists and psychiatrists in the form of ‘Behavioral Science Consultation Teams’ (BSCTs) was an initiative explicitly launched in order to integrate interrogation strategies across prison sites and for ‘assessing interrogation intelligence production’.¹⁷⁵ The equipage of mass interrogation thus encompassed statistical measures, reporting systems, and calculative devices for evaluating work processes.

¹⁷³ *SSCI Report*, xi.

¹⁷⁴ US Congress, Senate, Committee on Armed Services, *Inquiry into the Treatment of Detainees in U.S. Custody*. 110th Cong., 2nd sess., November 20, 2008, https://www.armed-services.senate.gov/imo/media/doc/Detainee-Report-Final_April-22-2009.pdf [hereafter *SASC Inquiry*], 104, 43.

¹⁷⁵ Department of Defense, "Assessment of DoD Counterterrorism Interrogation and Detention Operations in Iraq," ("Taguba Report", Annex #20), released 19 October 2004, <https://www.aclu.org/sites/default/files/torturefoia/released/a20.pdf>, 3--6, emphasis added.

The Executive Summary of Miller's team's 2003 report explicitly outlines interrogation's triple technological problem of organisational coherence, information management, and technical rationalisation:

The dynamic operational environment in Iraq requires an equally dynamic intelligence apparatus. *To improve velocity and operational effectiveness* of counterterrorism interrogation, attention in three major mission areas is needed. The team observed that the Task Force did not have authorities and procedures in place to effect a unified strategy to detain, interrogate, and report information from detainees/internees in Iraq. Additionally, the corps commander's information needs required an in-theater analysis capability integrated throughout the interrogation operations structure to allow for better and faster reach-back to other worldwide intelligence databases. Last, the detention operations function must act as an enabler for interrogation ... The command has *initiated a system to drive the rapid exploitation of internees* to answer [local], theatre, and national level counter terrorism requirements ... Receipt of additional resources currently in staffing will produce a dramatic improvement in the speed of delivering actionable intelligence and leveraging the effectiveness of the interrogation efforts.¹⁷⁶

Miller's vision of interrogation intelligence was of an apparatus whose equipage was disclosed as 'technological rationality'. Industrial-managerial tools and languages translated a system for brutally confining and questioning prisoners into a matter of production speedups ('rapid exploitation'), process rationalisation (via an integrated 'in-theater analysis capability'), and corporate direction ('unified strategy', 'leveraging effectiveness'). In combination, Miller's directives laid the normative groundwork upon which previously unthinkable acts became 'methods and techniques' and 'part of the process', standard operating procedure.¹⁷⁷ In 2004, one sergeant working at the coalface, in Abu Ghraib, told Army investigators that he 'assumed that if they were doing things out of the ordinary or outside the guidelines, someone would have said

¹⁷⁶ Ibid., 2, emphasis added.

¹⁷⁷ ICRC, *Report of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) on the Treatment by the Coalition Forces of Prisoners of War and Other Protected Persons by the Geneva Conventions in Iraq During Arrest, Internment and Interrogation*, February 2004, 11, https://www.globalsecurity.org/military/library/report/2004/icrc_report_iraq_feb2004.pdf; Department of Defense. "Article 15-6 Investigation of the 800th Military Police Brigade," Report of Major General Antonio M. Taguba, released 19 October 2004, <https://www.aclu.org/sites/default/files/torturefoia/released/TR3.pdf>, 19.

something'.¹⁷⁸ As a social machine for producing subjects (diligent and abject) and intelligence, the US mass interrogation system in Iraq during this period involved both the regulating technical mechanisms of compound discipline—administrative procedures, rationalistic discourses, the high-technology linking of sites of surveillance—and sovereign power, the application of raw force in order to 'break' human subjects.¹⁷⁹

In doing so, interrogation's sources become part of the equipage of mass interrogation. In his book, Mackey describes his team's independently concocted techniques for 'reducing' interrogatees, including through sleep deprivation, demoralisation (for example, by encouraging the writing of letters to relatives only to demand their endless redrafting), and subjection to arbitrary punishments for petty infractions. In these examples, the clear distinction between the subjects and objects of interrogation slips away, the prisoner's own body and mind becoming elements in the technical 'enabling' of interrogation. Mackey's slippage between the 'preparation' of equipment, the interpersonal encounter, and the source itself suggests an arena of transduction, the matter of interrogation revealing itself as a fluid technological field where environmental and subjective elements can be tweaked and manipulated.

Machine space

Interrogators must possess a 'well-developed "talent" ... for systems thinking'. So says Steven Kleinman, the US military intelligence veteran and leading interrogation researcher we met above. He argues that, while a successful interrogation involves a skilfully managed 'interpersonal' encounter between questioner and source, ultimately that is only possible when administrators create an environment of efficient operations. They must think of human

¹⁷⁸ Mark Danner, "Torture and Truth," *The New York Review of Books*, 10 June 2004, <https://www.nybooks.com/articles/2004/06/10/torture-and-truth/>.

¹⁷⁹ Jane Mayer, "The Experiment," *The New Yorker*, 4 July 2005, <https://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2005/07/11/the-experiment-3>; Sarah Dougherty and Scott Allen, "Nuremberg Betrayed: Human Experimentation and the CIA Torture Program," Physicians for Human Rights report, July 2017, <https://phr.org/our-work/resources/nuremberg-betrayed-human-experimentation-and-the-cia-torture-program/>.

intelligence production as something like a machine, a ‘complex, dynamic system ... greater than the sum of its parts’.¹⁸⁰

Kleinman identifies a Second World War-era system as a model that military interrogation planners might well look to replicate. The British forces’ Combined Services Detailed Interrogation Centres (CSDICs, a set of facilities explored in the next chapter), he believes, made a pivotal difference to the War. This is because they functioned as efficient manufacturing systems, producing torrents of actionable intelligence from interrogations with detained subjects. The system’s architects exemplified just the kind of production mindset Kleinman advocates, with the entire CSDIC interrogation apparatus subject to coordinated, organisation-wide direction. Equally instructive, Kleinman says, is a non-military system, one even more overtly machinic. The Toyota Production System, he writes, should be an inspiration to interrogators given its ‘precisely defined point of focus’. ‘Every member of the production team—from top manager to the worker on the assembly line—is armed with a clear and unambiguous standard upon which to base his or her actions’.¹⁸¹ So much for the ancient origins of interrogation, and the ‘simple’ nature of its interpersonal encounters. But Kleinman’s expert pronouncements may help explain Mohamedou Ould Slahi’s sense of objectification within the ‘war on terror’ mass interrogation apparatus. As noted in chapter 1, once pushed inside it, he felt like he was witnessing something akin to a ‘car production line’. Moving down the assembly line, he was like an (intelligence) commodity in the making.

While the spatialities and political forces unleashed by mass interrogation apparatuses are radically contingent, since 1945 US military experts have often approached with a similar penchant for ‘systems thinking’ and production. The following chapters provide a series of historical geographical snapshots that chart this development, connecting innovations laid down earlier in the twentieth century to the systematic approach to brutal interrogation carried out by the CIA during the early-twentieth first century, the point where Kleinman reached out to the Toyota model for inspiration. Focus centres on three key performances of US mass interrogation between the high cold war and the ‘war on terror’. During this period, it was recurrently

¹⁸⁰ Steven M. Kleinman, "Barriers to Success: Critical Challenges in Developing a New Educing Information Paradigm," in *Educing Information: Interrogation: Science and Art*. Center for Strategic Intelligence Research (Washington DC: National Defense Intelligence College, 2006), 253.

¹⁸¹ Ibid.

performed by intelligence agencies as if it were a production problem requiring spaces of efficient management. These systems were subsumed by bureaucratic, managerial, and productivist imperatives, interpellating their political subjects into spaces and compartmentalised responsibilities of industrial and mechanical production.

The lines of descent connecting the machinic CSDIC model and the spatial forms prescribed in US military doctrine today are remarkably distinct. Perhaps most notably, now the Department of Defense's equivalent to a CSDIC is a battalion-level facility known as a 'Joint Interrogation and Debriefing Center' (as noted above, the Abu Ghraib prison in Iraq was a JIDC). Army doctrine explains that a JIDC is a 'physical location', one designed 'for the exploitation of intelligence information from detainees and other personnel'. It is generally operated by both a deployed military intelligence battalion specialising in interrogation and a supportive contingent of MPs. Figure 2.10 provides an idealised design of the physical layout of a JIDC 'collocated' with an MP detention facility.

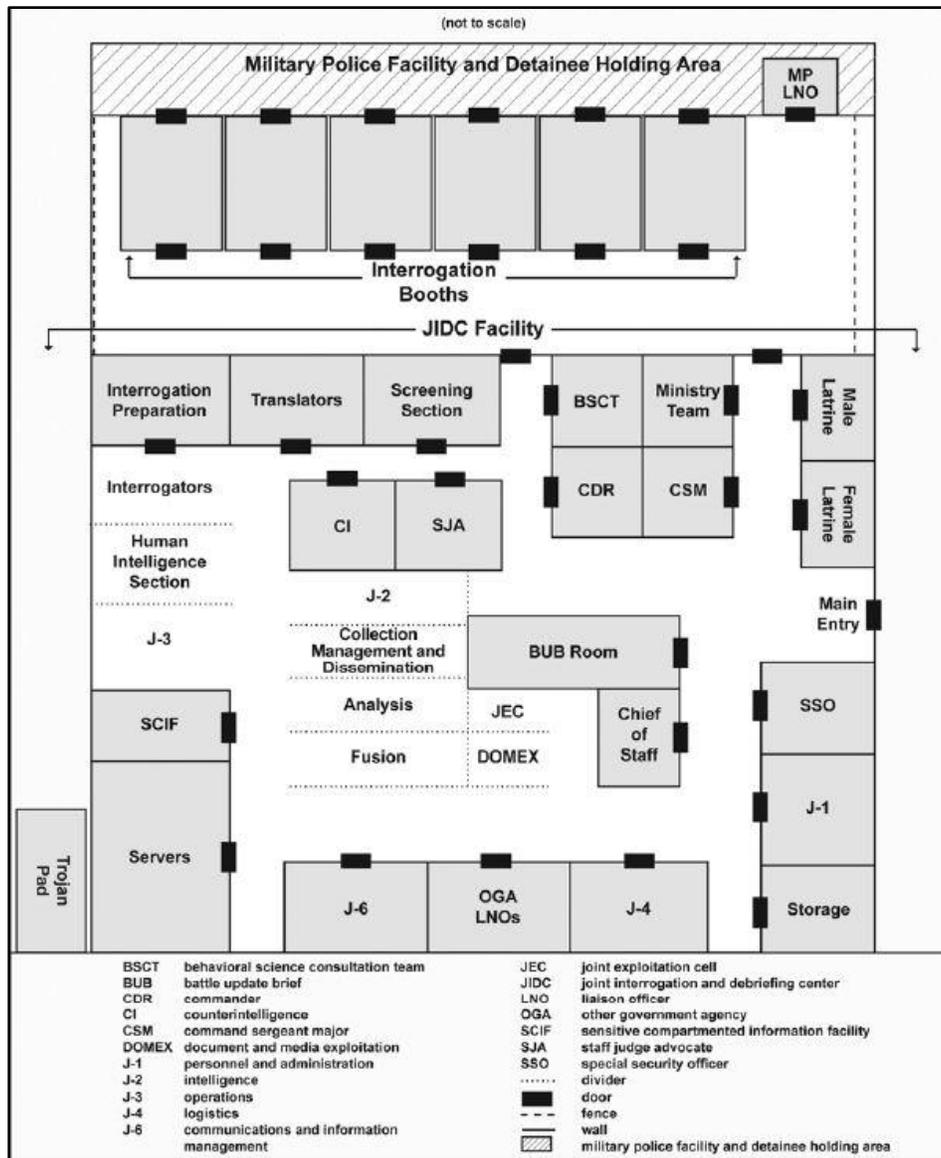


Figure 2.10 Example layout for a notional Joint Interrogation and Debriefing Center, according to US Army doctrine.¹⁸²

As Army interrogation doctrine explains, interrogators should consider how their workspace within the JIDC works as part of the larger intelligence production process. The space of the interrogation booth is an ‘interrogation enabler’, as Geoffrey Miller might put it. Interrogators

¹⁸² Department of the Army, Headquarters, *Training Circular 2-22.304-Military Intelligence Battalion (Interrogation)*, August 2009, §3-3, <https://publicintelligence.net/usarmy-military-interrogation/>.

should provide proper lighting, climate control, seating, workspace and materials, monitoring, safety, and security ... interrogators should have the option to arrange ... props in the area to create the appropriate atmosphere to support their selected approach strategies. Interrogators may want to provide a relaxed for a rapport-based approach, a business-like area resembling an office to support a ruse, or perhaps a sterile “prison cell-like” booth for a fear-based or futility approach.¹⁸³

But, as the field manual is at pains to emphasise, the JIDC is much more than just a physical location and a set of interrogation booths. It is also a rationalised organisational space, a ‘task-organised’ production facility, or a multi-agency undertaking. It is made up of ‘joint Service military personnel, Government civilians, and civilian contractors’ who may be spread around other locations in the theatre of operations, or even beyond. They must be linked up and directed towards mass interrogation’s ultimate ambition: intelligence collection and reporting. Figure 2.11 provides a schematic illustration of a notional JIDC’s organisational and communicational linkages with the other agencies responsible for detainee operations and theatre-level intelligence reporting. Accompanying doctrine describes how the components of the JIDC are to be arranged in order to service this larger war machine. In a warzone where multiple military branches are operating in concert (a ‘Joint Operations Area’), it stands as a manufacturing facility that supplies intelligence to arrays of ‘customers’, most of them far afield.¹⁸⁴

¹⁸³ Ibid.

¹⁸⁴ Department of Defense, *Joint Publication 3-63, Detainee Operations*, 30 May 2008 3-63 Detainee Operations, 30 May 2008, §II-6, https://fas.org/irp/doddir/dod/jp3_63-2008.pdf.

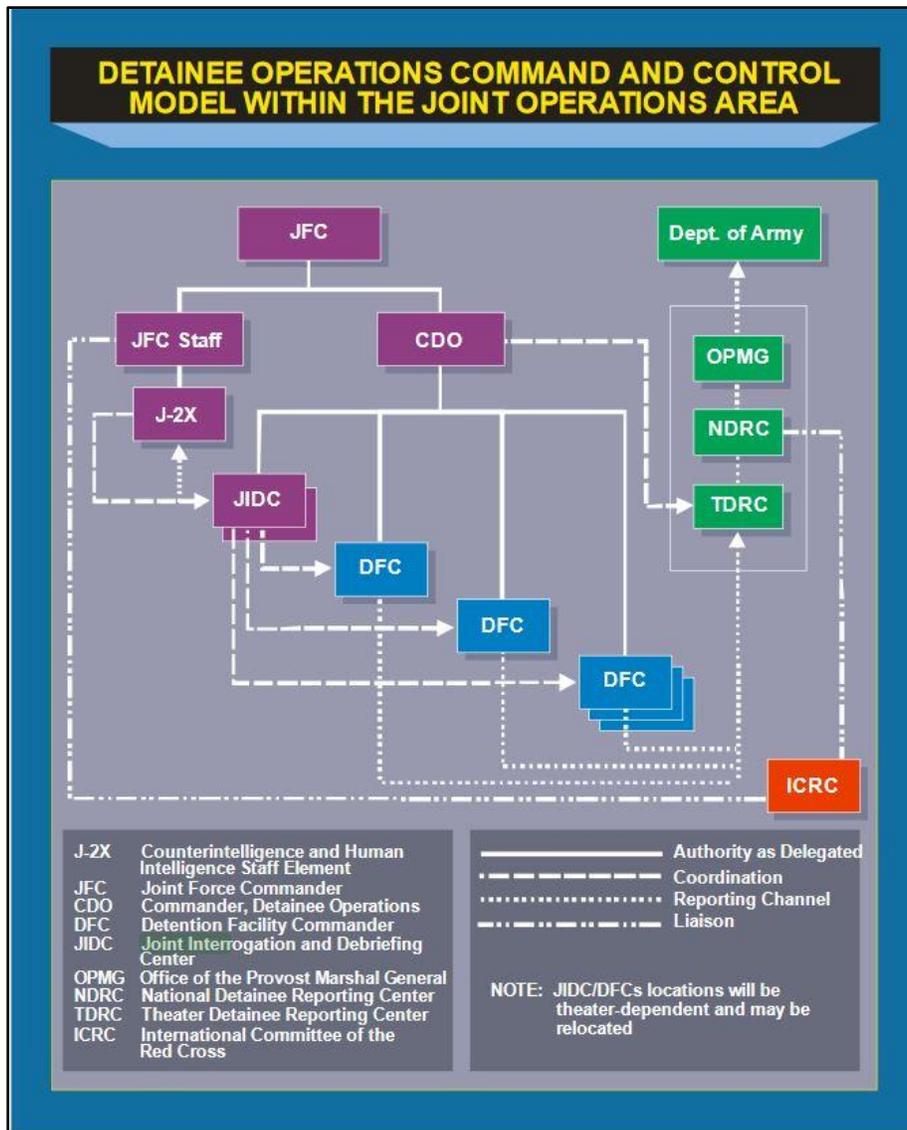


Figure 2.11 ‘Detainee Operations Command Control Model with the Joint Operations Area’. This Joint Chiefs of Staff schematisation of detainee operations displays the lines of communication and command that link a JIDC to theatre intelligence reporting.¹⁸⁵

In this dissertation I argue that productivist zones such as the Army’s JIDCs should be understood as *machine spaces*. Inside them, only instrumental reason is formally recognised, and human beings become subservient to the goal of realising the ‘efficient’ operation of the space itself.¹⁸⁶ Machine space discloses an arena of calculation. Within it, both human subjects

¹⁸⁵ Ibid., §III-2.

¹⁸⁶ In 1974 the geographer Ron Horvath offered up the idea of ‘machine space’ as a way capturing the spatial dimension of modern technologies. In his use of the term, it is ‘territory devoted primarily to the use of machines’. Areas utterly given over to machines include cities whose planners, rather than assigning living room to citizens, are

resemble constitutive parts, pinions in a larger mechanical process of legal and technical computation; political ambitions are translated into the technical objectives of management, volume production, and administrative procedure.

Almost every US state agency guidebook on human intelligence since 1945 includes a variant description of interrogation as both ‘a science and an art’.¹⁸⁷ But machine spaces require mechanics, not scientists and artists. The political subjects of mass interrogation are dedicated less to theorisation or interpretation than their tools and their efficient use in design, construction, and repair processes, as well as the productive forces they generate. Much less than a space of pure scientific research or artistic interpretation, US mass interrogation has been re-enacted, again and again, as if it were a staging area for *mechanical innovation*. National security actors are invited to enter and remake its machine spaces according to strategic imperatives. They must engage with their equipment inventively, but unlike in a creative artform, they are expected to apply their bureaucratic agency’s calculative procedures reflexively, at industrial tempos.

Just as the Toyota Production System developed and spread to new frontiers of collective action during the second half of the twentieth century, machine spaces are able to be picked up and redeployed. They are subject to instructions that imagine the space of war to be a ‘generic, geographically sanitized battlefield’ amenable to an industrial engineer.¹⁸⁸ Understood as a rationalised mechanical enterprise, new mass interrogation apparatuses may borrow elements from earlier rehearsals. While they are centrally concerned with idiographic knowledge of enemy territory, the internal spacings of its operations are often topological, programmatic. They are geared towards processing a *maximal* number of interrogatees, by the most *efficient* means available, in order to produce as many human intelligence reports for intelligence ‘customers’ as possible.

This volumetric ethos has been repeatedly explicated in US doctrine since the Second World War. Between 1945 and 1987, procedure and techniques for conducting Army

instead consumed by the prior challenges of moving, storing, and servicing their automobiles. See Ronald J. Horvath "Machine Space," *Geographical Review* 64, no. 2 (1974): 168, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/213809>. My use of the term is more figurative and topological, referring to complex zones conceived of as if their internal spatial divisions and arrangements had, in combination, the force of machinic production.

¹⁸⁷ For example, the Army’s current field manual guiding interrogations uses this exact phrase, see *FM 2-22.3 Human Intelligence Collector Operations*, §1-10.

¹⁸⁸ Nisa, "Capturing the Forgotten War," 21.

intelligence interrogations were laid down in *Field Manual 30-15, Examination of Personnel and Documents* (its provisions were often taken up by the other armed services during this period). Its ‘Principles of Interrogation’ declare that the ‘fundamental requirement’ for a skilled interrogator is an ability to support ‘the *efficient exploitation* of personnel who are potential sources of intelligence information’. Production must take precedence over reflection during interrogation, which is

the art of questioning and examining a Subject in order to obtain the maximum amount of usable information ... A good interrogation is one that produces needed information which is timely, comprehensive, and accurate ... [a trained interrogator] must view all information with skepticism, and, to the extent his capabilities and time permit, attempt to confirm or deny information received. *The interrogator’s primary mission, however, is collection of information, not evaluation.* Of great importance is the accurate reporting of information to the using elements.¹⁸⁹

Machine spaces thus cultivate certain political subjects’ basic responsibilities: mechanical rhythm, time conservation, and an unwavering focus on maximising the volume of commodity products, in this case intelligence reports.

Machine space can be infrastructural. Army interrogation doctrine was updated in 1987, with the promulgation of *Field Manual 34-52, Intelligence Interrogation*. Emphasis was once again placed on interrogators’ operating ‘with maximum efficiency’ and in this case the productivist imperative encompassed a broader space of logistical management.¹⁹⁰ In *FM 34-52*, the wartime delivery of human sources to interrogators at joint facilities was to be carefully managed so that a steady ‘flow’ of bodies could be managed in the interrogation booths. New regulations were unveiled for the construction of triage systems for screening sources and pre-reporting their status so that they could be initially categorised. Interrogation site managers were to prioritise their work by selecting subjects based on ‘cooperation level’ and ‘knowledgeability level’. In this way *FM 34-52* went a step further in rationalising the belief that information is

¹⁸⁹ Department of the Army, *FM 30-15, Intelligence Interrogation*, §1-3.

¹⁹⁰ Department of the Army, Headquarters, *Field Manual 34-52, Intelligence Interrogation*, Washington, DC, May 1987, §2-16, https://www.loc.gov/rr/frd/Military_Law/pdf/intel_interrogation_may-1987.pdf.

latent in many enemy and civilian detainees, and so should be collected at scale, without triggering crises of overproduction, excessive industry, or wasted time and movement.

As in the ‘just-in-time’ Toyota Production System that Kleinman venerates, the Army’s human commodities can suffer the decaying effects of passing time if left in storage, or if the phases of production fall out of sync. Figure 2.12 is drawn from *FM 34-52*. It proposes the quantifiable and precipitous decline in intelligence value of human sources (measurable in terms of ‘Percent of Information’). In this scenario, sources are almost worthless to interrogators just seventy-two hours after capture. Today, Army procedures instruct ‘human intelligence collectors’ in JIDCs to model time as if they were also on a production line, to ‘break ... questioning down into topical sessions to maximize effectiveness’.¹⁹¹ Before construction, such facilities need to fit a ‘preplanned and coordinated intelligence and counterintelligence program’ in order to ‘provide a continuous, timely flow of intelligence interrogation from the point of capture to the repatriation phase’.¹⁹² Every part of the organisational apparatus must operate in concert, with production flows (detainee intakes, movements, interrogations, and intelligence report dissemination) the focus of managerial attention. Under these imperatives it is no surprise that Chris Mackey felt at times that he was ensconced in a sprawling information machine, or that Slahi felt like he was on a conveyor belt.

¹⁹¹ Department of the Army, *FM 2-22.3, Human Intelligence Collector Operations*, §7-10.

¹⁹² *Ibid.*, §III-3.

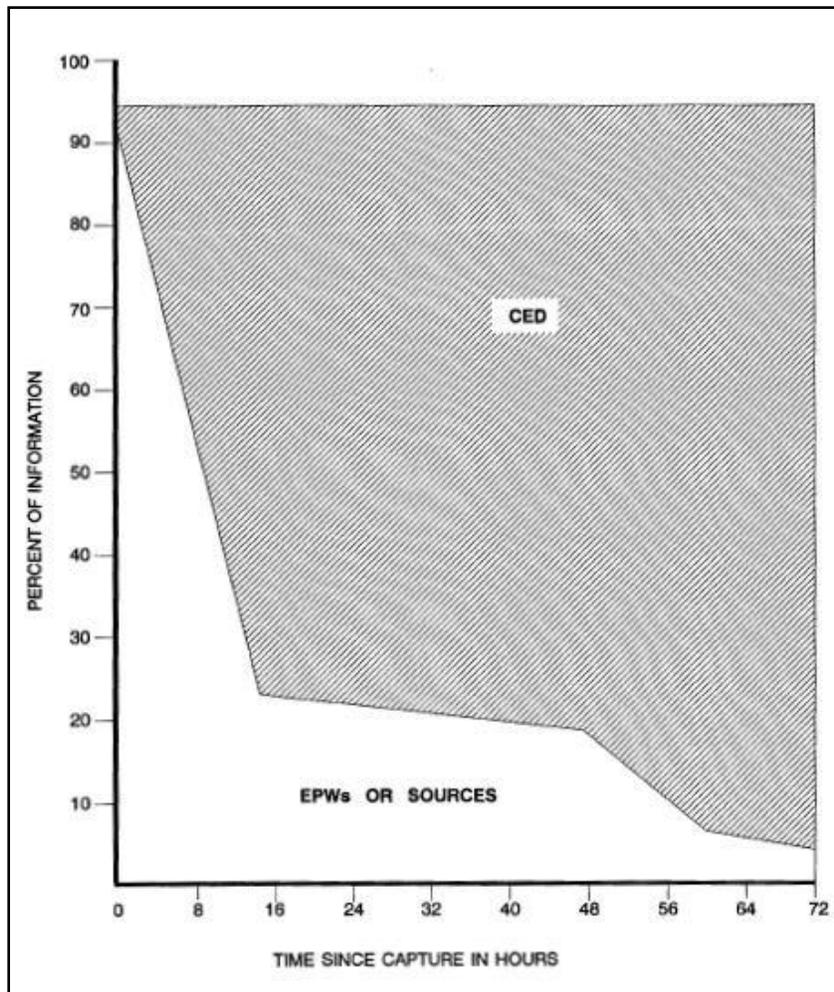


Figure 2.12 A graphic representation of the quantifiable decline in intelligence value of human sources and captured enemy documents over time since capture, extracted from *FM 34-52, Intelligence Interrogation*.¹⁹³

¹⁹³ *FM 34-52, Intelligence Interrogation*, §4-3.

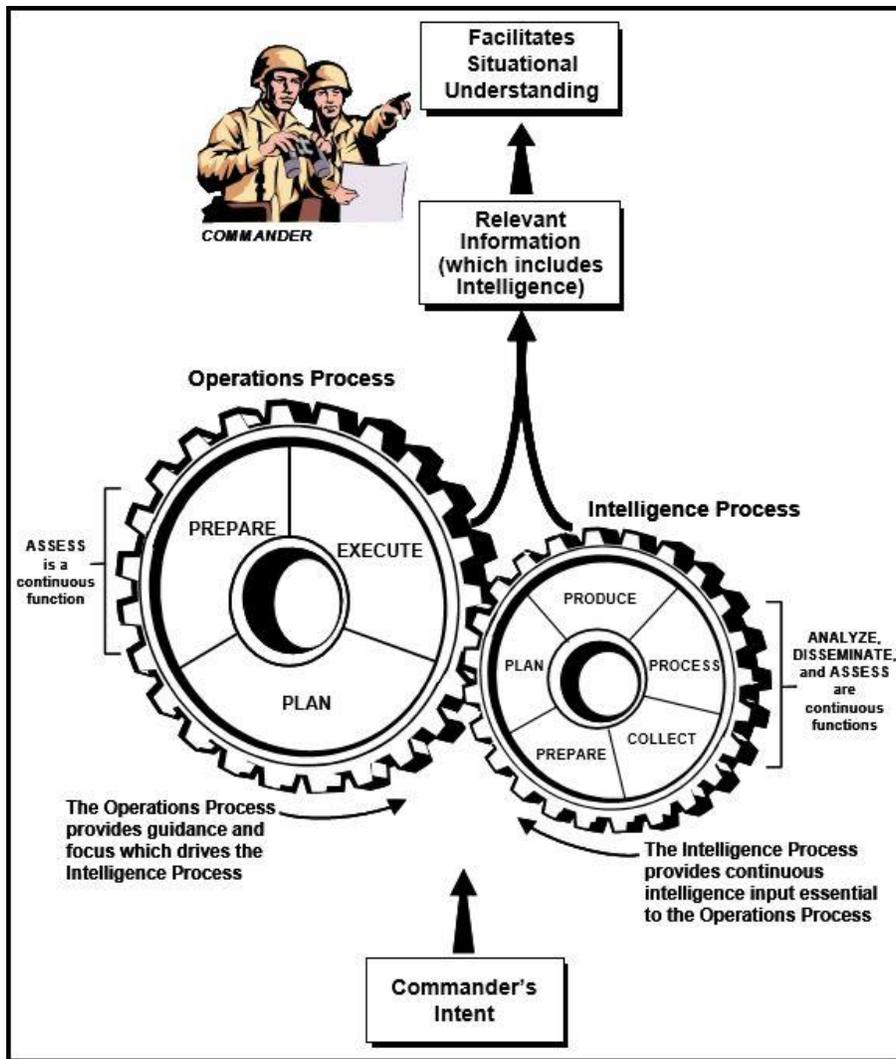


Figure 2.13 The machinic ‘intelligence process’ in the US Army’s current interrogation handbook, *FM 2-22.3*.¹⁹⁴

In the US Army’s current interrogation manual, the figure of the machine condenses the entire intelligence problematic. In *FM 2-22.3 Human Intelligence Collector Operations*, the ‘intelligence process’ never ends, but is ‘continuous’ (see figure 2.13). ‘Commander’s Intent’ and ‘Situational Understanding’ are the abstract inputs and outputs flowing into and out of a multiplex machine represented as a set of interlinked, perpetually turning, cogwheels. Those gears draw in, transform, and crunch together diverse information through phased operations (such as debriefing civilians or interrogating prisoners) and emanate ‘finished intelligence products’ (such as a computer-based map of battlespace illustrated from a detached perspective).

¹⁹⁴ Department of the Army, *FM 2-22.3, Human Intelligence Collector Operations*, §1-3.

Each step along this process involves its own set of mechanical operations. They include receiving and processing commanders' 'priority information requirements', handling new 'information concerning the environmental and geographical characteristics of a particular area', and 'converting electronic data into a standardized report'. But the key, at all times, is that intelligence officers should be familiar with the larger mechanical task that governs the machine space of mass interrogation: '*correlating dissimilar or jumbled information by assembling like elements*', synthesising textual or graphical intelligence in the right way before forwarding it for further analysis.¹⁹⁵

A machine is defined by its function, its outputs. In the case of mass interrogation, they are bureaucratic reports, the 'bits of truth' churning out of the intelligence infrastructure. If intelligence is the 'tiny scraps of information' that make war seem logical and rational, 'information' is the substance that greases the wheels of mass interrogation's machine space.¹⁹⁶ So in this way, as part of apparatuses' equipage, the specific ways in which intelligence is culturally rehearsed as 'information' is highly consequential. It fundamentally shapes the work rhythms, technical phases, subject forming tendencies, and spatial practices of military interrogation. For Geoffrey Nunberg, information is a strange thing in modern culture. It is at once an abstract substance, something like knowledge. But it is simultaneously material, evidence of something known that has been 'morselised' or 'quantised' and made capable of movement:

Unlike knowledge, which we often regard holistically, information is essentially corpuscular, like sand or succotash. It consists of little atoms of content—positions, sentences, bits, infons, morceaux—each independently detachable, manipulable, and tabular. These atoms are spread about in broad regions that correspond to subject-matter domains—there is medical information, sports information, information about the French Revolution, and so forth. But this is a question of geography rather than structure; we can break off pieces of information and ship them around while at the same time preserving their value.¹⁹⁷

¹⁹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁹⁶ John Keegan, *Intelligence in War: Knowledge of the Enemy from Napoleon to Al-Qaeda* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2003), epub e-book, chap. 8.

¹⁹⁷ Geoffrey Nunberg, "Farewell to the Information Age," in *The Future of the Book*, ed. Geoffrey Nunberg (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1996), 120.

In this passage the term ‘information’ could be substituted with ‘intelligence’. Intelligence is like sand, or ‘grains of truth’, as the narrator of the 1968 Army film in chapter 1 declares. It can be detached, tabularised, and shipped around (or printed onto microfilm and put on US-bound aeroplanes as we will see in two of the following chapters). Nunberg argues that, as something ‘corpuscular’, the idea of information does important ‘ideological work’. Both it and intelligence do not seem to reference knowledge from a subject position. Rather, they are a kind of ‘intentional substance’, abstract ‘stuff’ that is nonetheless ‘disconnected from the situations that it is *about*’.¹⁹⁸ It is precisely this elemental, measurable, and commoditised quality of its knowledge products that permits mass interrogation to seem not so much an effort in subjective understanding as flocculating discrete ‘bits’ of data present in the world: inside sources’ heads and in need of ‘extraction’, but also, upon processing, able to offer a composite, objective picture of the world, a ‘view from nowhere’.

An array of significant political ramifications is set in train when the imperatives of data frame military interrogation and its machine spaces. Information culture underwrites the all-pervasive ‘mosaic theory’ of modern intelligence. As David Pozen observes, the figure of the ‘mosaic’ has long justified the collection and protection of vast corpuses of national security information in the expectation that a coherent picture will condense *eventually*, out of a procedure of ‘analytic alchemy’.¹⁹⁹ Understood as the breaking off and shipping around of ‘pieces’ of information, intelligence collection becomes a matter of hoovering up of huge swathes of ‘disparate items of information, though individually of limited or no utility to their possessor’. The assumption is, of course, that this mass will take on ‘added significance when combined with other items of information’.²⁰⁰ In America’s modern wars, that breaking off and combining takes place in large-scale industrialised settings.

Machine space thus does not just authorise the mechanical processing of human subjects as if they were informational commodities but does so under volumetric imperatives and time pressure. The geographer Ghazi-Walid Falah discovered during his own interrogation in Israel that

¹⁹⁸ Ibid., 110--111, emphasis in original.

¹⁹⁹ David E. Pozen, "The Mosaic Theory, National Security, and the Freedom of Information Act," *Yale Law Journal* 115, no. 3 (2005): 630, <https://digitalcommons.law.yale.edu/ylj/vol115/iss3/7>.

²⁰⁰ Ibid., 633.

‘detention’ is not a static space of some kind of suspension of time, as a detainee simply ‘waits’ or is abused as a form of punishment: it is a *mechanism in highly confined and pressurised hyper-dynamic space* to extract intelligence under the impress of limited legal time. While my detention was to intimidate me as an academic, it also was a prime example of space-time mobilised to gather what is the interrogator’s stock in trade: *intelligence as it is fantasised by interrogators to exist*.²⁰¹

Here, space is a machine. The equipment of intelligence arrays intelligence officers and human sources so that intelligence comes to be seen as a substance to be ‘extracted’ by mechanical means. Interrogation information is understood to be simultaneously material, environmental, abstract—*actually* inside subjects’ minds and on their biological bodies—but also capable of mobility, convertible to documentation under the right conditions of systematicity and efficiency. Beyond those brutal moments of direct, bodily violence, we must attend to the ways in which interrogation apparatuses catalyse extended geographies of military violence. When we do, we find that later modern military interrogation, particularly as performed by US agencies, is nothing like any ancient practice that can be identified for comparative purposes. Far from simply an intimate encounter in a dark room or a timeless feature of war, it becomes as technopolitical apparatuses. They encourage the development of machine spaces. Inside them, their political subjects, including interrogators, are encouraged to consider their work as the mechanised sloughing off of information from sources in a space of churning components, mounting pressure, and information cycling. But this conception of human intelligence did not begin in the information technology-saturated spaces of contemporary war, but earlier, with its industrialisation and totalisation in Europe.

²⁰¹ Falah, "Geography in Ominous Intersection with Interrogation and Torture," 750, emphasis in original.

Chapter 3: Muscles and Brains

The birth of mass interrogation

While there are good reasons to doubt the ‘ancient’ origins of military interrogation, there is no disputing that it has a longstanding place in modern state practice, with agencies adapting it to a range of purposes. The Western legal tradition sometimes distinguishes between ‘forensic’ interrogations conducted as part of modern policing, ‘political’ interrogations designed to terrorise and suppress dissidence, and ‘intelligence’ interrogations, those undertaken by state agencies for the purposes of producing knowledge in order to realise politico-military objectives.²⁰² Since the Second World War, US military agencies have constructed interrogation operations primarily to serve this third purpose. In practice, of course, these three ambitions are not mutually exclusive, but may coincide or unpredictably irrupt, one into the other. Nevertheless, at least in their discursive construction, wartime mass interrogation programmes almost always prioritise the collection of information in the form of intelligence datapoints for use in the pragmatic work of achieving politico-military dominance, rather than confessions, denunciations, or ideological recantations.

The previous chapter established that this practice is not universal or timeless. Intelligence is a technical performance, something historically and geographically contingent. The idea that apprehended human subjects can offer up this specific kind of knowledge and thereby reconstruct the space of war only became obvious through modern technopolitical developments and experimentation on the ground. As the Lieber Code provision suggests, by the middle of the nineteenth century that process had been set in train. Witnesses to the events and locations of industrial warfare were beginning to be recognised as vessels containing valuable

²⁰² Jean Maria Arrigo, Stephen Soldz, and Ray Bennett, "Psychology and Interrogation," in *The Encyclopedia of Peace Psychology, Volume 1*, eds. Daniel J. Christie (Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell, 2012), 577--579; see also Allison D. Redlich, "Military Versus Police Interrogations: Similarities and Differences," *Peace and Conflict: Journal of Peace Psychology* 13, no. 4 (2007): 423--428, <https://doi.org/10.1080/10781910701665741>; Kleinman schematises these uses according to three broad categories: interrogation for the purposes of conversion; interrogation ‘in order to break the will’; and interrogation to obtain ‘military information’, see "The Promise of Interrogation," 1583.

political material, ‘information’, an epistemic substance at once abstract and capable of being made solid and mobile.

It was not until the early twentieth century, however, that the planners of advanced armies began to construct dedicated systems for exploiting this emergent resource, and the human bodies that housed it. By the First World War, the intelligence branches of advanced militaries had begun to recognise that enemy bodies did not only have to be destroyed, imprisoned, treated and cared for, ransomed, or exploited for their labour power. They understood that ‘when soldiers [and non-combatants] surrender they take their muscles *and brains* with them’.²⁰³ This realisation sparked major shifts in the spatial practices of prisoner circulation and information management. Systems began to be constructed for converting their knowledge to military geographical and other insights.

This chapter lays the foundation for understanding the birth of mass interrogation. It examines three conditions of possibility for its coalescence as a distinctive technopolitical apparatus in post-1945 US military intelligence operations. For the purposes of illustration, each of the three developments are mapped onto a specific transformation in the geography of war during the first half of the twentieth century.

We begin with the first condition of possibility: the advent of systematic prisoner questioning during the First World War. The extraordinary industrialisation and totalisation of warfare in early-twentieth century Europe did not just shatter its physical and human geographies. It also wiped out the traditional credenda of military geography in the process. Established means for surveying the battlefield became immediately obsolete. On the Western Front, especially, new techniques for charting the battlelines, directing artillery, and discerning the enemy’s order of battle needed to be devised in an otherworldly space of static trench warfare. In the British and German armies, raiding parties—and the prisoners they were ordered to capture—replaced horse-mounted officers as principle sources of intelligence. Mostly this was ‘tactical’ or ‘local’ knowledge of the front. By 1918 new infrastructures of detainment and questioning were gradually constructed through which prisoners would be funnelled. Some British initiatives would remain only partially utilised by Armistice, but the overall complexity,

²⁰³ Gerald H. Davis, "Prisoners of War in Twentieth-Century War Economies," *Journal of Contemporary History* 12, no. 4 (1977): 623, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/260164>, emphasis added.

scale, and infrastructural character introduced to prisoner questioning would have permanent consequences.

During the Second World War, those physical and organisational apparatuses became much more elaborate and rationalised. As industrial war again submitted to radical technological transformation, and its geographies enlarged even further, all major powers experimented with initiatives for systematically ‘interrogating’ captured enemy soldiers (the term was now commonplace in English-speaking armies’ intelligence patois). Large-scale interrogation was identified as a means of gathering a more expansive array of information, including ‘strategic’ knowledge of enemies’ political economies, command hierarchies, and materiel. The British military was again particularly innovative, seeming to have poured more resources into the advancement of this inchoate mode of expertise than any other. In particular, in the form of its Combined Services Detailed Interrogation Centres scheme, strategic interrogation and human intelligence were subjected to the kind of volumetric production processes and compartmented architectures that would mark US mass interrogation after 1945. Interrogation was reconceived as a field of mechanical production that could be set up on the home front. It became a phase of military operations that demanded its own machine spaces.

However, mass interrogation as we know it also requires that its informational products be made available to a much larger machine of war, a broad multi-agency bureaucracy of military calculation. In the chapter’s final section, we move to a third condition of possibility: the calcification of the bureaucratic ‘intelligence cycle’ as a commonplace idea in the US national security state. After 1945, key Second World War innovations were bedded down and made permanent fixtures of military intelligence. United States mass interrogation would continue to be mediated by the concept and material trappings of the intelligence cycle. It was (and remains) a powerful metaphor, inspiring the unending and large-scale compilation of intelligence data in spaces of rationalised, managerial organisation. In the following sections we trace the emergence of systematic prisoner questioning, machine spaces of strategic interrogation, and the bureaucratic intelligence cycle, three salient conditions of possibility for US mass interrogation and the historical-geographical episodes that will follow in subsequent chapters.

Massification on the Western Front, 1914--1918

The most distinctive feature of modern mass interrogation apparatuses is their remarkably industrial scale. They are not simply ad hoc carceral systems with intelligence components attached but are volumetric and rationalised, designed for the expressed purposes of ‘processing’ a large number of human subjects and for recording what they know. In chapter 4 we will examine a truly massive interrogation initiative pioneered by the USAF, Project Wringer. Over about six years, it submitted three hundred thousand (ex-) prisoners to systematic questioning largely on a co-operative basis. Chapter 6 trains a wider lens on the industrial scaling of interrogation in US operations during the American war in Vietnam, a conflict in which around 50 000 enemy prisoners of war were formally interrogated or debriefed, mostly under much less congenial conditions.²⁰⁴ If the number of civilians and ‘suspects’ screened and interrogated in more extempore fashion in the Vietnamese countryside is included, that figure would be much larger, possibly in the millions.

However, this massified approach to prisoner capture and questioning was not the invention of US war agencies. Rather, its evolution was more diffuse, occurring in tandem with the changing geographies of modern political violence. From the mid-nineteenth century, war underwent a broader process of industrialisation and ‘totalisation’. Hitherto unrelated technical, mechanical, governmental, and logistical knowledges were incorporated into ever-more complex operations of advanced militaries. A general speed up of communications, transport, and combat led intelligence officers (and their commanders) to demand increasingly larger volumes of ‘real-time’ knowledge of enemies and terrain and at an unprecedented level of detail.²⁰⁵ Armies experimented with new technologies for recording and compiling this material, much of which was geographical and technical.

The First World War was a formative experience for military intelligence planners.²⁰⁶ On Europe’s Western Front in particular it was clear from the outset that the combat zone had changed forever: the wholesale introduction of mechanised, long-ranged weapons, and attrition

²⁰⁴ Department of the Army, Headquarters, *Field Manual 34-52, Intelligence Interrogation*, Washington, DC, September 1992, <https://fas.org/irp/doddir/army/fm34-52.pdf>, iv.

²⁰⁵ Keegan, *Intelligence in War*, epub e-book, chap. 1.

²⁰⁶ Heather Jones, "A Process of Modernization? Prisoner of War Interrogation and Human Intelligence Gathering in the First World War," in *Interrogation in War and Conflict: A Comparative and Interdisciplinary Analysis*, eds. Christopher Andrew and Simona Tobia (Abingdon: Routledge, 2014), 18--35.

tactics rendered battlelines intractably static, reducing to obsolescence several long-established technologies of field reconnaissance.²⁰⁷ The role of intelligence collection increasingly became the responsibility of foot soldiers bogged down in trenches. According to one officer lecturing in 1918, upwards of ninety percent of British intelligence gained about the Front was relayed back from the frontlines, rather than by scouts or swiftly moving officers on horseback, as was typical in the past.²⁰⁸

The questioning of enemy prisoners emerged as one means for ferrying information ‘back’ to officers from the trenches. While aerial scouting and intercepted communications offered other vital new spatialising technologies, the capture of enemy soldiers on the battlefield was considered a particularly exigent response to the sudden nullification of conventional field surveying technologies. Prisoners could reveal their units and thereby help discern an obscured enemy’s order of battle. As well, they could be expected to know in relatively fine-grained detail the latest military geographical information required for trench warfare, such as the positions of gun emplacements, battlements, and wire entanglements. This knowledge could assist in the production of artillery targets and trench maps.²⁰⁹ The British and German armies led the way in scaling up prisoner capture and questioning. Both developed new technical procedures and disciplinary frameworks for encouraging the taking of captives during trench raids, spatial strategies for their subsequent transportation and questioning, and new procedures for relaying the resulting information. In the rest of this section I focus mainly on the British Army at the Western Front and the measures its directorate put in place to ‘massify’ the processes of prisoner capture and intelligence recording. These laid down some of the logical premises for the field that would later be more widely referred to as ‘military interrogation’.

British army intelligence recognised a place for prisoner-sourced intelligence almost from the War’s opening salvos. In 1914, advice from General Headquarters (GHQ) filtered down to at least some divisions recommending that trench raiding parties pursue ‘the necessity of procuring information’ by returning with captives wherever possible:

²⁰⁷ Terrence J. Finnegan, "Military intelligence at the Front, 1914-1918," *Studies in Intelligence* 53, no. 4 (2009): 29, <https://www.cia.gov/library/center-for-the-study-of-intelligence/csi-publications/csi-studies/studies/vol53no4/pdf/U-%20Finnegan-WW%20Intel.pdf>; Jones, "A Process of Modernization?", 21.

²⁰⁸ Jim Beach, *Haig's Intelligence: GHQ and the German Army, 1916--1918* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 90, <https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9781139600521>.

²⁰⁹ Finnegan, "Military intelligence at the Front, 1914-1918," 29; Jones, "A Process of Modernization?," 21.

It is always a matter of importance, and sometimes of vital importance ... to obtain information as to the particular formations opposing us, and in a lesser degree their condition. As a rule, this information can only be gained by taking prisoners, and in order to take prisoners it is usually necessary to attack ... minor enterprises ... should have the effect of *providing a steady flow of prisoners*, even if in small numbers.²¹⁰

Such references to the idea of a ‘steady flow’ of prisoners and information would become part and parcel of mass interrogation apparatuses throughout the rest of the century. But on the Western Front it was a more nascent logic. As part of the wider process of industrialisation, the War’s phases were increasingly conceived as mechanical circuits. In military speech, plans, and doctrine, an increasingly powerful conceptual framework repeatedly utilised ‘mechanical imagery’ and language to choreograph time, space, and military forces along the Front.²¹¹ From its masses of bodies, materiel, and information, all the matter that made up the War seemed to be made conceptually available to planners as returning cycles that looped between the battlefield and the centres of military calculation, production, and logistical organisation in the non-combat zone. As mass warfare in the twentieth century seemed to conjure larger industrial patterns, so new systems for ordering the production of prisoner intelligence were devised along infrastructural lines.²¹²

However, the idea of supplying a ‘steady flow’ of prisoners did not automatically translate into reality. Many soldiers in the trenches abhorred the notion of conducting raids principally for the purpose of providing officers with an enemy to question. Headquarters’ advice on the matter was often ignored. This changed in late 1915 when Douglas Haig took control of British Expeditionary Force. Under his authority, Intelligence Corps sought to scale the prisoner captures up and, as his reputation as a hard-line commander unafraid to sacrifice lives took shape, GHQ’s capture advice was soon written into policy. From 1916 officers frequently issued commands to soldiers to embark on raids in order to capture prisoners and so provide commanders in the rear with a source for determining the enemy units facing them across the

²¹⁰ G507, II Corps to 3rd and 5th Divisions, 4 December 1914, quoted in Beach, *Haig’s Intelligence*, 97, emphasis added.

²¹¹ Gregory, "Gabriel’s Map: Cartography and Corpography in Modern War," 103.

²¹² In addition to Gregory’s, "Gabriel’s Map: Cartography and Corpography in Modern War", Emily Mayhew writes about the importance of railroads in the logistical construction of the medical war in *Wounded: A New History of the Western Front in World War I* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), 159--182.

lines. That achievement was known as ‘an identification’. For Charles Quinnell, of the Royal Fusiliers’, the price paid for gaining an identification in this way was unconscionable:

We knew it was a waste of time; it was a waste of time, we just hated it. ... There was some general about 30 miles behind the lines wanting to know who was on the opposite side. And he would send up a message, ‘Raid so and so and get prisoners,’ just like that, you know. He ought to have had the job himself ... Oh god the men just hated it. They didn’t mind going over the top with a fair chance, but by putting this box barrage [preparatory artillery barrage] down you were sending an open postcard to the Germans to say we’re going to raid that bit there. The consequence was the Germans used to absolutely pour all, everything—they used to throw everything barring the kitchen stove at you. Open fire with trench mortars, minenwerfers, light guns, heavy guns—the lot.²¹³

Later in the year, GHQ laid down formalised procedures for transferring prisoners to dedicated ‘collecting points’ behind the lines. There they could be questioned at greater length by officers (see figure 3.1). Institutionalising capture raids drastically expanded the number of prisoners handled by divisions. New provisions were soon laid down for larger prisoner ‘collecting stations’ and then even more expansive corps-level ‘cages’. By 1917, British prisoner cages at the Front were sophisticated carceral sites, built to handle upwards of one thousand prisoners per day and exhibiting increasingly rationalised architectures. The mass flow took place inside them, their designs including discrete ‘arrival’, ‘sorting’, and ‘evacuation enclosures’.²¹⁴ To assist questioners, GHQ stocked cages with standardised reference works on the German army and customised maps of enemy territory. However, despite these attempts at systematisation on the field and in cages, questioning itself was not subject to the formal discipline that would guide the field of intelligence interrogation in the decades to follow. Figure 3.2 suggests how, more often, the interpersonal encounter occurred in extemporary spaces and according to ad hoc procedures.²¹⁵ Similarly, figure 3.3 shows that facilities such as the Wanquetin cage, set up during the Battle of Arras, were relatively unrationalised, primarily functioning as mass detention camps.

²¹³ Quoted in "Voices of the First World War: Trench Raids," *Imperial War Museums*, 4 June 2018, <https://www.iwm.org.uk/history/voices-of-the-first-world-war-trench-raids>.

²¹⁴ Beach, *Haig's Intelligence*, 99--100.

²¹⁵ Heather Jones, "A Process of Modernization?," 22.



Figure 3.1 During the Somme Offensive, British Army officers interrogate German prisoners of war at a collecting point at the Battle of Bazentin Ridge, Autumn 1916.²¹⁶

²¹⁶ Photograph by Lieutenant John Warwick Brooke, "The Battle of the Somme, July--November 1916," catalogue number Q3969, part of series "Ministry of Information First World War Official Collection," Imperial War Museums, [hereafter IWM], <https://www.iwm.org.uk/collections/item/object/205236478>.

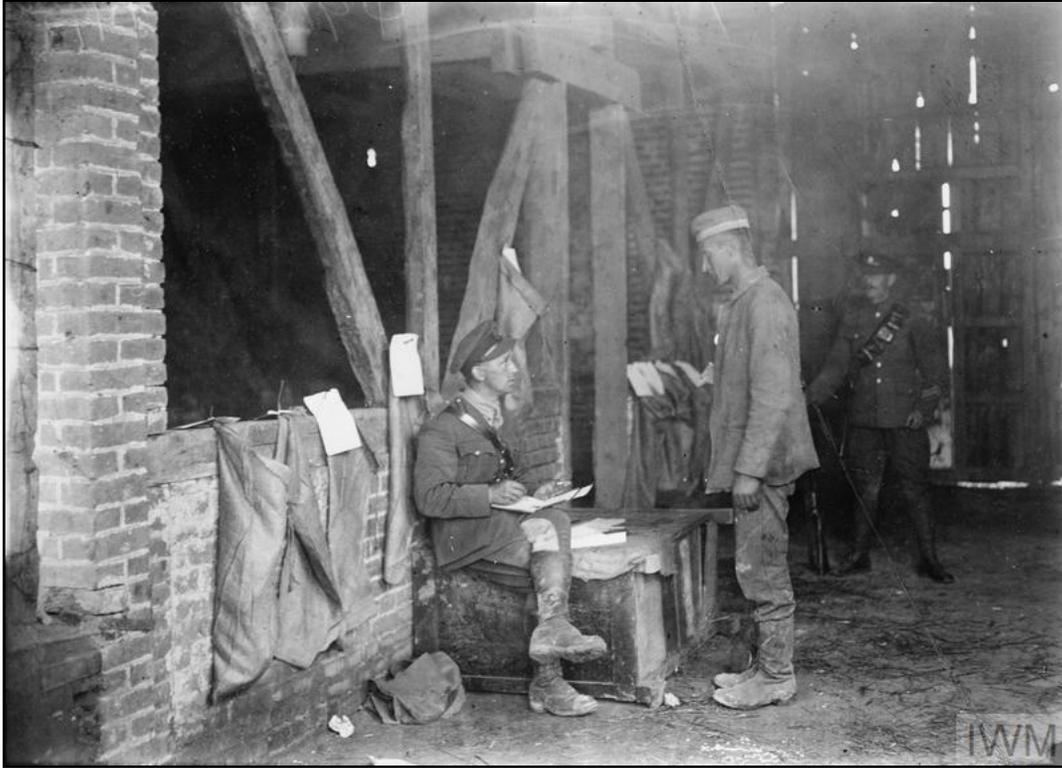


Figure 3.2 At the Battle of Amiens, a British Intelligence Officer questions a German prisoner in a makeshift setting, a barn near Maricourt, August 1918.²¹⁷

By the latter stages of the war, however, prisoner questioning was no longer a novelty. Soldiers grew to expect to be questioned upon capture and were better prepared to withhold intelligence or leave it behind by discarding pocket litter and insignias. In response, British intelligence extended the mechanical nature of prisoner transport to their interactions with German captives behind the lines. At collecting points the ‘atmosphere’ of an ‘orderly room’ was to be adopted for the purposes of intimidation: ‘the prisoner would be marched in, stood to attention and questions posed in an authoritative manner’.²¹⁸ In this way officers believed they could cower subjects, permitting larger numbers to be dealt with more speedily, rather than through extended interviews. The notion of interrogation as a struggle that played out on psychological terrain was beginning to take shape, albeit one that fit into a larger process of economical geospatial knowledge production and destruction. One intelligence officer

²¹⁷ Photograph by Second Lieutenant David McLellan, "The Hundred Days Offensive, August--November 1918," Catalogue number Q9181, part of series "Ministry of Information First World War Official Collection," IWM, <https://www.iwm.org.uk/collections/item/object/205244966>.

²¹⁸ Beach, *Haig's Intelligence*, 103.

remembered it like a churning machine that linked questioning to target identification in an almost instantaneous process:

Information radiated from a prisoner's cage at a speed that would have gladdened the heart of the most *difficile* editor. One minute a prisoner would give the location of an ammunition dump, the next a wire was being despatched to the R.A.F. asking them to go and bomb it.²¹⁹

The conceptual reframing of prisoner capture as the efficient circulation of both bodies and information, 'muscles and brains', meant that its operators sought to question prisoners at ever larger scales and quicker speeds. A general expectation took hold that psychological force was required to promptly 'open' interrogatees up and to move them on quickly. An overriding logic was introduced that would inhere for the next century: 'the sum of their conditioned responses could reveal more than a single, lengthy interrogation'.²²⁰

Through this period, the massifying of interrogation saw its geographies stretch further over the warzone. Haig's Chief of Intelligence, John Charteris, explained after the war that much effort was expended in designing orderly systems so that the labour-intensive work of listing and registering prisoners could be done further back behind the lines. Captives were transported by road and rail in order to render their handling more economical. At the same time, military interrogation brought new kinds of specialist subjects towards the Front. The need for rapidly processed 'local', tactical information—such as the changing locations of enemy guns—meant that divisional intelligence personnel were moved increasingly forward, into the trenches. There they could conduct 'initial screenings' and examinations, embedded with individual brigades. By the War's final phases German-speaking soldiers were regularly included in raiding parties.²²¹

²¹⁹ Ferdinand Tuohy, *The Secret Corps: A Tale of 'Intelligence' on all Fronts* (London: John Murray, 1920), quoted in Jones, "A Process of Modernization?," 25.

²²⁰ Beach, *Haig's Intelligence*, 103.

²²¹ *Ibid.*, 97--101.



Figure 3.3 German soldiers captured during the Battle of Arras are held in the prisoner cage at Wanquetin, April 1917.²²²

The mass scale of imprisonment during the First World War was unprecedented. Perhaps one in nine soldiers—around 8.5 million—were captured, a figure at least partly inflated in the conflict's later years as the practical value of questioning prisoners became normalised.²²³ For Beach, it was a new technology of war, forming 'the backbone of the British ability to monitor

²²² Photograph by Lieutenant John Warwick Brooke, "The Battle of Arras, April--May 1917," Catalogue number Q5149, part of series "Ministry of Information First World War Official Collection," [IWM], <https://www.iwm.org.uk/collections/item/object/205215512>.

²²³ Heather Jones, "A Missing Paradigm? Military Captivity and the Prisoner of War, 1914-18," *Immigrants & Minorities: Historical Studies in Ethnicity, Migration and Diaspora* 26, nos. 1/2 (2008): 20. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02619280802442589>. Jones, "A Process of Modernization?", 31; Davis, "Prisoners of War in Twentieth-Century War Economies," 624; Heather Jones, *Violence Against Prisoners of War in the First World War: Britain, France and Germany, 1914-1920* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 2.

the German frontline order-of-battle' by supplying sixty to ninety percent of the intelligence used to identify enemy units.²²⁴

These innovations extended beyond the British experience at the Front. The German army also put prisoner capture and questioning on a similarly industrial footing. After Armistice, General Ludendorff's head of intelligence at the Front, Oberstleutnant Walter Nicolai, declared that 'our greatest and most valuable sources of news in the western theatre of war—and at the frontline the only one—was furnished by prisoners of war'.²²⁵ However, Nicolai's use of the word 'news' (rather than 'intelligence' or 'information') is telling. For Jones, the process of incorporating 'new languages of psychology, bureaucratization and rationalization' into the questioning of enemy prisoners was gradual and partial. It is not even clear that the term or the concept of 'interrogation' was a salient one in British intelligence circles (its officers often described their methods for submitting prisoners to 'interviews' or 'friendly chats', not 'interrogations').²²⁶

As well, while the scale of interrogation was growing, on the Western Front the utility of its products was fundamentally limited. While Charteris argued that interrogation had become a vital new technique for charting the Front, it had a specific use:

Most of the information which a prisoner has is information in detail regarding the enemy defensive works on his own immediate front. To extract this information from him requires time. It is sometimes necessary to take the prisoner back in the front line trenches or to Observation Posts and almost always necessary to examine him with the assistance of aeroplane photographs.²²⁷

These words capture both the limits and the sense of a discipline in the throes of rationalisation. Questioning prisoners was now a practice that had its own spatial patterns, technical rigours, specialist graphical-reporting tools for spatialising results and, implicitly, the novel sense that 'information' lay in wait inside enemies' bodies. However, at the same time, it

²²⁴ Beach, *Haig's Intelligence*, 104. Finnegan argues similarly that, especially during the positional phases of the conflict, 'the most voluminous source of intelligence came from the interrogation of prisoners', see "Military Intelligence at the Front, 1914-1918," 29.

²²⁵ Quoted in Jones, "A Process of Modernization?," 21.

²²⁶ *Ibid.*, 19--20.

²²⁷ Quoted in Michael Occleshaw, *Armour Against Fate: British Military Intelligence in the First World War* (London: Columbus, 1989), 100-101

was the few miles near the front about which prisoners were expected to be knowledgeable. This meant that the massifying of interrogation on the Front was partial in other ways. While information was collected from prisoners in cages, questioning was most often conducted by improvising field commanders who drew small samples of prisoners from larger groups. As well, the British policy of capturing prisoners during raids was sometimes still disregarded altogether.²²⁸ Similarly, while the German army's protocols were formalising, with some British prisoners subjected to extensive questioning, more often those encounters were run according to 'ad hoc procedures usually targeted at officers [and] pilots'.²²⁹

Yet, if industrial warfare on the Western Front did not present a clear blueprint for mass interrogation, it nonetheless dramatically increased planners' appetite for ready-to-hand 'human intelligence'. In the British example, an entire new national machinery for producing interrogators and managing interrogation intelligence was taking shape. From 1918, prisoner of war examination was made a major component of officer training at the British intelligence school at Harrow.²³⁰ As well, the War Office commissioned a new specialised facility for handling intelligence sourced from prisoners who had been transported to camps in the United Kingdom. It was built in 1917 on Cromwell Road and jointly operated by navy and army intelligence.²³¹ Plans were made for its holding cells to be fitted out with listening devices. With the emergence of the Royal Air Force in 1918, the organisation was redirected to the production of aerial targeting intelligence and a 'special apparatus' with stages and holding facilities was planned so that very large numbers of human subjects could be efficiently processed. While the cessation of hostilities meant that no prisoners entered the centre, rationalised designs were sowing the seeds for a new field of expert reasoning.

The industrialisation of warfare reshaped the way advanced armies conceived of prisoner of war management and intelligence production. By 1918 the basic features of a mass approach to questioning had been laid down, particularly by British army intelligence. Procedures were formalised for moving prisoners back behind the lines, discrete facilities for their processing

²²⁸ Ibid., 80.

²²⁹ Oliver Wilkinson, *British Prisoners of War in First World War Germany* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2017), 35.

²³⁰ Jones, "A Process of Modernization?," 24.

²³¹ Kent Fedorowich, "Axis Prisoners of War as Sources for British Military Intelligence, 1939--42," *Intelligence and National Security* 14, no. 2 (1999): 159, <https://doi.org/10.1080/02684529908432543>.

constructed, and the rapid circulation of information produced in these encounters now appeared to be common-sense phases of war operations. By 1918, one British Army officer claimed that through the conflict intelligence officers in France had interrogated ‘between two and three hundred thousand captured Germans of every rank’.²³² The daily questioning of thousands of prisoners by capturing forces was not just conceivable but a technical field necessitating its own specialists and improvable techniques. In the next total war, construction of expert spaces and infrastructures for industrially producing and cycling intelligence from thousands of human sources would not just be possible, but obligatory.

Mechanical production and strategic intelligence, 1939--1945

In the next global conflict, the industrialisation of war intensified and expanded, reaching into virtually every aspect of political-economic life for the populations caught up in it. As well, a range of technological developments were available to counteract some of the causes of battlefield deadlock experienced on the Western Front. Mechanised armies, long-range bombers, the wholesale mobilisation of science to the national cause, new operational doctrines, and rationalised administration regimes for organising production all contributed to the thorough nationalisation of political violence. The geography of war changed in turn: in the Second World War advanced militaries pursued an even more varied swathe of information about enemies than before. Entire continents and regions would need to be known and mapped, rivals’ socio-political structures and industrial capacities had to be tabulated, their revolutionising weapons and secret devices discovered. In short, intelligence collection and production now incorporated the comprehensive survey of political-economic space, with new spatial forms devised for representing and intervening across regions and the globe. To support such enterprises, the circuits and infrastructures of military interrogation began to take on an intercontinental scale.

If the questioning of prisoners on the Western Front constituted a source of ‘local’ intelligence for overcoming attritional tactics, in the Second World War it also became a means of strategic warfare, the calculation and coordination of operations for larger political ends. In a conflict admitting no limit points on what was considered relevant to military planning,

²³² Tuohy, *The Secret Corps*, 256, quoted in Jones, "A Process of Modernization?", 25.

witnesses to war became bases for building knowledge of all kinds: ‘economics, the location of industry, the source and transportation of food supplies [became] as useful to the captor as the identification of units and their equipment, disposition and morale.’²³³ By 1945, prisoners under the control of British, German, American, and other intelligence agencies, were not just understood as soldiers with ‘news’ of immediate battles, but informational subjects possessing knowledge of almost every aspect of the enemy’s productive capacity.

New apparatuses and techniques of interrogation (now a term pervading the intelligence plans of English-speaking war offices) developed in response to commandants’ demands for strategic information. To borrow Tobia’s phrase, during the Second World War, the ‘in-between zone’—wherein soldiers are captive but not yet formally determined to be prisoners of war—was identified as a critical phase of intelligence warfare.²³⁴ In that legal and logistical interstice new forms of ‘screening’ for valuable sources and extracting information from them burgeoned. Most important, during this stage of prisoner evacuation, a new condition of possibility for strategic mass interrogation accreted: the common-sense idea that interrogatees were components to be inserted into complex, bureaucratic, machinic spaces of intelligence production. In the in-between zone, human intelligence production was marked by unprecedented systematicity, rationalised organisation, and high-efficiency management techniques.

By 1939 interrogational practice had become a formal element of a range of political technologies of suppression and colonial policing used by many governments, often outside of formal interstate conflict (as explored further in chapter 5).²³⁵ This meant that innovations in ‘strategic interrogation’—the systematic questioning of ‘high value’ subjects and large-scale production of human intelligence collection—was not dominated by any one participant. A

²³³ A.J. Barker, *Behind Barbed Wire* (London: BT Batsford, 1974), 59.

²³⁴ Simona Tobia, "In Enemy Hands. Allied Prisoners’ Interrogation Experiences and Memories in the Second World War," *Journal of War & Culture Studies* 9, no. 4 (2016): 291, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/17526272.2016.1216031>.

²³⁵ Chapter 5 returns to this theme. However, while the focus throughout this study is military intelligence interrogation, it should be noted that the use of detention camps and systematic questioning was becoming a more widespread technology of modern government in the early twentieth century. This was particularly the case for state security agencies dedicated to investigating and stamping out internal political threats, such as the Gestapo in Germany and French colonial officialdom in pre-War Indochina. See J. Ryan Stackhouse, "Gestapo Interrogations," in *Interrogation in War and Conflict: A Comparative and Interdisciplinary Analysis*, edited by Christopher Andrew and Simona Tobia (Abingdon, UK: Routledge, 2014), 75--92; Peter Zinoman, *The Colonial Bastille: A History of Imprisonment in Vietnam, 1862--1940* (Berkeley, CA: University of California, 2001).

number of advanced war agencies experimented with strategic interrogation during the conflict. For example, the *Luftwaffe* constructed an apparatus strikingly similar to the USAAF system described in chapter 1. Its ‘*Dulag Luft*’ facilities were dedicated to the incarceration and intensive interrogation of captured Allied airmen. (Hanns Scharff pioneered his questioning techniques at the main Dulag site, near Frankfurt).²³⁶ Meanwhile, from 1942 the US Army’s Military Intelligence Service worked swiftly to develop ‘*nisei*’ linguists out of the tens of thousands of Japanese Americans that were being relocated into concentration camps across the American west. Once trained many were attached to the joint Allied Translator and Interpreter Section, working as interrogators in the field and at centralised intelligence centres across the Pacific.²³⁷

Once again, however, a British programme was prototypical: the War Office’s network of Combined Services Detailed Interrogation Centres (CSDIC). Principles of industrial engineering were remaking intelligence through a range of conceptual exchanges, including division of labour, standardised procedures, and a mass production ethos. Arguably no other initiative would be more influential in guiding the trajectory of mass interrogation as a volumetric, machinic apparatus. Its designers systematised and put into action a model, previously inchoate, that imagined interrogation as a bureaucratic, mechanistic, large-scale, and phased intelligence recording assembly line. As noted in the previous chapter, for Steven Kleinman it remains the paragon of mass interrogation planning.²³⁸ The CSDIC system directly informed colonial British mass interrogation systems designed to put down uprisings in Palestine and Malaya (the latter to be examined in chapter 5), as well as US initiatives set up during the War itself, with consequences for its human intelligence activities in the early-cold war period.²³⁹

Whereas on the Western Front the questioning of prisoners was mostly sporadic, a practice tacked on to the larger process of evacuation from the point of capture, during the

²³⁶ Tobia, "In Enemy Hands," 292.

²³⁷ James C. McNaughton, *Nisei Linguists: Japanese Americans in the Military Intelligence Service during World War II* (Washington, DC: Department of the Army, 2006), https://history.army.mil/html/books/nisei_linguists/CMH_70-99-1.pdf.

²³⁸ Kleinman, "Barriers to Success," 253.

²³⁹ Steven M. Kleinman, "The History of MIS-Y: U.S. Strategic Interrogation During World War II" (master’s thesis, Joint Military Intelligence College, 2002), <http://www.dtic.mil/docs/citations/ADA447589>; Falko Bell, "‘One of our Most Valuable Sources of Intelligence’: British Intelligence and the Prisoner of War System in 1944," *Intelligence and National Security* 31, no. 4 (2016): 566–578; <https://doi.org/10.1080/02684527.2015.1062319>.

Second World War the functions of transit centre and interrogation site blurred.²⁴⁰ Through the course of the conflict, Allied authorities in northern Africa and Europe transferred prisoners to the British Isles as a matter of course. To house them, the Home Office controlled an archipelago of 1500 camps and detention facilities, a network that held over 500 000 German and Italian captives when incarceration peaked near the cessation of hostilities. Unlike in the previous war, these prisoners were first transferred to a regional cage for ‘screening’ and preliminary interrogation. The War Office’s Prisoner of War Interrogation Section (Home) was present in camps, responsible for ‘grading’ new internees, assigning them categories based on their ostensible ideological hostility, rank, and knowledgeability. While the bulk of soldiers taken prisoner by Allied armies were those who surrendered once the North African Campaign began in November 1942, between 1940 and 1943 the British screening system was already absorbing between 200 and 2000 enemy personnel every few months. In these early years of the war, most detainees were downed *Luftwaffe* airmen and captured submarine crews.²⁴¹ They attracted the War Office’s attention as both were deemed to be ‘special’ sources possessing intelligence useful for strategic planning.

To examine these specialist captives, the army revisited some of the interrogation plans and training procedures it had developed during the previous world war, but which had not been fully utilised by 1918.²⁴² Reactivated and extended, these measures crystallised as a network of domestic carceral and intelligence production facilities, the CSDIC(UK). It was a ‘joint’ apparatus, the intelligence directorates of the army, navy, and air force collaborating in order to ‘maximise the extraction of information’ from prisoners and so permit intelligence to be funnelled around the war apparatus.²⁴³ However, at the CSDIC sites—where interrogation rooms and cells were fitted with hidden microphones and devices installed for transferring conversations to wax records—each agency conducted its own interrogations, inserted their own

²⁴⁰ Helen Fry, *The London Cage: The Secret History of Britain’s World War II Interrogation Centre* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2018), 2.

²⁴¹ J. Anthony Hellen, "Temporary Settlements and Transient Populations: The Legacy of Britain’s Prisoner of War Camps: 1940--1948," *Erdkunde* 53, no. 3 (1999): 193, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/25647172>. Fearing the threat of invasion, between 1940 and 1944 authorities transferred thousands of prisoners on to Canada, the US, and imperial dominions.

²⁴² Bell, "One of our Most Valuable Sources of Intelligence'," 570.

²⁴³ Fry, *The London Cage*, 2--15.

stool pigeons, and separately extracted information from internees' monitored conversations.²⁴⁴ By the end of 1942, teams could visit three sites operating in Britain: at Trent Park at Cockfosters, and two Buckinghamshire country houses, Latimer House and Wilton Park, the three of which held around four hundred detainees. Over a thousand War Office personnel, air force and navy interrogators staffed them. That year CSDIC(UK) processed 700 German and 164 Italian prisoners, and produced more than 9000 wax records and 3000 intelligence reports, many of which were circulated to the Government Code and Cypher School at Bletchley Park.²⁴⁵

The CSDIC system soon spread wherever British authorities collected 'special' prisoners. Carbon copy facilities were constructed at CSDIC (Middle East) in Cairo (opened December 1940) and then in Algeria, Italy, Malta, Khartoum, Palestine, Delhi, Brisbane, and Burma.²⁴⁶ Each site was planned according to a highly rationalised, 'multi-tiered' institutional design with administrators endeavouring to focus officers' attentions towards procedure and economical production: efficient daily 'flows' of sources needed to be maintained, and report production rates maximised. Division of labour was key, with administrative tasks made mechanical, broken down and specialised. The inaugural head of CSDIC's air interrogation section declared after the war that:

Interrogation of prisoners is a difficult and delicate task ... [that cannot] be conducted by anybody, anywhere and by no matter what method. It is indispensable, *if results of any value are to be produced*, that the examination be conducted in a *skilled, planned and methodical manner*.²⁴⁷

To this end, CSDIC operations were compartmentalised and interrogations were generally reported verbatim, so that further analysis could be conducted elsewhere on the mass

²⁴⁴ Bell, "'One of our Most Valuable Sources of Intelligence'," 571.

²⁴⁵ Bob Moore and Kent Fedorowich, *The British Empire and its Italian Prisoners of War, 1940--1947* (London: Palgrave, 2002), 101.

²⁴⁶ Kent Fedorowich, "Axis Prisoners of War as Sources for British Military Intelligence, 1939-42," *Intelligence and National Security* 14, no. 2 (1999): 176, n. 32, <https://doi.org/10.1080/02684529908432543>.

²⁴⁷ Memorandum by Wing Commander S.D. Felkin, RAF, "The History of ADI(K)," 24 March 1944, Air Ministry Paper 2/4591, Public Record Office, London, quoted in Kevin Jones, "From the Horse's Mouth: Luftwaffe POWs as Sources for Air Ministry Intelligence During the Battle of Britain," *Intelligence and National Security* 15, no. 4 (2000): 66, <https://doi.org/10.1080/02684520008432628>.

of information collected.²⁴⁸ Separated teams were dedicated to the functions represented by the various stages in the interrogation-intelligence report production process: source control, interrogation, report writing, document evaluation, systems monitoring, and prisoner transfer. Interrogation itself was to be conducted by cycling sources around sub-sections of interrogators with specialised subject matter expertise, such as psychological warfare, industrial economics, scientific research, or the *Luftwaffe*.

One of the most productive CSDICs was the Delhi centre, which was operated by Australian, as well as British officers. Rather than enemy prisoners, in 1944 it was tasked with interrogating large numbers of the British Indian Army personnel who had escaped or been freed from Japanese prisoner of war camps in Malaya and Java. Figures 3.4 and 3.5 are extracted from reports made there and both files suggest in two ways how the products generated out of these encounters could be more strategic and sophisticated than anything attempted during the First World War.

First, the Indian CSDIC's geographical materials mapped space at a larger scale and at a more general, or infrastructural, level of military detail. Often the purpose was to identify Japanese industrial installations, transport connections, and the enemy's network of war prisons. For example, figure 3.4 is drawn from an August 1944 report compiled by an Australian officer after interrogating an Indian Army lieutenant from the Punjab. The file details his itinerary in Malaya, capture in Singapore, and life at the prison camp in Batavia where he was transferred and detained for two years. In addition to sketches of the jail itself, it also details a wealth of descriptions of the topography in the surrounding region, mud maps and marked up aerial photographs of the airfields and ports where he was forced to work in east Java. The second way in which the CSDIC in Delhi produced more complex and strategic material than in the First World War owed to the political and economic nature of the information sought. Interrogations were directed at developing knowledge that would be of long-term use in a larger bureaucratic system of military and colonial planning. For this reason, each report came with the warning that its source was 'an Indian and belongs to a martial race of India'. 'By European standards they are largely uneducated,' it continued, and so only 'the more intelligent' were interrogated. Nonetheless, even with its authenticity undermined by dubious racial origins, reporters at the

²⁴⁸ Jones, "From the Horse's Mouth," 68.

CSDIC (India) could transmit significant quantities of intelligence to war planners for later use in re-establishing government in the colonies, prosecuting war criminals, or for identifying Allied prisoners still in captivity (see figure 3.5). Unlike on the Western Front, where interrogation intelligence usually consisted of listing enemy positions and units on the battlefield, the Delhi reports are dominated by ‘special intelligence’. That included insights Indian personnel might have on the ‘native attitude to allies’ of Javanese people, the propaganda to which they were exposed, and the economic situation of the communities surrounding their prison camps. In addition, counterintelligence was demanded, such as the names of senior Japanese officers at the camps and any Javanese collaborators, particularly young conscripts who might pose a political risk upon European forces’ return.



Figure 3.4 A marked up aerial photograph of the airfield at ‘Grissee’, east Java. It was produced from the August 1944 interrogation of an Indian Army lieutenant who laboured there and was imprisoned nearby.²⁴⁹

²⁴⁹ Appendix A, "Report No. 19," 24 August 1944, Folder: "'A" Section CSDIC, Advanced L.H.Q Australia, Reports Nos 3 to 20, 1944, " Accession number AWM2018.8.368, collection number AWM 54 423/11, AWM digitised collection, <https://www.awm.gov.au/collection/C2620866>.

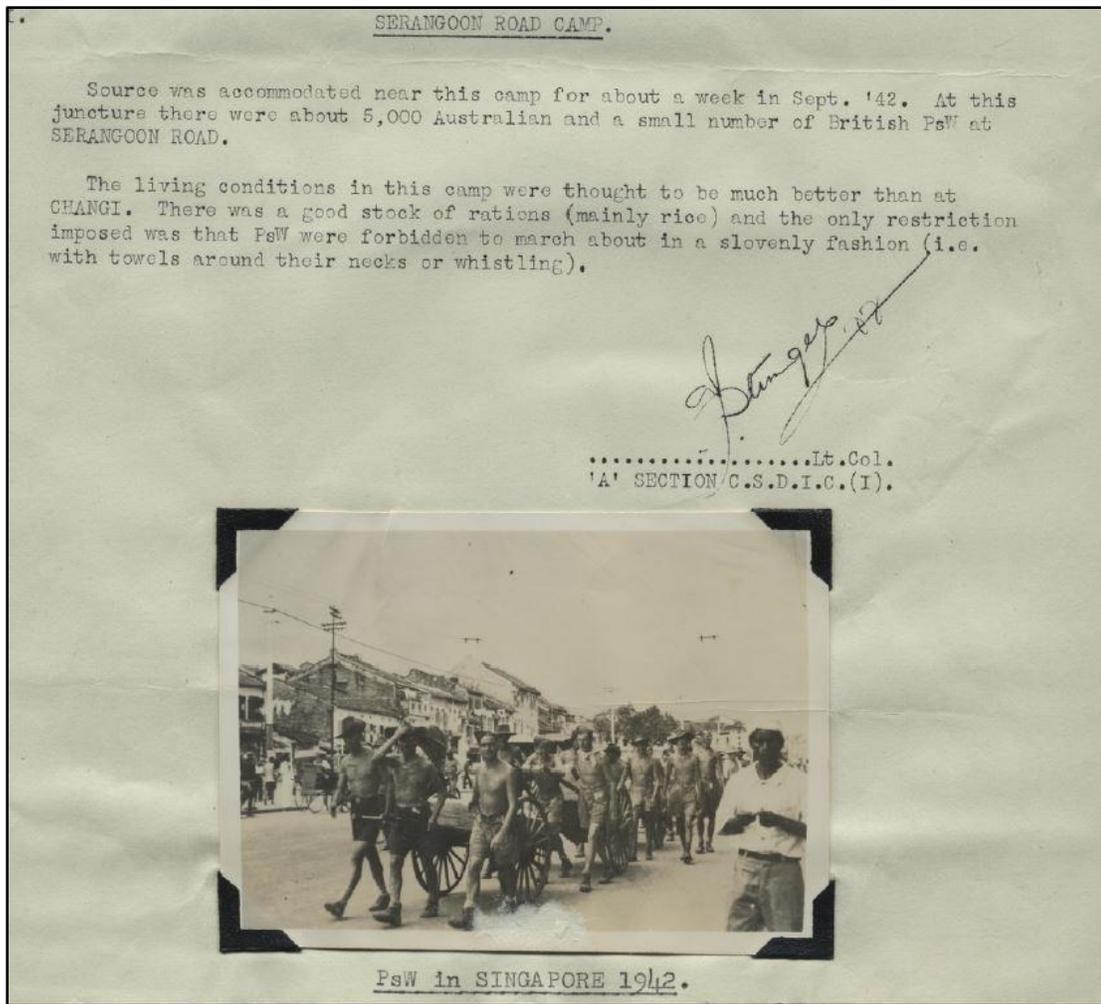


Figure 3.5 Extract from an Indian Army officer who had been imprisoned in Singapore and recovered by Allied soldiers in New Guinea. The report details the conditions of the jails and internees and the names of Japanese officers.²⁵⁰

The CSDIC (India) example begins to suggest how the British strategic interrogation apparatus constituted a 'complex structure' whose mechanical processes 'stretched over several theatres of war'.²⁵¹ In concert the centres disclosed a broader interrogation system as something like a vast machine for converting captured bodies into high-level information. Occasionally this mentality was reflected in language, with the apparatus compared to an industrial enterprise. In the build up to Operation Overlord, German soldiers were to be taken across the Channel and to

²⁵⁰ "Report No. 46," 23 May 1945, Folder: "A Section CSDIC, Land Headquarters Australia, Reports Nos 39 to 48, July 1944--1945," Accession number AWM2019.8.102, collection number AWM 54 423/11/51/Part/3, AWM digitised collection, <https://www.awm.gov.au/collection/C2654061>, 4

²⁵¹ Bell, "One of our Most Valuable Sources of Intelligence", 574.

one of two camps—at Kempton Park and Devizes—which were commonly referred to by officers as ‘bottlenecks’ in the flowing current of bodies moving through the system. The former was designed to allow two thousand prisoners to be sorted and forwarded for further interrogation each day. Physical procedures there were also choreographed, enabling prisoners to be quickly grouped, inspected, recorded, clothed, and submitted to initial interrogations.²⁵²

For British authorities, strategic interrogation during the War was effective when it was efficient. The ‘smooth functioning of the apparatus’ extended to the questioning process itself.²⁵³ With orders to produce timely technical knowledge of the German submarine fleet, air targets, and other evolving problems, CSDIC interrogators were under significant pressure. MI-5 ran a similar facility for processing *Abwehr* officers, a site whose mission objective was: ‘truth in the shortest possible time’. Interrogation officers were reminded that ‘some information in time is worth an encyclopedia out of date’.²⁵⁴ Most interrogations seem to have been conducted using non-coercive techniques, such as direct questioning and the ‘omniscient’ approach (otherwise known as the ‘we know all’ technique, whereby resistant interrogatees are assailed by interrogators with feigned knowledge, copious files, and snippets from recorded conversations).²⁵⁵ However, there is evidence that experimentation with drugs was attempted. At least one psychologist-interrogator administered amphetamines, thyroxine, and hypnosis techniques at the CSDIC in Cairo.²⁵⁶ More basic bodily brutalisation almost certainly took place as well, particularly at the notoriously rough Bad Nenndorf CSDIC site in Germany, set up near the end of the conflict.²⁵⁷

Another strategic interrogation site, London District Cage at Kensington Palace Gardens exemplified this approach to military interrogation. Rational procedure integrated with harsh treatment. The Cage had space for sixty senior German prisoners, who were pressed for their knowledge of battle plans, industrial geography, and potential bombing targets.²⁵⁸ On the one

²⁵² Ibid., 574--575.

²⁵³ Ibid.

²⁵⁴ Kleinman, "Barriers to Success," 253.

²⁵⁵ Bell, "'One of our Most Valuable Sources of Intelligence'," 577.

²⁵⁶ Iain Cobain, *Cruel Britannia: A Secret History of Torture* (London: Portobello, 2012), epub e-book, chap. 1.

²⁵⁷ Iain Cobain, "The Interrogation Camp that Turned Prisoners into Living Skeletons," *The Guardian UK*, 17 December 2005, <https://www.theguardian.com/uk/2005/dec/17/secondworldwar.topstories3>.

²⁵⁸ Fry, *The London Cage*, 40.

hand it was a ruthless site where prisoners were hidden from the Red Cross, threatened with execution, and deprived of sleep.²⁵⁹ Its commanding officer, Alexander Scotland, had served in the German Army during the genocidal Hottentot Wars, and later claimed his ‘battles’ in Namibia and imprisonment on the Western Front were formative experiences that inspired his severe approach to interrogation. All the same, London Cage was a stringently modern space. With its mechanical procedures and cutting-edge recording devices, it also constituted a virtual assembly line for processing military information, much of it strategic and spatial. Rationalised processes and compartmentalised responsibilities allowed interrogators to move twenty-five German senior officers through the facility each day, generating thousands of intelligence reports in the process. Fry observes that ‘timing was all’: in a ‘fast-moving war, a piece of intelligence one day was history the next’.²⁶⁰ For Scotland, the best interrogators were ‘practical psychologists’. They could manipulate enemies’ minds but were also at home in a bureaucratic setting: keenest were ‘lawyers and academics’, professionals used to ‘sorting through volumes of unfamiliar evidence’, or ‘journalists and businessmen, trained to worm their way into a new situation’.²⁶¹

With its mechanical rationality, the CSDICs did indeed sort through vast volumes of evidence, as well as detained bodies. In addition to the massification of basic interrogation at the Western Front, the mechanical processing of ‘special’ categories of war subjects for their ‘strategic’ information was now conceivable and designed along the lines of modern infrastructure. Colonel D. Macmillan, a senior intelligence officer, likened his interrogation work at the Cairo CSDIC branch to a modern machinic enterprise that churns out commodity-like products. They ‘can form a real picture of the mass of information that is being passed out’ and link the calculative spaces of strategic warfare together:

The customers are many and often far afield, which makes it virtually impossible for any head of military intelligence to appreciate the full value that a CSDIC can give to the common effort. A CSDIC transcends the sphere of purely military intelligence and becomes the hand maiden of all Departments and Sections, irrespective of service or politics. It may best be described as a universal agency from *which intelligence can be*

²⁵⁹ Fedorowich, "Axis Prisoners of War as Sources for British Military Intelligence, 1939-42," 161.

²⁶⁰ Fry, *The London Cage*, 17, 36.

²⁶¹ *Ibid.*, 38.

*obtained for the best benefit of the whole war machine, limited only in its capacity of output by the number of interrogators and staff available to the Organization.*²⁶²

The 'whole war machine' extended well beyond the CSDIC system. In turn, the conceptual apparatus driving industrialised interrogation was laid down in a range of schemes elsewhere. After the Northern African Campaign began, and the War Office was faced with the challenge of processing tens of thousands of prisoners at home, the Intelligence Corps requisitioned a textile mill in Oldham—a quintessential industrial space—converting it to a transit camp for tens of thousands of recently surrendered Afrikakorps soldiers. John Oswald, an interrogator there, described the industrialised labour of 'weeding out' any men who had knowledge of the Reich's V-2 rocket testing stations, before they were shipped to the US:

The prisoners were arriving by the trainload, marshalled into holding areas, and then fed singly to interrogators, who were allowed three minutes with each man. During this short time, we had to check whether the prisoner had been anywhere near Peenemünde, but not to alert him as to why we were interested in this ... We worked for up to 36 hours at a stretch, with only short breaks for picnic meals. I forget how long the exercise took, but it was certainly a week or ten days, after which we were quite exhausted, but felt that it had been a job worth doing!²⁶³

Compared to those conducted with officers at sites like London Cage and Trent Park, these interrogations were short and sharp. However, Oswald was later transferred to the Cairo CSDIC, where he undertook the equally tiring, repetitive, mechanistic work of large-scale interrogation, but which pursued a more strategic purpose.

The CSDIC model disseminated to the US intelligence apparatus during the conflict and shaped American mass interrogation after 1945. At the end of the War it was well-regarded in intelligence circles. More than ten thousand German and Italian prisoners were interrogated by

²⁶² Colonel D. Macmillan to Deputy Director of Military Intelligence (PW), 20 July 1945, War Office Papers 208/3248, Public Record Office, London, quoted in Fedorowich, "Axis Prisoners of War as Sources for British Military Intelligence, 1939--42," 156.

²⁶³ "An Interrogator's Life (Part 1)," account of John Oswald, 27 October 2004, BBC WW2 People's War Archive, <https://www.bbc.co.uk/history/ww2peopleswar/stories/61/a3189161.shtml>.

British intelligence and 100 000 transcripts produced from their bugged conversations.²⁶⁴ But well before that point, word of the ‘British model’ of industrialised interrogation and intelligence reporting had reached Allied intelligence circles and provisions were soon made for its direct translation into US operations.²⁶⁵ A 1942 US Office of Navy Intelligence study of interrogation efforts at London Cage led to the lodging of a request with the War Department for an American equivalent of the CSDIC.²⁶⁶ Soon after, the US Army Air Corps leadership also applied for a similar system and a US personnel section was added to the London site. Intelligence swaps were agreed, and American interrogation officers trained there.²⁶⁷

Through this exchange relationship, the US military branches’ intelligence agencies were supplied with plans for the ‘apparatus and mechanisms’ required to reproduce the mechanical, staged, and hierarchised approach used there.²⁶⁸ At sites such as Camp Tracy in California and the Joint Interrogation Centre at Fort Hunt in Maryland, the Military Intelligence Service constructed expansive ‘combined’ interrogation facilities, replicating key CSDIC elements. They adopted the assembly line model too, constructed as large-scale incarceration-interrogation facilities capable of ‘processing’ dozens of subjects each day. The former received Japanese prisoners and the latter interrogated around 3 500 German officers for ‘strategic’ information.²⁶⁹ Mechanised, strategic interrogation had found its way into the US military intelligence structure.

The bureaucratic ‘cycling’ of intelligence

In addition to the massification of prisoner questioning and the systematisation of strategic interrogation, there is a third fundamental condition of possibility for mass interrogation: the bureaucratised intelligence ‘cycle’. Since the Second World War, almost every intelligence trainee in the US has been presented with a diagram very similar to figure 3.6.²⁷⁰ It depicts the

²⁶⁴ Fry, *The London Cage*, 20; Sonke Neitzel and Harald Welzer, *Soldaten: On Fighting, Killing and Dying* (London: Simon & Schuster, 2012), 346.

²⁶⁵ Bell, "‘One of Our Most Valuable Sources of Intelligence’," 569.

²⁶⁶ Kleinman, "The History of MIS-Y," 32.

²⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, 36--46.

²⁶⁸ Jones, "From the Horse’s Mouth," 76.

²⁶⁹ Kleinman, "The History of MIS-Y," 114.

²⁷⁰ Michael Warner, "The Past and Future of the Intelligence Cycle," in *Understanding the Intelligence Cycle*, ed. Mark Pythian (Abingdon, UK: 2013), epub e-book, chap. 1.

work of intelligence as a chain, each link denoting a phase in a spiralling process of information management and planning operations. The representation below is taken from a 1992 Army Field Manual, *Interrogation Intelligence*, but almost every US interrogation manual frames ‘human intelligence’ with a similar graphic tool. Though an abstract representation, figures such as this have performative force, particularly when they are doctrinal and pervasive.

In *Interrogation Intelligence*, interrogation is recast as an unending production cycle, one whose outputs relate to data compilation and communication. It asks interrogators and interrogation report writing officers to internalise their labour as a phase in a perpetually circling process of information management, one moment in an overarching and compartmentalised bureaucratic data stream. As figure 3.6 indicates, within intelligence bureaucracy, certain officers are responsible for delineating *requirements* (or ‘planning objectives’), a phase that involves identifying decision-makers’ information needs (often referred to as ‘customers’); others are dedicated to *collecting* data, in this case involving the submission of human subjects to rounds of systematic questioning by specialists. Elsewhere the procedural quality of collected data is *evaluated*, often by officers with separate training, while others are determining the significance of recordings at the *analysis* stage, a process in which new information is integrated with similar chunks of information already on hand. Finally, some agents undertake the work of *dissemination*, dispatching ‘the resulting intelligence product’ to customers afield. In this way, the ‘cycle’ graphic is meant simultaneously to chart the progress of material intelligence reports while also portraying a process of corporate learning. Constitutive members operate in synchrony to clarify new knowledge by refining packets of raw data into pure information, providing more retained materials with which to perpetuate and deepen the cycle.²⁷¹

²⁷¹ Warner, "The Past and Future of the Intelligence Cycle," 12. Warner speculates that the intelligence cycle metaphor was adapted from early-twentieth century psychological theory. Figures such as Victor Haberman popularised the idea that understanding works as a train of constantly reiterating mental functions: ‘attention, memory, comprehension, and combination’. The resultant ‘intelligence process’ was pictured as a set of ‘discrete operations for gathering and processing inputs’, much as the intelligence cycle did for security information.

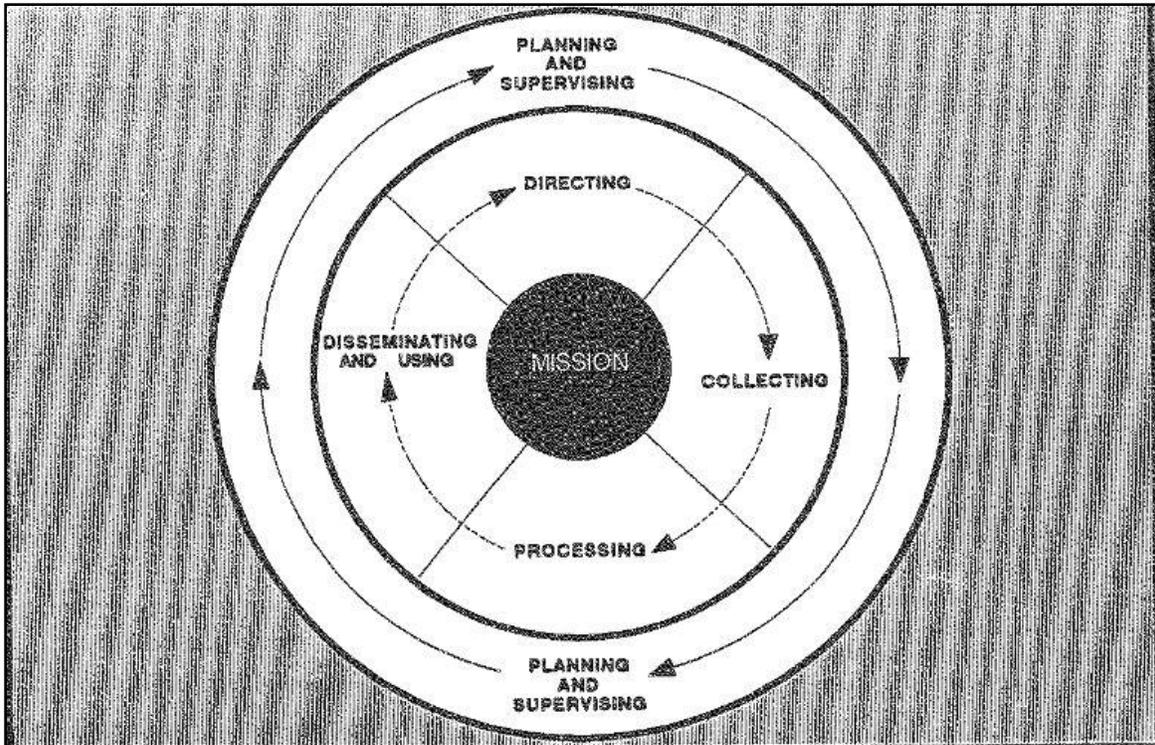


Figure 3.6 The 'Intelligence Cycle' as depicted in the US Army's 1992 *Field Manual 34-52, Intelligence Interrogation*.²⁷²

From at least 1948 this intelligence cycle metaphor started to take hold right across the US national security state.²⁷³ When applied to large-scale interrogation systems, it dictates the formalisation of a diversity of discrete administrative tasks. It conjures bureaucracy. Included in interrogation operations are many more specialists than simply interrogators, commanders, and guards. Now added to the mix are typists, map makers, librarians, report editors, draftspersons and printers, logistics specialists, medical officers, communications staff, translators, and much more. To oversee these congeries of specialists, commanders of intelligence operations by necessity become managers. Specialisations occurred in earlier initiatives, as we have seen. But, after 1945, US human intelligence operations were reframed so that, rather than principally a matter of submitting many subjects to systematic questioning, interrogation instead was recast as a problem of establishing the productivity of a compartmentalised information bureaucracy. The

²⁷² US Department of the Army, Headquarters, *Field Manual 34-52, Intelligence Interrogation*. Washington, DC, September 1992, §1-2.

²⁷³ Warner, "The Past and Future of the Intelligence Cycle."

Army's 1951 *Field Manual 30-5, Combat Intelligence* broke down the intelligence manufacturing cycle in this way:

- a. The production of combat intelligence may be divided into four steps—
 1. Collection of information.
 2. Processing of the collected information to produce intelligence.
 3. Use of the resulting intelligence.
 4. Direction of the collection effort.
- b. These steps are concurrent. At the same time that new information is being *collected*, other information is being *processed*, and intelligence is being *used*. The entire operation must be constantly *directed*.
- c. The four steps are the lowest common denominator of the operational cycle of intelligence. Each is indispensable. If one step fails, the entire intelligence process will fail.²⁷⁴

In an apparatus where production is central and imagined simultaneously to be compartmentalised and corporate, iterative and unending, it is common for the process to become an end in itself. For one Department of Defense historian, a lasting problem with picturing intelligence as an 'endless chain'—wherein 'products' spin out of a collective effort of mass information collection—is that its national security producers are provoked to generate crises of overproduction.²⁷⁵ Rather than a holistic process, for reasons of self-interest the ambitions of political subjects inside the churning interrogation apparatus is to maximise volume and throughput at their particular phase of operations.

The ultimate ambition is to *scrub subjectivity* from intelligence products in two ways. The 'raw materials' of interrogation (oral accounts, sketched diagrams, hazy memories, and hearsay) must be converted into something more objective, pure intelligence; while the contingent processes by which intelligence is authored by officers must also be removed by way

²⁷⁴ Department of the Army, *FM 30-5, Combat Intelligence*, 23, emphasis in original.

²⁷⁵ Warner, "The Past and Future of the Cycle," 14.

of formal, disciplined procedures for crafting these materials into standardised reports, or impersonal datapoints.

The following chapters examine three rehearsals of this ‘scrubbing’ by American agencies in later modern war, as well as similar experiments by European counterinsurgents in colonial staging grounds. They show that the ‘transformation’ of interrogation’s apprehended subjects into vast pools of ‘intelligence sources’—whose knowledge is subsequently processed into ‘information’—are not automatic or pre-assured steps. Rather, intelligence production is the outcome of significant labour, administrative organisation, and technical ingenuity on the part of US intelligence’s official subjects who are, often, both soldiers and bureaucratic workers. Examined this way, systematic military interrogation appears less like an abstract, ahistorical, and obvious solution to ‘the state’s’ perpetual ‘intelligence problem’. Rather, it is an instrumental effect of work carried out by a *bureaucracy*.

A bureaucracy’s authority, Max Weber argued, is dependent upon its ability to eliminate any appearance that its judgements are made on subjective terms. It must ‘dehumanise’ its productive operations in favour of calculative procedure.²⁷⁶ To this end, as bureaucracies, late modern interrogation agencies are under pressure from within and without to *display* ‘mechanical objectivity’. They must exhibit administrative rationality by showing that they adopt specialised techniques and maintain an ability to follow the rules.²⁷⁷ The reasoning power of their ‘products’ relies on officers’ ability to convincingly perform this effect in concert, collectively to fabricate from interrogations abstract intelligence data—‘factual information’ structured and arranged in set relations and used as the basis for national security reasoning.²⁷⁸ But ‘human intelligence’ utilises the most classically subjective source imaginable. So, in the empirical chapters to come we will follow the often extraordinarily detailed arrangements implemented in order to scrub subjectivity from both wartime interrogation materials and its

²⁷⁶ Max Weber, *The Essential Weber: A Reader*, ed. Sam Whimster (New York: Routledge, 2003), 249, quoted in Andrew Lakoff and Eric Klinenberg, "Of Risk and Pork: Urban Security and the Politics of Objectivity," *Theory and Society* 39, no. 5 (2010): 505, <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11186-010-9123-3>.

²⁷⁷ Though his focus is quantification, on the requirement for US bureaucratic agencies to display ‘mechanical objectivity’ by ‘following the rules’, see Ted Porter’s *Trust in Numbers: The Pursuit of Objectivity in Science and Public Life* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1995).

²⁷⁸ Minna Räsänen and James M. Nyce, "The Raw is Cooked: Data in Intelligence Practice," *Science, Technology, & Human Values* 38, no. 5 (2013): 659, <https://doi.org/10.1177/0162243913480049>.

expert methods, to convert uncertain, or ‘raw’ human intelligence mechanically into polished and calculative ‘bits of truth’, as Chris Mackey put it.

Bureaucratic rationales and techniques heavily mediated the industrialisation of post-1945 mass interrogation machinery. Kim argues that, during the Korean War, bureaucratic procedure became crucial to ‘rendering the interrogation room as a site of precise warfare ... a rational space for the production of information’.²⁷⁹ The US interrogation system in Korea, for example, brought together trained Japanese American translators, handbooks instructing how to ‘open up’ ‘Oriental’ targets and to assess their reliability, and exact procedures for producing a ‘clean, typed interrogation report in English’. Yet, the deluge of resulting documentary artefacts elided most of the messy details of their making. In generic, mass produced form, interrogation information could be taken on face value as something known across a sprawling military apparatus.²⁸⁰ Far from incidental, the antiseptic, proceduralised quality of the bureaucratic intelligence cycle helped perform the US occupation as legitimate, humanitarian, and precise.

Following the strategic expansion of interrogation during the Second World War and the realities of ‘the complex, integrated battle space’ inherent to later modern war, interrogation planners began to recognise that intelligence was more multifarious than previously imagined. Their scope had to be ‘properly expanded to also encompass, at a minimum, the pursuit of political, economic, and technical information’.²⁸¹ Today, the ‘actionable intelligence’ that the intelligence cycle may heave out includes virtually any knowledge deemed relevant by its expert compilers. As it expands and complexifies, socio-political layers may be added and modified depending on strategic requirements. In this way interrogation is a social practice and intelligence a discourse of space and knowledge.²⁸² Rather than systems that produce information mirroring the territory of battle, interrogation’s experts and knowledge artefacts actively create the political reality they describe.

²⁷⁹ Kim, *The Interrogation Rooms of the Korean War*, 127.

²⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, 150--168.

²⁸¹ Kleinman, "The Promise of Interrogation v. the Problem of Torture," 1583.

²⁸² Michael G. Fry and Miles Hochstein, "Epistemic Communities: Intelligence Studies and International Relations," *Intelligence and National Security* 8, no. 3 (1993): 25, <https://doi.org/10.1080/02684529308432212>.

Conclusion

Carl von Clausewitz declared that ‘by “intelligence”, we mean every sort of information about the enemy and his country—the basis, in short, of our own plans and operations’.²⁸³ However, when he wrote those words in 1832, intelligence planners by and large could not imagine that ‘the enemy’ could yield those insights directly. By the middle of the twentieth century, however, in the US national security system, but also elsewhere, it was a common-sense precept. Large-scale interrogation systems could be set up during wars. Detained human subjects could be funnelled into them and put to use not only as bodies, but as thinking, remembering subjects whose knowledge could be converted to new military insights. By the middle of the twentieth century, the key technical, organisational, and military ingredients for mass interrogation had been laid down.

This chapter has identified three conditions of possibility for this to occur, three ingredients in the ‘history of baking’ of mass interrogation into common sense. First was the massification of prisoner questioning. This transformation inhered in a range of disparate advances occurring through numerous advanced militaries. However, it took place most acutely on the Western Front during the First World War. In particular, senior intelligence officers in the British Army designed a range of new doctrinal and technological requirements that sought to convert soldiers on the frontlines into instruments for relaying ‘news’ from the front. In part they were to play this new role by capturing prisoners, questioning them, and ensuring their transportation back behind the lines. In this ‘in between zone’ between capture and imprisonment, enemies could be put to use, gradually transformed into component parts of a larger, but still inchoate apparatus of knowledge production. Most of that knowledge would remain ‘local’ information, however. The next key condition of possibility was the subsumption of interrogation by means of mechanical production and its appropriation for use in producing insights at a wider political-geographic scale. Those two advances occurred during the Second World War, when mass interrogation was further rationalised and put to more strategic uses. Once again, the British military was pivotal. The CSDIC system consecrated the lineaments of the rationalised, industrialised ‘production model’ that would become so attractive to

²⁸³ Carl von Clausewitz, *On War*, translation by Michael Howard and Peter Paret originally published in 1976 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), 64.

interrogation experts in the decades to follow. This technopolitical apparatus was an archetypal machine space. It directed its political subjects to maximise production, to consider their work as the repetitive and mechanical crafting of commodity outputs, to incorporate divisions of labour into their self-understanding as efficient specialists labouring in their compartment of a much larger, collective war machine. Comparable examples elsewhere indicate that these developments were not restricted to any one nation's armies. The final condition of possibility for the birth of mass interrogation was the discursive and technical recasting of this mechanised, rationalised system into an instantiation of an overarching 'intelligence cycle'. In the US national security state after 1945, almost every professional interrogator and associated intelligence officer would be made to understand their role in this figurative loop and so it would become an enduring metaphor with performative force. As a problematic of modern state administration, the intelligence cycle was by necessity bureaucratic, a way of speaking about collective work in a byzantine and hierarchical security apparatus. From the Second World War, all interrogators would come to, if not understand, then at least appreciate their constitutive role in the cycle. Their labour as intelligence producers was not just rationalised and mediated by industrial precepts but had to be overtly dehumanised also. The 'products' of mass interrogation needed to be fabricated but performatively objective, to be processed into abstract data (geographical and otherwise) so that national security reasoning could be put on a calculative footing. For the intelligence cycle to operate, these epistemic materials needed to become light, able to be circulated and redeployed elsewhere in the war machine. They needed to be scrubbed of subjectivity.

In later conflicts, as we will see through the following chapters, these three conditions made it possible for 'human intelligence' collection to be imagined by US and other war planners as a rational process of production inside machine spaces. Their rational circuits, expert subjects, and cycling gears could draw in and process huge numbers of witnesses to war and convert their subjective knowledge into some of the 'actionable' products which a modern war demanded. The later modern idea of mass interrogation was born. However, Clausewitz would have been cautious about its powers to describe the enemy and 'his' country. He believed that if one was to look closely at where intelligence came from, 'the actual basis of this information' commanders relied upon, one would soon 'realize that war is a flimsy structure that can easily collapse and bury us in its ruins'. 'Many intelligence reports in war are contradictory; even more

are false, and most are uncertain.’ All that one can ‘reasonably ask of an officer is that he should possess a standard of judgement’.²⁸⁴ It is the standardisation of judgement that mass interrogation relied upon for its voluminous reports to seem anything but a flimsy structure. As the Second World War soon gave way to a new kind of total, industrial conflict where the stakes of strategic conflict were higher than ever, US intelligence planners would look to reconstitute interrogation as a means for perceiving a distant, sealed off ideological enemy. If the political-economic fine points of an enormous cold war enemy were to be calculated, this time production methods would have to be especially rationalised.

²⁸⁴ Ibid.

Chapter 4: Through the Wringer

Mass interrogation and USAF target production in the early cold war

Munich, May 1954. Source 200779 told his United States Air Force interrogator that before emigrating to West Germany he had been a concert pianist.²⁸⁵ Only months earlier he toured China, as part of the East German *Staatliches Volkskunst-Ensemble* ('State Ensemble for People's Music'). The trip had been a lavish affair. Premier Zhou Enlai attended their Beijing performance and later presided over a banquet for the musicians. At the East German embassy, the ambassador threw a New Year's Eve party for them. However, notwithstanding the perks of state musicianship, 200779 maintained serious doubts about life in the German Democratic Republic. A recent uprising in East Berlin had not stopped the country's Sovietisation, Moscow would continue to wield effective suzerainty over it. About this 200779 had managed to keep his mouth shut during the long Trans-Siberian train journey and early China performances. But in Hangzhou he misjudged his audience. His interrogation dossier records he 'made a remark against' his government there. Punishment was swift, with the pianist summarily 'dismissed' from the tour. He was escorted back to Beijing by an East German Communist Party functionary and from there embarked on an exhausting four-day rendition home via flights through Mongolia, Irkutsk, and Warsaw. Back in Berlin, he decided he had had enough of the communist experiment. A new life beckoned in the West and 200779 joined the thousands of Germans escaping over the cold war's gradually hardening frontier every month.²⁸⁶

²⁸⁵ This account is drawn from 200779's Project Wringer interrogation dossier, available as "Wringer Report 51A-D-E-10393," in Folder: Berlin, WAC: 169, Box 730A, RG 341, NARA II.

²⁸⁶ In early 1954 the mass emigration of East Germans defecting to West Germany had reduced from a tidal wave to merely a steady torrent. 1953 had seen around 300,000 emigres move across the internal border, which was gradually sealing but would not be fully hardened until the Berlin Wall's construction in 1961. Understandably, the exodus was construed by the GDR and Moscow as a major threat to the viability of the East German state, and the Soviet political-economic model more broadly. While the Western powers generally welcomed the refugee wave as a positive sign, more surprising is the German Federal Republic government's reaction, which grew apprehensive about the economic impacts of the population shift in West Germany. Adenauer thought it was a means of economic warfare, or part of a conspiracy to populate East Germany with 'Russians and Asiatics'. He was made to shelve a 'utopian' plan to encourage East German farmers to instead emigrate to Canada temporarily until the GDR was 'liberated', see Valur Ingimundarson, "Cold War Misperceptions: The Communist and Western Responses to the East German Refugee Crisis in 1954," *Journal of Contemporary History* 29, no. 3 (1994): 463--466,

Resettling in American-occupied Bavaria, 200779 was less a subject of ideological impurity than geopolitical potential. Almost immediately the Air Force intelligence branch in Munich pulled his file from their growing database of persons recently 'returned' from the Soviet Union. It sent a request for him to appear at the city's United States Military Post. Once inside, the pianist was drawn to an interrogation room and informed that, as a recent defector, he was a vital source of knowledge of communist space and society. Air Force personnel and a German-speaking civilian asked him to walk through his most recent experiences, recording his responses in minute detail. They were especially interested in what he could tell them about those coerced flights across China and the Soviet bloc. The result of 200779's willing, but undoubtedly brusque, interrogation was a cluster of fractional memories about a vast enemy. In Beijing, for instance, he remembered brand-new Soviet planes scattered across a 'very modern' concrete airfield. Once bundled into them, 200779 noticed they were branded with the 'Russian-Chinese Aviation Company's' name. At a pitstop at 'Under-Khan', in the Gobi Desert, he waited beside the runway. The expanse of yellow sand that spread out before him was interrupted only by a single low-slung stone building and a camel's skeleton. Interrogators recorded that he found no place for lunch.

Countless observations like 200779's fill millions of Air Intelligence Information Reports transmitted as part of Project Wringer (see figure 4.1). It was one of the largest US mass interrogation programmes ever undertaken, involving the questioning of over 300 000 subjects between the late-1940s and mid-1950s, mainly in Germany and Japan. It was a deeply cold war affair. The conflict had sparked a race inside the Air Force to construct systems for gathering the exhaustive strategic knowledge required to map and bomb a vast, nuclear-equipped, ideological adversary. Frighteningly, that enemy was increasingly shut off from traditional modes of reconnaissance. For all its high technology and aerospace industry contracts, the US still 'had no eyes' on the communist world.²⁸⁷ Project Wringer was one solution. It targeted for interrogation the many thousands of ex-prisoners of the Second World War who had been forced to labour in the Soviet Union after 1945. They were now gradually returning home and their memories and

<https://www.jstor.org/stable/260769>; David G. Coleman, "Eisenhower and the Berlin Problem, 1953--1954," *Journal of Cold War Studies* 2, no. 1 (2000): 3--34, <https://doi.org/10.1162/15203970051032363>.

²⁸⁷ Horst Boog, "The WRINGER Project: German Ex-POWs as Intelligence Sources on the Soviet Union," in *Secret Intelligence in the Twentieth Century*, eds. Heike Bungert, Jan Heitmann, and Michael Wala (London: Frank Cass, 2003), 83.

experiences of industrial infrastructure and production made them strategic assets, the kind of rare witnesses to communist space the US national security state now desperately needed.

It was this context that made 200779's partial memories worth recording. While he offered mainly meagre details, it was impossible to know if any might constitute the potentially crucial bits of truth that would contribute strategic dominance. In the age of atomic weapons, strategic bombing theorists assumed that defeating advanced enemies required the almost instantaneous wiping out of their political-economic infrastructure and centres of industrial production. To amass this capability, enormous lists of target intelligence were required, and similarly totalising systems for spatialising and ordering geospatial materials constructed. Accordingly, Project Wringer planners deemed almost all interrogatees' memories to be worth recording. The main targeting apparatuses it served was the Bombing Encyclopedia, a worldwide index of industrial and military installations also compiled by the Air Force. Initially, Wringer's would be a critical source of the oceans of 'raw' intelligence required to support the production of refined targets for its enormous indexes. However, to be usable in this way, the mass interrogation materials collected could not simply be relayed in the form of a stack of loose narratives. Rather, to assist in the construction of targets for indexation, they needed to be impersonal, non-narrative, hard geospatial data. That catalysis required the arrangement of machine spaces overseas that could rationalise mass interrogation and standardise report production as if it was a mass production enterprise. Only in this way could the necessary volumes of human intelligence be circulated to centres of military calculation in the US for further transformation and potential use in a global war plan.

This chapter examines two related intelligence initiatives whose purpose was to cure the Air Force of its cold war strategic 'blindness'. The first, the Bombing Encyclopedia, was a means for representing the entire world as targetable terrain. Planned for a conflict of totalising proportions, it worked as a similarly totalising databank of strategic knowledge. The chapter examines its assembly by the Air Force's Directorate of Intelligence, highlighting how its design features of abstraction, indexation, and 'machine methods' for rapidly optimising strike lists helped to put the planning of a potentially cataclysmic air war on a rational, calculative footing. The chapter builds on existing research to argue that this promise of disembodied war was in fact contingent upon the work of a multitude of hidden figures who populated the bureaucratic 'target business'.

Nonetheless, totalising strategic military apparatuses can unleash their own performative geographies at scale. The second initiative examined below is Project Wringer. It was an equally ambitious technopolitical apparatus and also aimed to represent and intervene in cold war strategic space. Its relationship with the Bombing Encyclopedia was direct and, so far, largely undocumented. Wringer personnel interrogated thousands of ex-prisoners returning from the Soviet Union, a population identified as a primary reservoir that, if tapped, could quench target producers' considerable thirst for up-to-date industrial and economic intelligence. The chapter therefore shows that interrogatees represent an additional set of human figures who hide in the Air Force's early cold war targeting apparatus. However, to become objective intelligence, their subjective presence needed to be erased from the picture. A range of technopolitical and managerial processes were installed in Europe and Japan to convert their interrogation accounts into target codes. This included measures for ensuring that 'complete coverage' of the Soviet Union and the returnee pool was in reach of intelligence planners; a series of technologies and policies for processing and screening sources speedily; a litany of managerial tools for rationalising and materialising the production of interrogation reports; and, finally, apparatuses for spatialising the resulting information and circulating it back as orderly geospatial intelligence, recombinable for further calculation.

From muscles to brains

Upon the general cessation of hostilities in 1945, the Second World War's victor powers were encouraged to repatriate their prisoners of war as soon as practicable. In some places this process was stubbornly gradual. In the Soviet Union it was particularly protracted. Its immense prisoner population represented an irresistible source of muscle power, a labour force that could kickstart its war-ravaged industrial economy. During the War, Soviet armies had captured at least 2.3 million German soldiers, with most kept on for years under conditions of forced labour, transported around the Eastern Bloc and often lodged in Gulag-like work camps.²⁸⁸ Most were set to building large civil projects such as new rail routes or were sent to the mines, others simply replenished the labour lost to urban factories. Germans made up the bulk of the million war

²⁸⁸ Richard Overy, *Russia's War: A History of the Soviet Effort: 1941--1945* (London: Penguin, 1998), 354--355.

prisoners who either died or were never accounted for in the Soviet Union over the next decade. But thousands of Austrians, Hungarians, Bulgarians, and other Europeans also succumbed to the same wretched conditions.²⁸⁹ In the east of the country, former soldiers of the Imperial Japanese Army made up a separate workforce there. After the brief Soviet-Japanese War of 1945, Stalin ordered around 600 000 Japanese prisoners held by the Soviets to work in Siberia.²⁹⁰ Ten to twenty thousand died in their summer uniforms during the first winter, with many more dying of malnutrition. These Japanese prisoners were also only repatriated reluctantly, by crowded ship and in dribs and drabs, well into the mid-1950s.²⁹¹

Soviet authorities' dragging out of the repatriation process was a source of significant controversy in the international community. But for a coalescing US national security state, it provided an opportunity. It meant that when returnees entered American zones of occupation, they could provide intelligence. Despite their limited freedom during detention, because of the hardening of the cold war's ideological barriers, a prisoner's insights onto the communist world were increasingly valuable. For the United States Air Force (USAF) especially, returnees comprised an especially pertinent source of intelligence because many had been put to work in factories and infrastructure projects. Its Directorate of Intelligence (DOI) believed they might now form an unlikely source of knowledge about developing Soviet industries, as well as the

²⁸⁹ James Bacque, *Crimes and Mercies: The Fate of German Civilians Under Allied Occupation, 1944--1950* (Vancouver, BC: Talonbooks, 2007), 500.

²⁹⁰ Sherzod Muminov, "The 'Siberian Internment' and the Transnational History of the Early Cold War Japan, 1945-56," in *Transnational Japan as History: Empire, Migration, and Social Movements*, eds. Pedro Iacobelli, Danton Leary, and Shinnosuke Takahashi (Basingstoke, UK: Palgrave Macmillan, 2016), 78--79, <https://doi.org/10.1007/978-1-137-56879-3>.

²⁹¹ For reasons of availability of archival documents, this chapter is predominantly concerned with European returnees' interrogations. The Japanese experience is equally relevant, of course. From November 1946, the US Army's Counter Intelligence Corps and the joint US-Australian Allied Translator and Interpreter Section (ATIS) began its own large-scale returnee screening programme at ports of disembarkation in Japan. In coordination with USAAF and then USAF intelligence personnel, ATIS operated a Central Interrogation Centre in Tokyo, whose debriefing teams adopted technical measures compatible with Project Wringer. From its offices geographical intelligence was ferried to DOI in Washington, DC, using the Wringer reporting system. However, while the location and description of Siberian labour camps was deemed valuable, under the leadership of General Douglas MacArthur, the Supreme Commander of Allied Powers Tokyo headquarters' prime objective seems to have been more draconian than strategic, aimed at ferreting out and surveilling returnees deemed to hold suspicious political affiliations. See Douglas MacArthur, Charles Andrew Willoughby, and General Staff of Supreme Command for the Allied Powers, *Reports of General MacArthur: MacArthur in Japan: The Occupation: Military Phase, Volume I, Supplement* (US Army, 1966; Washington, DC: Center of Military History, 1994), 256--261, https://history.army.mil/html/books/013/13-4/CMH_Pub_13-4.pdf.

enemy's military, urban economies, and transport systems. Recording what interrogatees could remember promised to unlock vast swathes of industrial and other data that could inform the production of strategic target intelligence. If the early-cold war's perilous geopolitical balance suddenly gave way, these ex-prisoners' knowledge of the communist world could very well inform decisions about where to aim American bombs.

The pressure to know the enemy during the early-cold war period led to several large-scale attempts by military agencies in occupied Europe and Japan to intercept and interrogate returnees from the USSR en masse. Displaced persons and dissident scientists were also targeted for questioning, as were political émigrés like 200779. Project Wringer was probably the largest such initiative, its 300 000 interrogations resulting in the circulation of more than a million intelligence 'products'—immutable mobiles—back to DOI headquarters in Washington, DC. These interrogation dossiers would be used to expand USAF's growing banks of strategic targeting information. In doing so, Project Wringer allowed interrogation to assist in the writing of military geography. Further, as with the other examples examined in this dissertation, it was a technopolitical apparatus manifesting its own extended geographies. More than simply a reflection of the cold war's logic, it was a moment in its becoming, a means by which its spaces were imagined and performed, and its political subjects remade.

Mass interrogation, mass production

As the following sections show, Project Wringer was also not just an emanation of the timeless challenge of intelligence interrogation. Its basic logical precepts and technical systems were heavily mediated by historically and geographically contingent problems of producing and circulating information in time and space. Both the Bombing Encyclopedia and Wringer apparatuses' power derived from their capacity to compile millions of standardised reports, each containing innumerable, recombinable datapoints about an advanced enemy's strategic-economic space. These were collected initially in far-flung USAF offices in Europe and Japan on a vast scale, before being circulated as informational 'products' to centres of strategic calculation in the US. In both systems, mass interrogation and strategic target intelligence were implicitly recast as forms of *mass production*. The bureaucratic intelligence cycle was conceived as an industrial production problem, its phases requiring the rationalising and efficiency improving techniques of modern management.

In this mass production model of intelligence, reports and targets were the key commodities. A pervasive emphasis on maximising output volumes remodelled tasks at every stage of the production process. Managerial edicts to improve efficiency filtered down to DOI's offices, interrogation rooms, and printing facilities. New rationalising initiatives were constantly introduced to improve workers' productivity in time and space and reinforced the collective understanding that intelligence was a material 'product' that was to be mechanically fabricated for requesting 'consumers'. It also animated an unceasing search for opportunities to rationalise the intelligence process and further its division of labour.

In Project Wringer, a mass production ethos dictated that interrogation reports were economically produced, standardised, and made mobile. Machine spaces and bureaucratic measures for controlling them were set up in order that great numbers of personal accounts were recorded using consistent formulas, so that resulting products were outputted and assembled. Finally, to be useful in a broader, impersonal and industrial machine of intelligence processing and calculation, Wringer's mass-produced interrogation dossiers had to take on the technical features of data. Messy subjective information had to be converted into the kind of geospatial information that could be used in a strategic target index. To become objective intelligence, interrogatees' accounts were broken into chunks of simplistic text, tables of coordinates, and schematised technical graphics.

By reducing both the labour process and the informational products of mass interrogation into constituent parts, hitherto fuzzy memories of forced labour could be made to appear as something purer and more determinate: information. In that ethereal form, intelligence could travel, becoming corpuscular 'atoms of content' freed of their subjective origins. Hence, new targets could be revealed, and existing indexes updated. As we will see, mass produced interrogation intelligence was in this way a fungible commodity, able to be taken up across the cold war national security state. But Project Wringer's primary objective was specific: to supply torrents of strategic-geographical intelligence to the DOI's central target database, the cutting-edge Bombing Encyclopedia. It summoned more intelligence assembly lines, more compartmentalised workers, and more of the machine spaces that later modern war requires if enemies are to be collectively known and impersonally destroyed.

The target business in a closing world

Both the Bombing Encyclopedia and Project Wringer were initiated during the ‘high’ cold war. In this early phase of the conflict, the spread of communism and the Soviet Union’s acquisition of atomic technology had triggered existential fears in the US that acted to transform ‘the very nature of the nation-state,’ and in important ways across the North Atlantic as well. One consequence was the emergence of a new apparatus for accomplishing the work of war, the ‘national security state’. It was less a list of agencies than a retuning of strategic and military priorities, expert languages, and institutions to hitherto unimaginably grand geopolitical and technological objectives. National security thinking was alive to inchoate threats at home and abroad, to global dangers and the strategic imperatives that came with containing them. This included establishing a virtually limitless sphere of US influence and policing it on an unceasing basis.²⁹²

Accordingly, the national security state involved a reconfiguration of the US military apparatus also. Rather than preparing for episodic conflicts in defined foreign theatres, its armed services would more and more pursue bold, long-term initiatives for compiling exhaustive knowledge about ideological enemies, developing global systems of surveillance, and deploying sophisticated military technologies for delivering firepower to any point on the Earth’s surface. For Paul Edwards, these post-1945 developments helped to put into action a ‘closed world’ techno-discursive assemblage. That is, a ‘radically bounded scene of conflict’ that also lacked frontiers, an inescapable ‘self-referential space where every thought, word, and action is ultimately directed back toward a central struggle’.²⁹³ In the closed world of the early cold war, across both arenas of specialist geopolitical knowhow and broader political culture, military and state expert discourse and practice now internalised and reinforced the idea of the Soviet Union as a behemoth and recalcitrant enemy. It was ever more sealed off, and socially and ideologically alien. At the same time, in a closed world, new technologies rendered it more threatening to the US heartland than ever before.²⁹⁴

²⁹² Joseph Masco, *The Theater of Operations: National Security Affect from the Cold War to the War on Terror* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2014), 127; Matthew Farish, *The Contours of America’s Cold War* (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 2010).

²⁹³ Edwards, *The Closed World*, 12.

²⁹⁴ Farish, *The Contours of America’s Cold War*, 1--49.

The Truman Doctrine, declared in 1947, exemplified the logic of the closed world. It committed the US national security state to track communism and stamp it out aggressively, *everywhere*. Superior airpower would be a crucial component of this expansive commitment. Not coincidentally, that year an independent USAF broke away from the Army. Its aerospace industry-connected leaders were particularly enamoured with high technology solutions for achieving strategic dominance in the new age of intercontinental warfare. After teething and funding problems, its command eventually conceived plans for global, strategic air warfare by engineering and managing extraordinarily sophisticated technologies and weapons.²⁹⁵

Strategic Air Command (SAC) was USAF's centrepiece solution for projecting this power abroad. Also established in 1947, it epitomised the era's closed world technopolitics. Not only did it assemble unprecedented destructive capacities, including nuclear weapons and long-range systems for delivering them, it also aimed to deter and retaliate against attacks by readying systems for deploying these strategic weapons 'in any part of the world' at very short notice.²⁹⁶

The central mission at SAC was thus to perfect strategic bombing, a relatively novel modality of war, but one whose theories and practices had a pulsating and destructive recent history. During the early cold war, almost all senior SAC officers toted service medals from their time with the Army Air Forces in the Second World War. As they now planned atomic strike forces in a closing world, their recent experiences managing the wholesale destruction of Germany and Japan became highly significant. Out of those bombing campaigns fundamental tenets of strategic air warfare expertise began to solidify into expert logic. Perhaps most important was the USAAF's 'selective' approach to bombing. Rather than 'city-busting tactics', much of its strategic bombing during the War had aimed to destroy enemies' urban and economic infrastructure (though population centres *were* targeted as part of this deadly formula, of course). To facilitate that process, the production of exhaustive lists of industrial facilities and technical instruments for quickly optimising target lists was required. In accumulating and spatialising this technical information, enemy territory was conceived as an 'economic structure', or an 'industrial web'. Beating adversaries into submission meant 'disabling' their vital

²⁹⁵ Edwards, *The Closed World*, 8--12; Herman S. Wolk, *Planning and Organizing the Postwar Air Force, 1943--1947* (Washington, DC: Office of Air Force History, USAF, 1984), 179--208.

²⁹⁶ Phillip S. Meilinger, *Bomber: The Formation and Early Years of Strategic Air Command* (Maxwell Air Force Base, AL: Air University Press, 2010), 18--31, 73, <https://apps.dtic.mil/dtic/tr/fulltext/u2/a602158.pdf>.

productive powers, directing firepower to key factories, and creating ‘bottlenecks’ along its economic arteries by destroying critical transport and communication nodes. Targets were selected based on their ability to produce commodities of war, such as metric tonnes of fuel or quantities of weapons. Installations where such strategic goods were manufactured—and the urban labour forces surrounding them—became primary objects of targeting analysis.²⁹⁷

Extending this approach into the cold war meant that SAC would require unprecedented volumes of finely detailed industrial, economic, and military information. The Air Force quickly recognised that it had to focus its efforts on a single industrialised and vast enemy: it needed an ‘all-round intelligence picture of the Soviet Union’. In preparation, its leaders directed their Europe Command to draw up target maps for at least fifty principal industrial cities there. But even more challenging, given the geopolitical dynamics of the cold war, was the requirement to schematise the entire communist world’s ‘economic web’, including regions where Soviet forces might plausibly mobilise forces and assume industrial production. Consequently, in addition to Europe Command’s list, DOI set about devising methods for gathering the extensive geographical-industrial databanks and maps required to optimise immediate strike lists for almost any region on the planet.²⁹⁸

The sheer difficulty of the challenge became immediately obvious. Whereas during the War it was sometimes possible to conduct risky reconnaissance flights, or consult captured and archived cartographic materials, in a ‘cold’ war playing out in the age of atomic weapons, the risks attached to violating enemy airspace were much higher. All the while, communist enemies’ industrial bases were surely restoring, their economic webs complexifying and extending. In 1947, none of SAC, USAF Europe Command, or DOI knew exactly where to find the current targeting intelligence required to plan the Soviet Union’s disintegration, let alone how to order it once it was compiled.²⁹⁹ In later sections we will examine how Project Wringer helped to solve this first challenge by producing intelligence through mass interrogation. In the next section we

²⁹⁷ Meilinger, *Bomber: The Formation and Early Years of Strategic Air Command*, 73. Mass interrogation and strategic bombing did not signal the end of targeting mass populations and SAC did incorporate explicit codes for ‘population’ into its target systems, including in the Bombing Encyclopedia. See William Burr, *U.S. Cold War Nuclear Target Lists Declassified for First Time*, National Security Archive Briefing Book No. 538, December 2015, <https://nsarchive2.gwu.edu/nukevault/ebb538-Cold-War-Nuclear-Target-List-Declassified-First-Ever/>.

²⁹⁸ Boog, "The WRINGER Project," 83.

²⁹⁹ Meilinger, *Bomber: The Formation and Early Years of Strategic Air Command*, 126.

examine the Bombing Encyclopedia, a solution to the second problem of ordering and optimising target intelligence into a global strike list.

The Bombing Encyclopedia

The Bombing Encyclopedia was a paradigmatic closed world technology. It had its origins in the post-War USAAF as a system for assembling and manipulating the complex arrays of geospatial information needed to prosecute strategic air wars. In the breakaway USAF, it came under the management of DOI's Strategic Vulnerability Branch (SVB), eventually crystallising as a technopolitical apparatus comprising organisational bureaucracies, military and data technologies that, when linked together, could supply the hoped-for targeting index that SAC (and other USAF agencies) could use to execute bombing campaigns anywhere in the world.

The project's signal element was a highly detailed and manipulable databank of industrial and military installations. Formally named the 'Encyclopedia of Air Objectives', by 1959 it included over 78 000 entries (figures 4.1 and 4.2 are from a 1951 paper version, printed so that updated listings could be shared with other DOD agencies). While most sites were located in the Soviet Union and China, it was a totalising spatial artefact encompassing 'friendly' territory as well, listing targets in the Middle East, southeast Asia, and western Europe. All were now deemed to be spaces of potential communist occupation and therefore had to be reimagined as targetable terrain.³⁰⁰

³⁰⁰ As Derek Gregory has shown, the BE is still in use across the US military today, though renamed the 'basic encyclopedia' and much evolved. See, "Bombing Encyclopedia of the World," *geographical imaginations*, 3 August 2012, <https://geographicalimagination.com/2012/08/03/bombing-encyclopedia-of-the-world/>; and "Intelligence Designed," *geographical imaginations*, 7 March 2016, <https://geographicalimagination.com/2016/03/07/intelligence-designed/>; Outten J. Clinard, "Developments in Air Targeting: Data Handling Techniques," *Studies in Intelligence* 3, no. 2 (1959), https://www.cia.gov/library/center-for-the-study-of-intelligence/kent-csi/vol3no2/html/v03i2a10p_0001.htm.

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ZLATOUST STL MCH A MUN PLANT LENIN259			233		5510	05941	1		100	0164	0012	067
ZLATOUST STL MCH A MUN PLANT LENIN259			235		5510	05941	1		100	0164	0012	067
ZLATOUST STL MCH A MUN PLANT LENIN259			238		5510	05941	1		100	0164	0012	067
ZLATOUST STL MCH A MUN PLANT LENIN259			239		5510	05941	1		100	0164	0012	067
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Figure 4.1 Extract from Volume I of the July 1951 edition of the Bombing Encyclopedia. In this version targets are alphabetically arranged by city across Asia and Europe, with sites in the Soviet Union taking up the bulk of the index.³⁰¹

³⁰¹ USAF Directorate of Intelligence, "Bombing Encyclopedia, Volume I," Fifth Edition, Box 352, Series: Publications ("P") Files, 1946-1951, RG 319, NARA II.

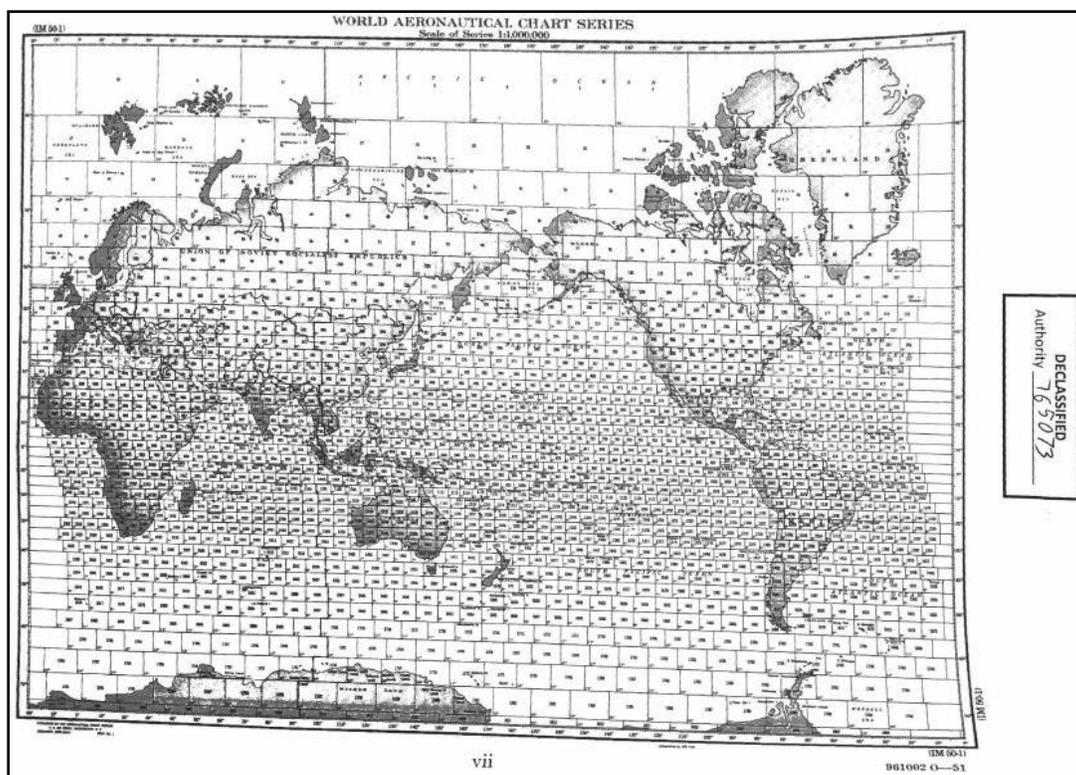


Figure 4.2 Bombing Encyclopedia frontispiece. The World Aeronautical Chart series provided a totalising cartographic perspective for USAF intelligence, its codes incorporated into target lines.³⁰²

Two of the Bombing Encyclopedia's design features put into action the closed world technopolitical dynamic that typified the USAF's approach to targeting in the cold war (and in key ways, far beyond it). On the one hand it promised to represent global geopolitical space in the form of a *complete* index. One SVB planner boasted of its total geographical scope, claiming that it provided 'factual information ... [of] all potential objectives of air attack throughout the world'.³⁰³ Similar global ambitions are apparent in printed copies from the period. Figure 4.2 shows a frontispiece that overlays a world map projection with World Aeronautical Chart series numbers. This global grid referencing system was incorporated into target codes.

A second enactment of closed world technopolitics was the index's calculative and technical instrumentation. As Gregory argues, abstract vision is a key technological condition of

³⁰² "Bombing Encyclopedia, Volume II," July 1951, Fifth Edition, Box 352, Series: Publications ("P") Files, 1946-1951, RG 319, NARA II, vii.

³⁰³ Stephen J. Collier and Andrew Lakoff, "The Bombing Encyclopedia of the World," *Limn*, Issue 6: The Total Archive (2016), <https://limn.it/articles/the-bombing-encyclopedia-of-the-world/>.

possibility for modern aerial warfare.³⁰⁴ By seeming to dislocate ‘installations’ from surrounding urban life, cities become ‘hollowed out’, transformed into ‘strings of coordinates’ evacuated of human life. In indexing human geographies in this way, the Bombing Encyclopedia supplied a much-needed sense of disembodied ratiocination to the targeting process. Given that any strategic air war would be waged by a sprawling USAF bureaucracy and against a nuclear power, abstract reasoning was deemed a necessary pre-condition for optimising strike lists. The random scattering of bombs might be the difference between supremacy and oblivion. So, instantly disabling an ‘economic structure’ and creating infrastructural ‘bottlenecks’ required a rational, data-driven plan. That ambition was furthered in part through the system’s deliberate design as a hyper-logical databank. In the paper indexes, thousands of pages of target codes were grouped by industrial category or country, seemingly endless tables and lines of numbers establishing a sense of sterile elegance. Seemingly banal formatting choices, such as the arrangement of targets as lists in alphabetical order, were anything but. They were design decisions with highly political consequences. Indexicality was technical armature, a way of ordering information that rendered impersonal and expert the decision-making processes that would drive an air war of unimaginably destructive proportions. Just as a list denotes functional equivalence across its entries, so the Bombing Encyclopedia’s directories of abstract target codes invited its users to consider the decision to wipe out an industrial site or city as merely a matter of technical calculation. A key step involved the translation of the Encyclopedia’s ‘raw’ geographical and industrial intelligence into strings of numbers, a process we will review in the next section. With those abstractions, numbered targets signalled to bombing planners objects that could be ‘disabled’ through the clinical and constrained intervention of the USAF and its precision bombs. Targeting would be a matter of ‘optimising’ a list, rather than selecting one populated place for annihilation over another.³⁰⁵

This sense of disembodied, calculative rationality was deepened with the introduction of mechanical instrumentation for making the Bombing Encyclopedia a ‘semi-automated’ system. In the late-1940s, SVB’s Director of Research, James T. Lowe, delivered several lectures to the

³⁰⁴ Derek Gregory, "American Military Imaginaries and Iraqi Cities: The Visual Economies of Globalizing War," in *Globalization, Violence, and the Visual Culture of Cities*, eds. Christoph Lindner (New York: Routledge, 2010), 67--84.

³⁰⁵ Gregory, "Intelligence Designed"; Collier and Lakoff, "The Bombing Encyclopedia of the World."

Air War College in Alabama. He dilated upon some of the technical, administrative, and information technology innovations recently borrowed from the world of industrial management and incorporated into his agency's targeting work. Most notably, he explained how 'new "machine methods" of information management' were remaking and further rationalising Bombing Encyclopedia operations. Cutting-edge IBM accounting machines had been recently put to work sorting SVB's massive and growing data collection.³⁰⁶ With them USAF's growing mountain of industrial intelligence on the communist world could be processed quicker than ever, a step-change in work orders that involved transposing target data to a system of punch cards stored at USAF Headquarters.

Lowe excitedly declared that the Encyclopedia was able to compute more strategic installations than ever while simultaneously reducing 'the number of people in the target business'.³⁰⁷ However, rather saving labour per se, Lowe's enthusiasm turned on the ability of machine tabulation to improve decision-making. Information machines allowed rapid, perfected, and potentially fully automated targeting. In the event that the cold war suddenly turned hot, SVB technicians would be able quickly to sort through an ever-growing mountain of possible targets, the IBMs used to execute 'runs' on the punch cards. That process would perform a decidedly later modern geography of war, with mechanical instruments part of a bureaucracy that 'would generate reports about potential target systems based on selected criteria such as industry and location'. For DOI planners such as Lowe, machine tabulation and report handling thus seemed to turn the Bombing Encyclopedia into a 'fine mesh' that speedily distilled a 'perfect avalanche of information' in a closed world of proximate, existential threats.³⁰⁸ To enrol instrumental knowledge, new machine spaces of bureaucratic intelligence production were set up. They were nowhere near as disembodied as Lowe had suggested, however.

Hidden figures

With their electronic databanks and languages of refined logic, cold world bombing experts seemed to be at the heart of a rarefied and rationalised form of strategic geopolitics. However, Gregory warns against the notion that the Bombing Encyclopedia could ever be taken on face

³⁰⁶ Collier and Lakoff, "The Bombing Encyclopedia of the World."

³⁰⁷ Quoted in Collier and Lakoff, "The Bombing Encyclopedia of the World."

³⁰⁸ Quoted in Eden, *Whole World on Fire*, 108.

value as a ‘fine mesh’, or a calculative tool of target *selection*. Instead, he reminds us of the irreducibly artefactual nature of military targets: ‘we don’t inhabit a world of targets: they have to be identified, nominated, activated—in a word, *produced*.’³⁰⁹ As with intelligence production more generally, Gregory observes, the semblance of purity and objectivity delivered by the Bombing Encyclopedia’s impressive capacities to manipulate abstract targets should be examined as a truth effect, a technopolitical achievement. Upon close inspection, even high-technology targeting apparatuses are populated by subjects. However, they are often hidden away in modern compartmentalised machine spaces and made responsible for specialised output-driven work processes.

When we move inside the processes of their production, we find that the Bombing Encyclopedia’s coded targets were compiled in a series of machine spaces whose productive effects covered over a range of human figures. First, and most obviously, are the political subjects drawn into the air intelligence bureaucracy. The ‘target business’, as Lowe termed it, may have been a rationalised, but it still required trained workers to fill the SVB’s sectioned-off offices, to receive raw intelligence, to shuffle and update maps, and to pen target reports. Henry Nash provides one of the few personal accounts describing this role. As part of USAF’s Air Targets Division in the 1950s and 1960s, his job was to construct and nominate new entries for the Bombing Encyclopedia. He was designated to draw up targets in the Political and Economics Section, a task he described as the ‘bureaucratisation of homicide’. His patch of deadly bureaucracy was lined in windowless cinderblock, a ‘grey, creaking two-storey temporary barracks-like building’ on Constitution Avenue in Washington, DC.³¹⁰

The machine space Nash worked in was a ‘complex vastness’ regulated by compound discipline. While effectively involved in planning the obliteration of large urban centres, and potentially even societies, his immediate tasks were mundane. Tasks were managerially regulated, compartmentalised, and process oriented. The office behaviour in Air Targets Division, he said, was ‘no different from that of men and women who might work for a bank or insurance company’.³¹¹ In addition to the overt sense of hierarchy and security-conscious

³⁰⁹ Gregory, "Bombing Encyclopedia of the World"; "Intelligence Designed," emphasis in original.

³¹⁰ Henry T. Nash, "The Bureaucratization of Homicide," *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists* 36, no. 4 (1980): 22--27, <https://doi.org/10.1080/00963402.1980.11458715>.

³¹¹ Nash, "The Bureaucratization of Homicide," 22.

compartmentalisation, a productivist ethos reigned. The labour of target production was divided into small, competitive teams, an arrangement that walled off some of its morally debasing aspects. When Nash's colleagues succeeded in getting a government control centre or suspected Communist Party headquarters listed in the Bombing Encyclopedia they would celebrate with 'an extra martini or two at lunch.' Just as consequential, he reckoned, was the distancing effect of the rhetoric favoured by DOI and its bombing experts (Lowe's 'fine mesh' being an example). 'Long-range predictions' and 'worst case scenarios' were just some of the commonplace 'conjectural and theoretical shields' that separated the work of target indexing from the reality of its potential consequences: 'the strong technological and quantitative orientation of these tasks held the attention of analysts', Nash recalled, 'the relation of weapons to human life was an incidental consideration'.³¹²

Heidegger might add that the abstract intelligence Nash handled brought the world to Washington, DC's concrete vastness as a standing reserve, a 'whole structure of things' to be manipulated from the outside, as it were. For the political subjects inside the SVB's target production bureaucracy, the structures and languages of industrial processing evacuated concern for the potential human costs of their work. The technical and aesthetic characteristics of its databanks removed their labour from even the view of other agents in the USAF bombing apparatus. Once figures like Nash completed their tasks, what was conveyed to a strike force operator was simply a list of conceptual forms, alpha-numerically coded 'installations' in enemy territory. Figure 4.3 is drawn from a 1947 BE Code Book. It is a visual representation of the kind of mechanical reasoning a user should adopt when utilising the index. In this case, if an intelligence planner wanted to jump to the sub list of factories producing spark plugs in a certain country, they should begin with the industrial category 'Basic Equipment', before scanning down to the sub-category 'Electrical Equipment' and to the specific targets listed under sub-sub-category 'spark plugs'. Those targets would include the industrial number 32 29100.

³¹² Ibid., 24.

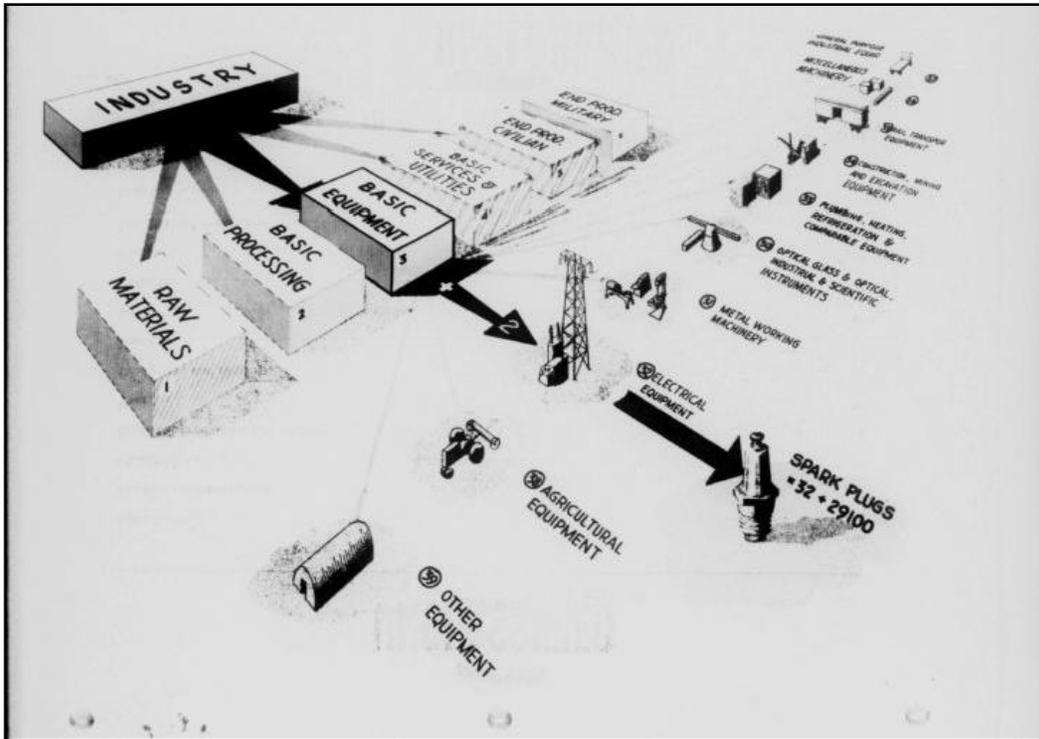


Figure 4.3 A sheet included in an August 1947 BE codebook that illustrates how users should interpret its 'Product Cards', entries grouped by the industrial commodity produced at a target installation.³¹³

Nash's account reminds us how, from the Second World War, the language of 'the enterprise' became increasingly common throughout the US military machine. It remains a central feature of its later modern incarnations. Of course, the entanglements generated between the corporate and military spheres are much debated, with budgets and dollars typically the focus. But just as important has been the conceptual armature and mindset that attends the military-industrial complex. Efficiency, just-in-time production, and satisfying consumer demands are not just figurative motifs, but organising features, components of machine space. This corporatisation of activities summons a range of political technologies and conceptual apparatuses that decompose war into phases of industrial action, rather than the material act of killing people and destroying geographies: bureaucratic hierarchies, technical languages, optimising mechanisms, representations heavy on data and number, machine translation, and lots and lots of lists. The same techniques and tools also characterise the supply of military intelligence, specifically that which was produced in USAF mass interrogation during this

³¹³ "Bombing Encyclopedia, Part I, Code Book for Product Card-Industrial Installation Listings," August 1947, Air Intelligence Division, Office of Naval Intelligence, Reel 42085, AFHRA, microfilm 702.

period. Abstract targets are like commodities, dutifully failing to disclose their origins in the labour of employees like Nash, obscured by the SVB's bureaucracy and rationalisation. As we will see, another set of figures are hidden inside the corporate production of Bombing Encyclopedia targets: the hundreds of thousands of interrogatees who supplied the target business with its 'raw' geospatial materials.

Project Wringer: Industrialised geography

Before the advent of sophisticated overhead reconnaissance in the late-1950s, more than half of the target intelligence reports received by the US national security state were drawn from mass interrogation initiatives, including those used to produce the Bombing Encyclopedia.³¹⁴ With 300 000 interrogatees, Project Wringer likely stood as the largest such initiative. It operated from 1947 to 1954, targeting those who had been forced to labour or build the factories in the communist bloc that the SVB and the SAC would earmark for strategic destruction. In the period before high-altitude surveillance technologies, USAF deemed sources

a treasury of information of invaluable worth to the Directorates of Intelligence in Washington and USAFE [United States Air Forces in Europe] for strategic and tactical planning. It was believed that on release from captivity the homecoming PWs [Prisoners of War] could reveal data, and circumvent thereby, at least in part, the "Iron Curtain's" effectiveness in restricting the collection of vital information.³¹⁵

Spatialising interrogatees' memories, such as 200779's flights across Eurasia, was the means. However, that process involved much more than an interpersonal encounter and the simple recording of answers to questions. After all, interrogatees did not necessarily make reliable witnesses. Their accounts could be imprecise and incomplete, or they might be disinclined to answer certain questions. Given most were imprisoned, they might only have recourse to a

³¹⁴ USAFE, 'Mission,' in "History of the 7050 AISW," 31 October 1951, Folder: K-WG-7050-HI, Reel P0248, Air Force Historical Research Agency, Maxwell Air Force Base, Alabama [hereafter, AFHRA]; see also John T. Farquhar, *A Need to Know: The Role of Air Force Reconnaissance in War Planning, 1945--1953* (Maxwell Air Force Base, AL: Air University Press, 2004), 37, https://www.airuniversity.af.edu/Portals/10/AUPress/Books/B_0034_FARQUHAR_NEED_TO_KNOW.pdf.

³¹⁵ USAFE, "History of the 7001 AISS," 31 January 1950, 24.

limited set of experiences. 200779's account, for example, is fuzzy on the details. He admitted that at times on his trans-Siberian journey his depressive state meant that he 'wasn't paying attention'.³¹⁶ As a concert pianist, he could provide only loose approximations of structural dimensions, distances travelled, and the functions of industrial facilities. He offered insights into the lives of expatriate East German and Russian engineers in Beijing, but those were considered pure hearsay.³¹⁷

United States Air Force intelligence planners were acutely aware of the challenges of accurately mapping the Soviet Union using ex-prisoners' fallible memories. To compensate for individual flaws, quantity would have to make up for quality: great volumes of memories would be collected and diligently solidified into fractional datapoints. This meant that subjective experiences had to be extracted, transformed, and manipulated into usable material, made into mobile intelligence in the form of schematic diagrams, coordinates, cartographic codes, and technical briefs appropriate for use by bombing planners elsewhere in the targeting apparatus. To inject human intelligence production with this kind of rigour, Project Wringer's administrators borrowed managerial techniques from the world of modern industrial production. Work processes were rationalised and routinised, tools and equipment for conducting interrogations and compiling reports were standardised and made interchangeable. In short, Project Wringer recast mass interrogation as mass production.

To put interrogation on a mass production footing, the Wringer system needed to mirror some of the key features of the modern enterprise form, with operations arranged for maximum productivity and efficiency. This section explores how its interrogation and intelligence production phases were designed to be carried out through a series of productivist machine spaces. Organisational plans and work environments were made to mimic the factory setting: functional specialisation was pronounced, and institutional and technical knowledge was unevenly distributed across the administrative hierarchy, with systemic decisions the preserve of project managers. In this way, mass production principles imbued the USAF's interrogation apparatus with the tenets of 'managerial authority'. Expert administrators would seek out efficiencies and attempt to improve production cycles at every work phase. Interrogators and other intelligence personnel were pushed to raise productivity, with the effect that mass

³¹⁶ "Wringer Report 51A-D-E-10393," 2.

³¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 3.

interrogation's 'workers' were bound to technical procedure, their discretionary powers to alter the nature of their labour tasks tightly delimited. Like the Ford Motor Company's revolutionary production process, the idea of the moving assembly line was utilised as a means for coordinating action. Wringer's information and control processes contained measures that transformed each labouring interrogator and interrogatee into a mechanical variable.³¹⁸

Like the Bombing Encyclopedia that the resulting interrogation intelligence would serve to deepen and expand, the design features of the Wringer system became another complex vastness governed by instrumental knowledge and focused on maximising outputs. However, in this phase of the 'target business', production challenges centred not on refining data into targets but making it from scratch. 'Raw' geographic intelligence was to be exhaustively collected from prisoners and solidified into informational forms that could be used elsewhere in the USAF's targeting apparatus. What began as loose memories solicited from detained laypersons became geometrically precise renderings of abstract enemy space for target databanks. But by disassembling the mass production processes involved in compiling interrogation reports, we can see how Project Wringer did not just draw in interrogatees but was 'wringer-like' in the sense that its political subjects were interpellated as productive workers in a modern bureaucracy. To borrow Gregory's phrase, this was 'intelligence designed,' and directed at scrubbing out of the picture the situated means of its production.³¹⁹ The following sections trace the technical manoeuvres put in place to harden fuzzy accounts so they could be brought into a state of informational equivalence as data entries and spatialised as targets. To do this, measures were put in place to ensure that the Wringer materials performed a range of key epistemic effects: complete coverage, objective rationality, and producing entries for a total databank. Finally, they also had to be spatialised, immutable mobiles bearing geographical knowledge that could be circulated around the national security system for further recombination.

³¹⁸ Here I draw on Shosanna Zuboff's analyses of the abstractive power and organisational design of industrial mass production, see "The Abstraction of Industrial Work," in *Knowledge Management and Organizational Design*, ed. Paul S. Myers (Newton, MA: Butterworth-Heinemann, 1996), 197--208; and *The Age of Surveillance Capitalism*, especially p. 347.

³¹⁹ Gregory, "Intelligence Designed."

Ensuring complete coverage

The huge geopolitical and technical scales of Project Wringer and the Bombing Encyclopedia reflected the fact that, by the late-1940s, the Truman administration had redefined American interests on ‘totally global terms’.³²⁰ As General Douglas MacArthur (in charge of Supreme Command for the Allied Powers in Tokyo as Wringer interrogations were getting off the ground) put it to Senators at the time, defeating the insidious ideology of communism and the tyrannical states it had infected was a ‘global proposition’, requiring that ‘we defend every place’.³²¹ Project Wringer was one means for responding to this global proposition. It obviously could not map the entire communist world, but a total approach could be taken to interrogating those who had knowledge on the central enemy. As the DOI put it, in an age of horizonless airpower, every industrial, military, and strategic facility needed to be mapped in order to determine *all* the Soviet Union’s ‘capabilities, and vulnerabilities’, a gargantuan task drawing on ‘all types of intelligence, *regardless of their scope and importance*’.³²²

A late-1951 statement of command orders for the USAF unit overseeing Wringer operations in Germany and Austria details an objective ‘unprecedented in scope’: intercepting and exploiting all returnees, either at the West German border or soon after they crossed it. Interrogators were reminded that

human sources, in general, consist of personnel who, by former residence of tenure as prisoners of war, [and] have certain essential information about the Soviet Union and/or its satellites. [However] these personnel emanate from all strata of Society and may be categorized as repatriated ex-prisoners of war, political refugees, illegal border crossers, defectors and deserters, scientists who have completed a compulsory term of service in the USSR or one the satellites, and displaced persons...

...To insure *complete coverage* of potential human sources of information, screening teams are established in appropriate locations throughout the Western Zone of Germany. Initial data collected from these screening centers are forwarded to Central Files, Wing

³²⁰ Edwards, *The Closed World*, 11.

³²¹ General Douglas MacArthur, *Hearings Before the Committee on Armed Services and the Committee on Foreign Relations of the United States Senate, 82nd Congress, 1st session* to “Conduct an Inquiry into the Military Situation in the Far East and the Facts Surrounding the Relief of General of the Army Douglas MacArthur from his Assignments in the Area” (1951), 81--83, quoted in Edwards, *The Closed World*, 11.

³²² Memorandum for Historical Officer, Policy Division, Directorate of Intelligence, USAF, "Semiannual Historical Data, 1 Jul 1949--1 May 1950," 3 May 1950, Folder: 5-1962-76, Reel K1120, document K142.01, AFHRA, 1.

Headquarters, which files now contain data on approximately 250 000 sources. 175 000 of these sources remain to be exploited and new sources are derived daily...³²³

From 1947 to 1950 upwards of 70 000 returnees were crossing into Europe yearly, and perhaps half that number again were arriving at Japanese ports from the USSR.³²⁴ The USAF intelligence establishment in Europe estimated that half of border-crossers there might ‘possess Air Intelligence Information’. Such a vast challenge demanded that Wringer take the form of a ‘world-wide activity’ that utilised an entirely ‘new interrogation technique’ capable of processing an unprecedented number of sources.³²⁵ From 1949 an extensive system of dedicated ‘Wringer Posts’ were rolled out by USAF administrators in US-occupied Germany and Austria. They were dedicated compounds that included administrative offices, interrogation rooms, map libraries, and other facilities constructed in around a dozen major cities, from Bremen in the north to Munich in the south, where source 200779’s shared his trans-Siberian account (the ‘around’ owes to the fact that posts opened and shut over time).

In 1952, plans were made to expand the project’s catchment area into British and French zones of occupation in Germany. British forces conceded they did not have the resources to interrogate many of the 200 000 useful sources that had resettled in their area of administration. The USAF’s solution was to set up ‘flushing’ centres in those regions, where teams could scan the registries of displaced persons and direct the most valuable to the American zone for interrogation.³²⁶ In this way the Wringer system was conceived as a national infrastructure of interrogation intelligence production that would encompass as much of the returnee population as possible (see figure 4.4). An affiliated system for Japan was soon put in place at the Supreme Commander of Allied Powers headquarters in Tokyo, where operations ran on a smaller scale than in Europe but were similarly ambitious in scope. In 1949 USAF intelligence officers there received a database of entries detailing the names and known whereabouts of 639 000 Japanese

³²³ USAF 7050th AISW, "Mission" sub-section of "History of the 7050th AISW," 31 October 1951, Wiesbaden Military Post, USAFE, Folder: K-WG-7050-HIQ, Reel P0248, AFHRA, emphasis added.

³²⁴ MacArthur, et al. *Reports of General MacArthur*, 1966, 260.

³²⁵ USAF, "History of Collection Division, Directorate of Intelligence, USAF Headquarters," 1 July 1949--31 December 1950, Folder: K142.01, Reel K1120, AFHRA, no page.

³²⁶ USAF 7050th AISS, "Historical data, 7050th Air Intelligence Service Wing [AISW] for May and June 1952," Appendix IX, Folder: K-WG-7050-HI, Reel P0249, AFHRA, slides 512--517.

ex-servicemen who had disembarked from ships returning them from forced labour camps in the Soviet Union. By February 1953, 24 000 had been located and interrogated, with teams also operating remotely in Taiwan and Korea.³²⁷

³²⁷ Project Wringer generally involved the questioning of pliant, civilian sources. The case could be made that in current US military terminology these moments in human intelligence collection might be considered 'debriefings', rather than interrogations. Adopting this term would capture the generally volitional nature of Wringer encounters. However, it would also be to insist on a label that the Project's administrators almost never used, at least not in this context. Almost without exception internal records refer to Wringer 'interrogations' and 'interrogators'. The keyword also had its own specific technical and organisational connotations as participants knowingly modelled their efforts on wartime interrogation systems. During this period USAF DOI pursued a line of separate 'debriefing' programmes that involved questioning US government agents who returned from communist states, such as consular military attaches, scientists, and state-connected clergy. For a concise summary of the Japanese Wringer efforts, with mention of a team in Taiwan, see the memorandum, "(Secret) Synopsis of Japanese Wringer Program," C.C Rogers, USAF Colonel, DOI, to John G. Fowler, Brigadier General, Deputy for Intelligence, Far East Air Force, 24 October 1955, Folder: INT 1-10 Interrogations, January--December, 1955, Box 18, Entry A1080, RG 341, NARA II.

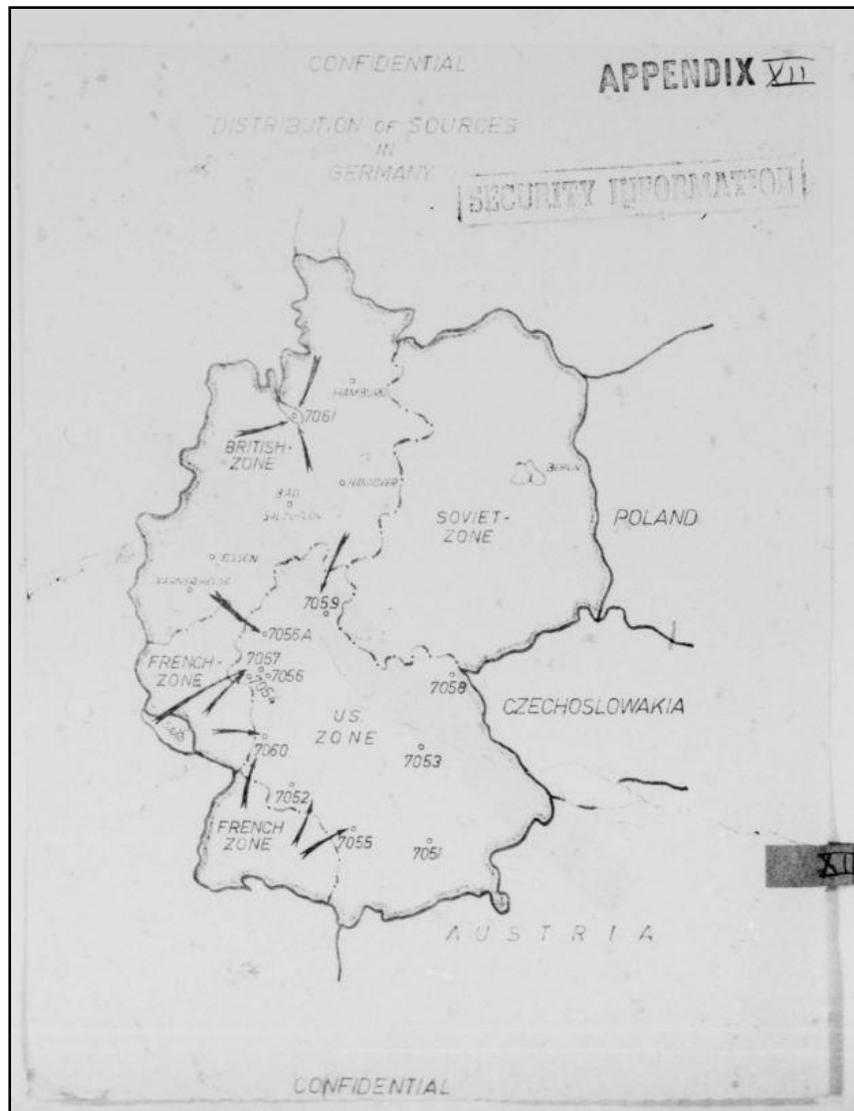


Figure 4.4 USAF map of Germany pinpointing Project Wringer interrogation posts in cities in the US occupation zone. Arrows depict the flows of selected sources from ‘flushing’ centres in the British and French zones, Autumn 1952.³²⁸

In addition to far-flung interrogation sites and reporting offices, however, facilities needed to be set up to administer the programme and process intelligence in the US national security state’s calculative centre. Once recorded, Wringer materials were sent to Washington, DC, for further processing at the Pentagon building. The DOI offices there represented the system’s data hub, the point where paper and microfilm intelligence was collated, high level

³²⁸ USAF 7050th AISS, "Historical data, 7050th Air Intelligence Service Wing [AISW] for May and June 1952," Appendix XII, Folder: K-WG-7050-HI, Reel P0249, AFHRA, slide 521.

planning was carried out, and a four-week ‘Wringer School’ training air intelligence officers and interrogators ran.³²⁹ Research and development requirements meant that the project’s documentary and disciplinary circuits spread further, linking the interrogation posts in Europe and east Asia to another training centre at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base in Ohio and Air University’s Human Resources Research Institute (HRRI) in Alabama.³³⁰ This latter office took charge of improving interrogation and reporting techniques. Finally, from 1950 to 1953, HRRI contracted eminent behavioural scientists at Columbia University’s Bureau of Applied Social Research, which I return to below.

These numerous and diverse institutional sites suggest the enormous scale of the Wringer mass interrogation-intelligence apparatus. But ‘complete coverage’ meant that it needed to be assembled rapidly as well. Human intelligence is, as the military describes it, ‘perishable’, and DOI recognised that it had only a few years, perhaps even months, before returnees’ memories faded, and their knowledge became outdated. In November 1948, USAF’s European Command headquarters in Camp Lindsay, Wiesbaden, housed only a small, ad hoc programme for screening returnees.³³¹ By 1950, DOI had fully recognised the immense wealth of knowledge latent in the mass of European returnees. The Wiesbaden initiative was rapidly scaled up, supplied with full unit status—the 7050th Air Intelligence Service Wing (AISW)—and a much larger staff of over eight hundred. A unit history describes how this was the year Wringer ‘came of age’, when the accuracy of its reporting, ‘the adequacy of coverage, and the specific pertinency of that coverage ... [began to be] recognized even by the intelligence activities of other government agencies’.³³² It seems that this value derived not from any special scholarly regional expertise, geographical acumen, or deep knowledge of subject matter on the part of interrogators, but the sheer volume of rudimentary ‘air intelligence’ hoovered up.

³²⁹ USAFE 7050th AISW, "History of the 7050th AISW," 29 February 1952, Folder: K-WG-7050-HIQ, Reel P0248, AFHRA, 12.

³³⁰ Christopher Gross, "Surviving the Holocaust: Former Soldier, AF Civilian Tells His Story," *U.S. Air Force*, 4 May 2016, <https://www.af.mil/News/Article-Display/Article/751292/surviving-the-holocaust-former-soldier-af-civilian-tells-his-story/>.

³³¹ Douglas J. Fulton and John M. White, "Historical Data for 4602d AISS," 1 July--30 December 1953, USAF report, Ent Air Force Base, Colorado Springs, Colorado.

³³² USAF, "History of Collection Division, Directorate of Intelligence, USAF Headquarters," 1 July 1949--31 December 1950, Folder: K142.01, Reel K1120, AFHRA, no page.

In this sense, the Project's aim of achieving 'complete coverage' was not so much about interrogating every returnee, but in building a comprehensive picture of Soviet space. To do this meant immediately indexing the information recorded in interrogations so that similar accounts could be compared, useful ones circulated, and gaps in enemy territory identified. The Project's primary output in this regard were interrogation transcripts in processed form, Air Intelligence Information Reports (the 'Wringer Reports'), an archive which quickly grew into hundreds of thousands of files. They disclosed in often extended biographical detail how huge numbers of foreign prisoners of war were forced into factory work, to clearing quarries, re-opening mines, repairing roads, staffing scientific enterprises, and innumerable other kinds of labour in the Soviet Union after 1945. But while interrogators recorded sources' background information and any socio-cultural or political insights deemed pertinent, the essential commodity sought was always that which was more directly of use to USAF target compilers: concrete information about Soviet industrial installations, military facilities, and vital infrastructure, the kind of data that was entered into SVB's Bombing Encyclopedia.

To assist this process, interrogatees were enrolled into the mapping process directly. Nearly all of them were asked to locate on existing map sheets and then draw by hand the sites and towns where they laboured and were housed (see figure 4.5). The millions of 'memory sketches' that resulted were Project Wringer's central achievement. As schematised, cartographically oriented graphics, they offered the key means for spatialising an industrial enemy before the advent of systematic aerial surveillance. However, to impart the necessary features of target intelligence—for example, the cartographic effect of objective, detached perception—memory sketches needed to be submitted to significant technical refinement before they could be transmitted back to Washington.



Figure 4.5 A source and USAF-employed German civilian interrogator write reports simultaneously. Note the office walls festooned with maps and target mosaics, Wiesbaden, February 1952.³³³

Much of the challenge of supplying intelligence on Soviet industrial targets with ‘complete coverage’ therefore came down to Wringer officers’ skills in chiselling memory sketches into recognisable datapoints. Interrogators and other USAF personnel rigorously adhered to rationalised procedures for questioning sources, carefully recording their responses, and properly managing the standardised production of reports and memory sketches for the intelligence hierarchy. Improved memory sketches were made by gathering previously ‘processed’ material for comparison, with similar dossiers stacked together, their common features combined ‘before being disseminated’ as an intelligence ‘product’.³³⁴

Like other twentieth-century US mass interrogation systems then, Project Wringer involved much more than interpersonal encounters in interrogation rooms. It was a highly sophisticated apparatus for building and ordering banks of exhaustive knowledge of enemy space in a mass production setting. However, ‘complete coverage’ required staff to devise means for

³³³ USAF 7054th AISS, "History of the 7054th AISS, February 1952," Reel P0248, AFHRA, microfilm 1448.

³³⁴ This process is described in similarly terms in the Army’s contemporaneous interrogation handbook, *FM 30-5, Combat Intelligence*, 98.

tracking and tabulating an enormous number of potential sources. Hence, a constellation of technical and governmental solutions was developed to ‘process’ and ‘screen’ as many returning subjects as possible.

Processing and screening

The second key condition for the mass production of interrogation intelligence was the establishment of efficient means of processing and screening a maximal number of potential sources. To respond to DOI intelligence requests and fill gaps in coverage, Wringer officers needed to rapidly locate the right interrogatees, draw them into the interrogation apparatus quickly, and circulate them back out into the population. However, by the late-1940s, so many ex-prisoners and displaced persons were entering Germany and Japan that it was impossible to detain even a fraction of them in temporary camps or other accommodation for the sole purpose of intelligence collection. In any case, Wringer administrators in Washington, DC, and Wiesbaden often found that ‘border crossers’ were too exhausted and disoriented to be interrogated at the moment they crossed the frontier. Measures were implemented to intercept them on their pathway to resettlement and register them in databanks. However, to ensure Project Wringer was a mass intelligence production exercise, these filing systems held entries for every returnee. For the sake of efficiency and accuracy, mechanisms for filtering and locating sources were equally important. Such ‘screening’ systems successfully communicated to USAF intelligence officers certain key traits and areas of knowledgeability.

Almost as soon as they took control over regional government in Germany and Austria, and assumed national rule in Japan, US occupation forces established protocols and posts for standardising the registration and tracking of ‘border crossers’. With the populations of these regions in flux, these systems continued to operate well after 1945. Project Wringer’s planners took advantage of them wherever possible, linking with other agencies in order that returnees could be diverted to USAF personnel when required. In Bavaria, for example, the Munich Wringer post reported in 1951 that it had arranged with local police and US Army intelligence agencies to ‘channel’ immediately new returnees to the Wringer office for processing into its filing system. Figure 4.6 shows how the 7051 AISS—the city’s Wringer unit, where 200779 was interrogated—acted as a staging point on a returnee’s journey from the border to the Bavarian Refugee Commission. Instead of interrogating prisoners in the ‘in between zone’ behind the

battlelines of a hot war, in the cold war USAF established that space in the institutional interstice between border and refugee processing.

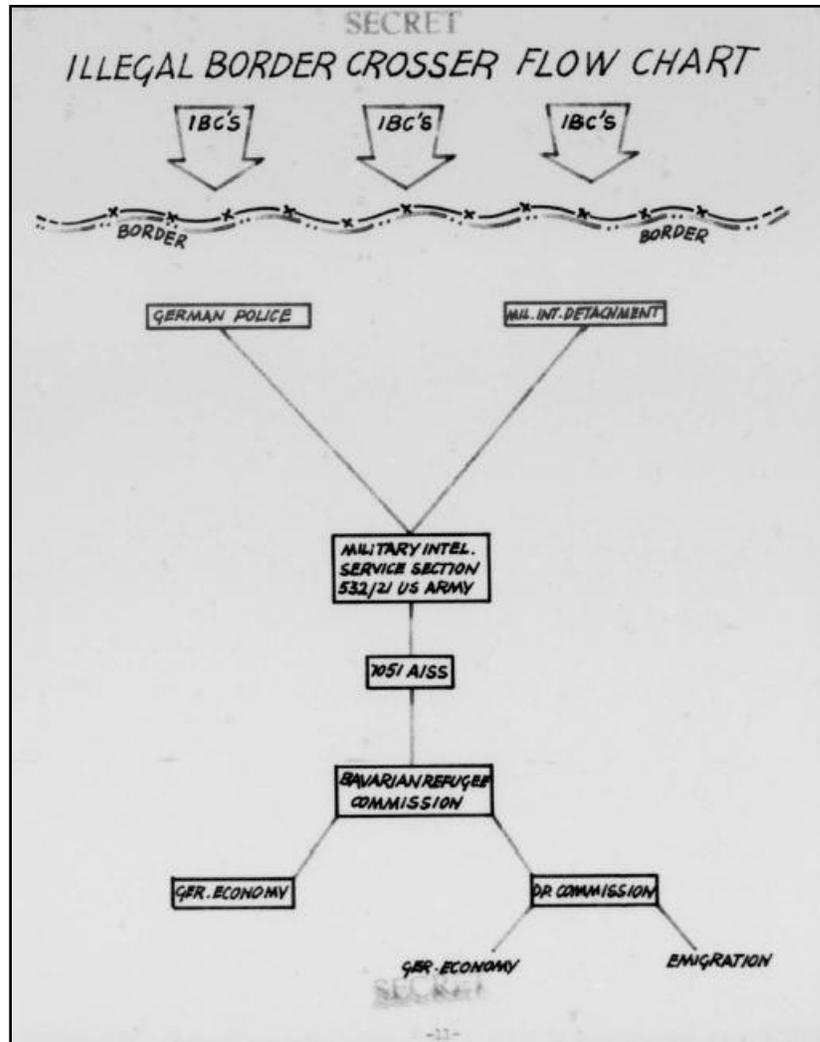


Figure 4.6 A schematic used by USAF's Munich office (7051 AISS) to represent its place in the Bavarian 'border crosser' screening infrastructure.³³⁵

Once at Wringer posts, 'processing' took place. New returnees' details would be interpolated into USAF's growing and integrated regional databases, a step that allowed their future movements and locations to be shared across intelligence sites in the zone of occupation. Sometimes this process could be speeded up by drawing up pre-emptive lists of potential

³³⁵ USAF 7050th AISW, "History of the 7050th AISW, February 1952," Appendix XXXV, Reel P0248, AFHRA, microfilm 1262.

returnees before they even crossed the border. In 1953, Air Intelligence offices in Tokyo planned for a final batch of ex-prisoners to arrive in Japan by compiling a 'roster' of 12 000 possible sources to apprehend before their repatriation ship docked. The list was produced by intercepting prisoners' letters home and siphoning key details about their time in captivity and forced labour. Once returnees were onshore, it was hoped, this system of 'Master File Cards'—which listed 'all known information about any repatriate'—would hasten the processing of valuable sources.³³⁶

But the most powerful processing tools available to Wringer intelligence offices were sophisticated devices of data management borrowed from the sphere of civilian bureaucracy. In American-occupied Europe, the McBee Keysort indexing system, a proprietary filing technology, was in wide use. Equipment for operating it was distributed to over one hundred refugee camps and major crossing points so that a single programmable databank of sources was maintained everywhere.³³⁷ It was another attempt at total information management, of ensuring complete coverage.

Upon arriving at check points, ports of disembarkation, or displaced persons camps, returnees were assigned an individual, numbered 'McBee Card' for insertion into the index. In 1950 the 7050th AISW highlighted the system's place in its vastly improved 'processing method'. It was part of a highly regimented procedure, with the creation of a new McBee card a moment in the mechanical assembly line of intelligence:

In anticipation of many thousands of returning PWs, it was clear that adequate control of information and sources in terms of selectivity must be made, and the McBee Keysort card file method was determined upon as workable system for complete documentation and reference.

Original documentation of PWs, however, completed on arrival of returnees at Reception Centers, is made on a "Register" card (Number 1 card) which is an adapted "working McBee" ... After basic biographical data is recorded in pencil, the PWs file thru rooms where they are questioned on their itinerary as PWs, the work they performed and the names of the cities wherein the work took place. Through the use of gazetteers and World Almanac Charts [*sic—read 'World Aeronautical Charts'*], geographical coordinates of the various cities are recorded on

³³⁶ USAF 6004th AISS, "Semi-annual History of 6004th AISS," June 1953, Folder: 2-6223-11A, Reel K0534, AFHRA, 178.

³³⁷ Boog, "The WRINGER Project," 86.

the cards together ... with a code figure indicating the PW's apparent degree of knowledge gained from experiences in captivity.

The PW is then given a franked post card on which is to be printed the confirmed home address of the PW after he has been resettled in Germany. One copy of the Number 1 card and the post card arrive finally at the Documents Section, Operations Office of this headquarters and all information is transcribed on to the McBee card which is in duplicate. The duplicate copy of the McBee is then forwarded to the appropriate Field Team.³³⁸

This statement of operations indicates how the McBee system provided a framing device within which a complex, distributed proto-database could develop. It also facilitated a dynamic approach to 'screening' sources for their utility in intelligence production. The card banks allowed USAF officers to direct their interrogation efforts in response to the evolving requests filtering down from 'consumers' at DOI headquarters. In drawing up lists of desired sources, staff at Wringer Posts would refer to intelligence requests and then consult their McBee index, drilling down to persons and areas of interest by inserting a stylus through rows of holes in thousands-thick columns of coded, edge-notched cards. Lifting and shaking caused (human) targets to fall out of the bunch and inserting multiple styluses yielded the equivalent of logical 'and/or' functions.³³⁹

Eventually the McBee card collection in Europe held the biographical details of almost 400 000 returnees.³⁴⁰ The next stage of processing involved utilising it to identify sources who had moved into the population. In Germany, this phase fit with Wringer's larger bureaucratic pattern of standardised action: returnees whose McBee cards had been pulled were sent identical 'Petition Letters' by team commanders. These were dispatched from USAFE intelligence under the false pretence that recipients had been chosen for inclusion in a historical study of war experiences. In 1951, mustering letters told potential interrogatees vaguely, if not entirely disingenuously, that a USAF study of 'the recent past' needed 'people of different backgrounds who have participated in the important events of the last few years'. The letters were stern,

³³⁸ USAF 7001st AISS, "History of the 7001 AISS, USAFE Wiesbaden," 31 January 1950, Folder: K-SQ-INTEL-7001-HI, Reel K0534, AFHRA, 27.

³³⁹ USAFE 7051st AISS, "Squad SOP #55-3, 'Briefing and Debriefing', 7051 AISS," 1950, Folder: K-WG-7050-HI, Reel P0248, AFHRA, Appendix: Air Force Justification.

³⁴⁰ Boog, "The WRINGER Project," 85.

declaring that ‘attendance is required’ and that ‘only compelling reasons for an alteration of this review will be accepted’. In West Germany, ex-prisoners were ordered to the nearest Wringer post spread across the country, with most interviews conducted at the busiest 7050th AISW squadron posts in Munich, Frankfurt, and Nuremberg.³⁴¹

But tracking and locating potential subjects was clearly just the initial stages in ‘processing’ returnees. Next was mass interrogation’s primary challenge: the eliciting of oral and written responses, and their transformation from rough recordings into acceptable bureaucratic media—textual and graphical objects that could be circulated around the US intelligence apparatus. As Monica Kim observes, modern military interrogation’s power to process knowledge and bodies is intrinsically connected to the modern capacity to order vast quantities of paper files.³⁴² Indeed, Project Wringer’s planners’ most salient measure of successful processing was the maximal production, editing, and transmission of reports. The Wing’s command in Germany described its primary objective as ‘tangible, in material form’:

The unit of production is the intelligence information transmittal, composed of one or more reports of paramount significance. Each report is a studied, analytical and factual document of a location or subject within the [USSR] or a satellite communist state. Each report contributes to United States information on a foreign power—potential enemy—and is exploited for all fields of intelligence from strategic bombing planning to psychological warfare.³⁴³

Here we sense mass interrogation as a phase of industrial ‘production’ in a larger scriptural economy, a means for pumping geo-informational fuel to other ‘users’ in the USAF intelligence bureaucracy and beyond. Wringer’s ‘processing’ work culminated in the translation of recondite, high-dimensional, and indeterminate personal geographies into ‘information’. Once in that form and scrubbed of subjectivity, interrogatee’s knowledge could acquire lightness, move around, and be taken up in spatialising projects elsewhere.

³⁴¹ USAF 7050th AISW, "Appendix VII, Wing Regulation Number 50-3 Headquarters, 7050th AISW," 5 October 1951, Folder: K-WG-7050-HIQ, Reel P0248, AFHRA, Document No. T5-11500.

³⁴² Kim, *The Interrogation Rooms of the Korean War*, 18.

³⁴³ USAFE 7050th AISW, "History of the 7050th AISW," 29 February 1952, Folder: K-WG-7050-HI, Reel P0248, AFHRA, I.

A brief example illustrates how Project Wringer's 'processing power' involved the technopolitical achievement of converting a pool of potential interrogation subjects into stripped-down paper reports and, finally, abstract spatial information. If DOI ordered reports focusing on either: returnees who had been forced to labour at or near an airfield; in south-eastern Siberia; or under the control of the Soviet Navy when in captivity, Tokyo interrogators might have consulted their filing system and found the card bearing Akutsu Hisashi's name. His interrogation dossier shows that his experiences covered all three of these topics of interest.³⁴⁴ In early 1950 he was indeed summoned from his home in Nagano Prefecture for a lengthy visit at USAF's intelligence offices at Tokyo Far East Command. Upon his capture by Soviet forces, he was transferred and interned at a prisoner of war camp at Sergeevka, around 150 kilometres north of Vladivostok, where he served as a medic (before the War he had been a barber). This role meant that, between April 1948 and August 1949, prison authorities repeatedly dispatched him by railroad to assist at another camp in the region. Akutsu's mobility during this time lent his recollections a particular interest to USAF interrogators. His resulting dossier records in significant detail his memories of the two Soviet Navy airfields he repeatedly observed as he moved between the labour camps. As figures 4.7 and 4.8 show, through the processing of Akutsu and his interrogation responses, memory sketches transformed this subjective experience into something spatial, determinate, and objective. In its pages and sketches, detailed intelligence materials become disembodied, abstract textual and geometric datapoints. They are no longer Akutsu's responses but 'attachments' to 'Report #768'.

³⁴⁴ For Akutsu's interrogation dossier see Report No. 768, Folder: FP-251, Box 3, Entry A1 1006, RG 341, NARA II, pages 1, 10, and attachments.

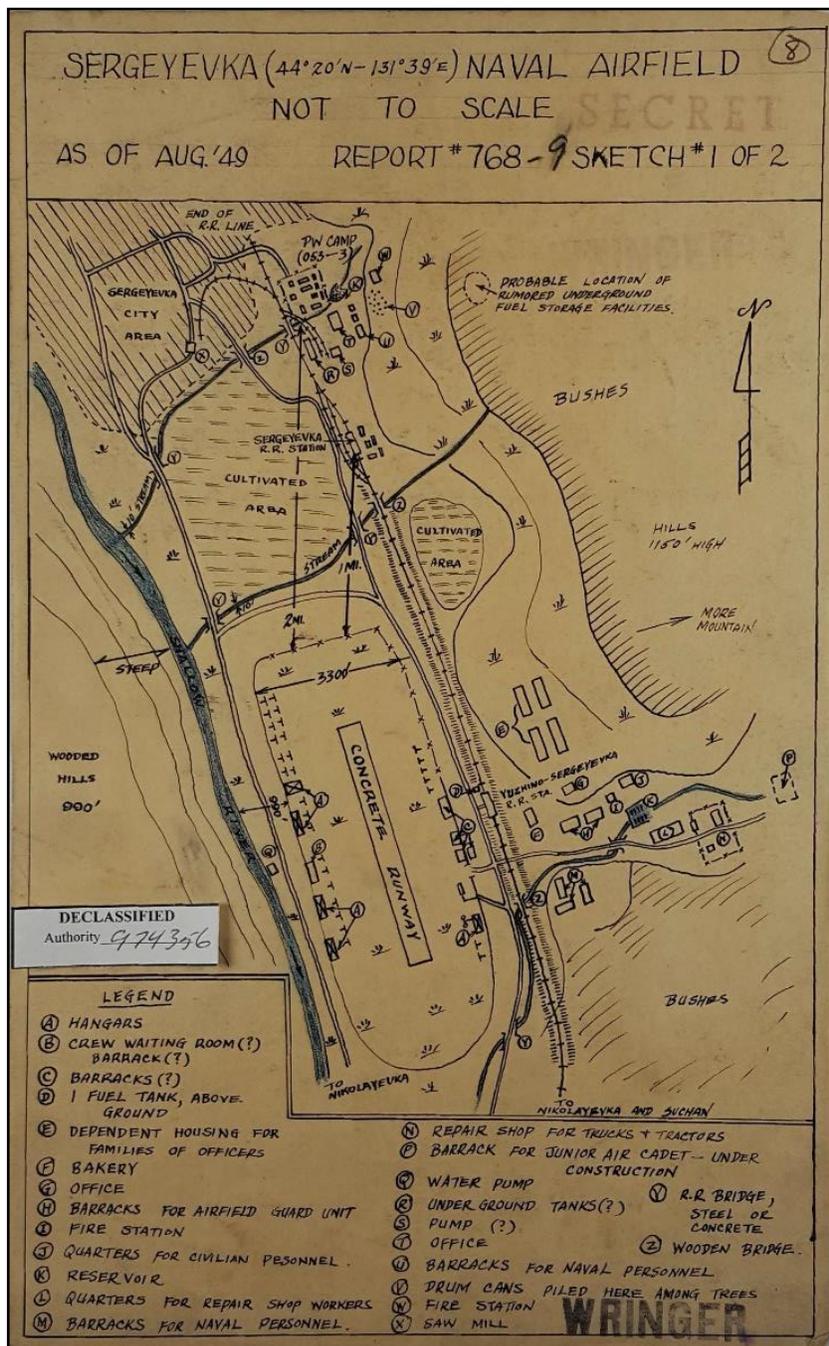


Figure 4.7 Memory sketch of a Soviet Navy airfield in Siberia, provided to USAF Intelligence in Tokyo by an ex-Japanese Imperial Army private, early 1950.³⁴⁵

³⁴⁵ Ibid.

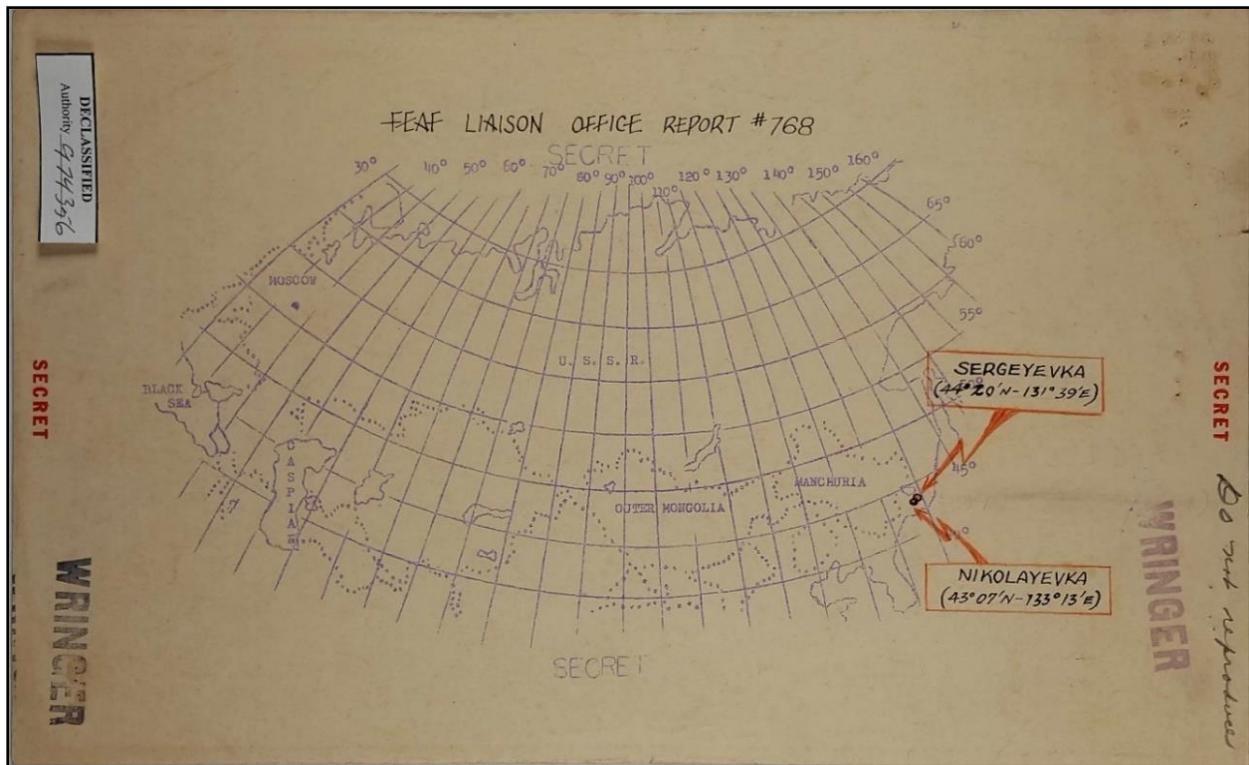


Figure 4.8 Wringer Report produced from the interrogation of Akutsu Hisashi. His memories of two Soviet Navy airfields helped USAF interrogators to map them and forward new targeting intelligence to the Pentagon.³⁴⁶

In subsequent sections I explain how intelligence personnel crystallised prison stories into such rarefied geospatial data. But here Akutsu's example sensitises us to the importance of efficient processing and screening measures in mass interrogation apparatuses. By assembling certain procedures for intercepting a vast number of human sources, and others for filtering and selecting interrogatees in response to intelligence requests, Project Wringer could provide DOI with access to a reservoir of human intelligence already displaying order. Because candidate subjects and their preliminary details had been drawn into preliminary USAF's databanks, intelligence officers' ability to direct their subsequent interrogations toward areas of relative ignorance or strategic importance was vastly improved. In this way, processing and screening measures set the stage for a range of other phases in the mass production of intelligence in a closed world. Complete coverage and efficient processing were intimately linked to the performance of detached geographical vision. As the polar perspective in figure 4.8 indicates,

³⁴⁶ Ibid.

standardised processing encouraged the sense that processed reports were an objective means of visualising and mapping cold war geography. As Heidegger might say, the initial grasping and technological ordering of human subjects, such as a barber in Nagano, helped to ‘reveal’ (in his lexicon, but USAF’s also) the entire world to DOI officers as a ‘standing reserve’ for technical intervention, a resource that could be made further use of by other technological means.

However, before they could be put into circulation as elements of a comprehensive technology of military visualisation, interrogation reports needed to be mass produced. This did not simply mean they were to be fabricated on a large scale. Rather, they had also to be assembled systematically, in commodity-form, so that they communicated their rational production under the direction of managerial authority and as an interchangeable part of a larger industrial whole. To convey the truth effect of an abstract target, intelligence reports had to present knowledge with objective force and not as merely the say-so of an ex-prisoner.

Rationalising productivity, making intelligence

In 1949, Project Wringer central office in Wiesbaden reported that its initial interrogations had delivered middling results. When officers received new sources at unit posts, individual interrogations were generally conducted professionally, with useful results. But across the organisation production rates were low. The problem lay in officers’ responsibility for multiple tasks in the system, from interrogation to report writing and administration. This craft-based approach meant that teams would sometimes transmit only a few dozen reports in a week, a rate that ensured intelligence was often out of date by the time it was sent to DOI. In response, Project Wringer and its constituent squadrons set about remodelling their ‘operational organisations’. Production was rationalised by implementing a division of labour and separating out the various functions of intelligence officers. The rooms in requisitioned office buildings were reorganised as a compartmentalised production process, with previously commingled work divided across functionally specialised sections:

The Operations Office was broken down into Operations Section, Documents, Reports and Translation Sections. The Operations Section maintained all operational files, processed all operational correspondence and assigned teams and individuals to missions. It undertook the briefing and training of all incoming personnel in the [Project Wringer] mission and was responsible for the provision of confidential funds, operational

supplies, training aids, Specific Requests for Information, technical manuals, interrogation briefs, and team libraries comprised of a variety of subjects varying from grammatical principles to studies in geography, history, industry, and other technical matter.

...The Reports Section ... [was] established for the purpose of receiving and processing reports, examining them for adherence to established procedures for report writing, preparation and distribution of Errata Sheets pertaining to reports, and the maintenance of reports records and flow charts.³⁴⁷

With an improved division of labour, production volumes soared. However, Wringer's central office was careful to underline that this was not a system that maximised volume at all costs. Rather, it was an apparatus that *rationalised* production by focusing less on implementing draconian work conditions than improving quality control at every stage of the work process. Initially

for planning purposes, each interrogator was expected to produce one finished interrogation transmitted per day but this establishment of a norm proved infeasible and was reflected adversely in "reports" that were skimpy and incomplete ... the reports prepared without consideration of the time element were superior in quality of content and quantity of information.³⁴⁸

Wringer intelligence officers were not conceived as high-minded experts or involved in the 'tradecraft' of intelligence. As so often conveyed in popular representations, interrogators did not develop and practice sophisticated theories of psychology and cognition. Rather, officers in DOI's mass interrogation system were more like labourers assembling a maximal quantity of standardised products under managerial control. After all, the project's name was a provocation to staff to consider their work in mechanical terms: they were to 'wring out' from individual human sources all the strategic intelligence on the communist world they might possess.³⁴⁹ However, while sources were meant to be depleted, planners acknowledged that interrogators themselves could be pushed too hard, becoming unproductive. The central problematic of

³⁴⁷ USAF 7001st AISS, "History of the 7001, Wiesbaden Military Post, 31 January 1950," 42, 49.

³⁴⁸ Ibid.

³⁴⁹ In his brief overview of the project, Horst Boog confirms this explanation by drawing from a USAF officer's retold account, see "The WRINGER Project: German Ex-POWs as Intelligence Sources on the Soviet Union," 85.

rationalising Wringer's industrial production cycles looped back to the challenge of balancing speed over accuracy. This dual imperative to be diligent and productive is hinted at by a cartoon included in a unit history (see figure 4.9).³⁵⁰ Two men wind closed a gigantic vice within which a confined human source is gradually squeezed. A sign hangs ironically in the background: 'Be Friendly!'.



Figure 4.9 'Cartoon drawn for Squadron Party,' an event held at a USAF Wringer Post in Munich, November, 1951.³⁵¹

By 1950, Project Wringer's teams of intelligence personnel had squeezed a great many sources in Europe and Japan. Rationalised processes had raised production significantly and the Wringer Reports were now making up half of all the intelligence flowing into DOI Headquarters

³⁵⁰ USAF 7051st AISS, "Transmittal of Historical Data, January, 1952," Folder: K-SQ-INTEL-7051-HI, Reel K0534, AFHRA, Appendix B.

³⁵¹ USAF 7051st AISS, "7051 Air Intelligence Service Squadron, History 1 November 1951 to 31 December 1951," Reel K0534, AFHRA, slide 1164. The central image may have been borrowed from an unrelated Army circular, as indicated by the incongruous prisoner uniforms worn by the vice turners.

in Washington, DC.³⁵² But in Germany and Austria, the 7050th AISW was interrogating around a thousand new sources every month across its posts and, just as with the initial filing and tracking of returnees, the challenge of reporting the information gleaned from tens of thousands of interrogations across a complex, international bureaucratic network presented a series of major industrial-managerial challenges. Air Force administrators in Washington, DC, began to consider how to improve the efficiency of their individual workers. In particular, the new expert discourses of organisational and behavioural science were emerging and were sought out to augment the project's productivity. In 1951, the Human Resources Research Institute at Air University sounded out researchers at Columbia University's Bureau of Applied Social Research (BASR) to see if they could devise means for testing improved methods for massifying and rationalising interrogation at the German posts. Soon, BASR's behavioural scientists were awarded a lucrative research contract, its statement of work emphasising the productivity question at the heart of mass interrogation:

The purpose of Intelligence collection is to obtain a maximum amount of relevant information of the maximum quality in a minimum time. When human sources are utilized, the primary factors determining success of a collection effort are the sources, the interviewers, the interviewer supervisors, and the procedures and conditions established for the interviews.³⁵³

Descriptions such as this reflected the general understanding at USAF that mass interrogation principally invited questions of efficient mechanical production. Behavioural scientists would be called upon to transform the interrogation centre into another closed world. Figure 4.10 shows a glimpse through one of the two-way mirrors set up at the 7053rd AISS post in Nuremberg, which was fitted out in the upper stories of the Palace of Justice. The mirrors were used by BASR behavioural scientists and other supervisors in the training of interrogators and the improvement of work processes.

³⁵² Directorate of Intelligence, "History of Collection Division," 1 July 1949--31 December 1950, Folder: 5-3620-26, Reel K1120, AFHRA, microfilm 873.

³⁵³ "Purpose, Status, and Plans of Research on Interview Methodology," Project AFIRM plans of work prepared under contract with Human Resources Research Institute, Air University, 30 November 1951, Folder B-0391, Box 25, Bureau of Applied Social Research [hereafter 'BASR'] Collection, University Archives, Rare Book & Manuscript Library, Columbia University [hereafter 'UA-CU'] 1--2.



Figure 4.10 A glimpse through one of the two-way mirrors built into the walls of the Wringer interrogation rooms in Nuremberg's Palace of Justice. An original caption reads: 'Even the earnest expression of the eye can be easily observed or photographed thru the newly installed training aid'.³⁵⁴

Such innovations rationalised Project Wringer's activities and lent them further industrial efficiency. In seeking to improve the 'utilisation' of sources and interrogators, the behavioural science consultants and DOI administrators conceived all figures in the interrogation process as components in a machine space whose conditions could be manipulated for productivity gains. Its elements needed skillful, even scientific, arrangements to save labour time, funding, and capital. With this ethos structuring the project, the Columbia scientists were also asked to consider a series of specific questions associated with corporate management:

Which people make the best interviewers? Dozens of interviewers are hired monthly by collection agencies, some of whom prove satisfactory and some of whom do not. Intelligence teams in Germany and Japan are requesting assistance in developing methods of selection which will reduce the "wash-out" rate and save time and money...

³⁵⁴ USAF 7053 AISS, "History of 7053 AISS, 1 July 1951 to 31 August 1951," Reel K0534, AFHRA, slide 1309.

... Training courses for interviewers are being developed in Washington and in the collection agencies overseas, in addition to on the job training. These courses are strong on content orientation and weak on training in the actual interrogation process. How can interviewers be taught to interview more efficiently? What techniques of interviewing produce the best results?

Under what conditions is an interview maximally productive? Some Intelligence interviews are conducted in plush rooms, others in bare rooms, some in out of the way hotels, others in central office buildings. The Air Force has spent a great deal of money establishing various sorts of interview conditions. To what extent and in which cases are these expenditures warranted by actual results?

What is a successful interview? The answer to this question is not at all obvious, as it may seem. The question arises, in fact, from complaints of overseas collection agencies that they have an inadequate basis for evaluating their own work, and especially the work of individual interviewers and teams. With a tremendous expenditure of effort, they are often not certain whether the effort is properly directed in terms of Washington needs.³⁵⁵

“Wash-out” rates, time and money, interview efficiency, maximal productivity, effort expenditure. From 1951, a managerial-industrial spirit suffused Project Wringer, animating almost all its self-representations, shaping its internal objectives. Commitments to economisation, ‘quality control’ and improving ‘production rates’ were introduced at every stage of the interviewing and reporting processes, suffusing the entire interrogation-targeting intelligence apparatus with tools and logics reminiscent of a Fordist assembly line. For example, report writing was imagined as a staged infrastructure, broken into screening, editing, and checking phases, and finally dispatch (see figure 4.11). In Korea in 1953, Wringer Reports

³⁵⁵ "Purpose Status, and Plans of Research on Interview Methodology," Folder B-0377, Box 118, BASR Collection, UA-CU, 1--2. These questions strike a chord with BASR's work at the time. In the 1940s and early-1950s its most eminent figures, Robert Merton and Paul Lazarsfeld, were developing the ‘focus group’ as a new tool for bringing together social-psychological attitudes studies and market research. The Bureau itself began as the Office of Radio Research, emerging out of its leaders’ wartime work with the Office of War Information, where they tested radio and film morale programmes on American audiences using polygraph-like devices and focused interviews. In the post-War period, along with working to raise Wringer’s productivity, the Bureau also sought out or won dual-use corporate science contracts with a margarine manufacturer, Voice of America, the Betty Crocker company, and other clients looking to improve interviewing and attitudes research. See Folders: B-0404 and B-0409, Box 119, BASR Collection, UA-CU and Robert K. Merton, "The Focussed Interview and Focus Groups: Continuities and Discontinuities," *The Public Opinion Quarterly* 51, no. 4 (1987): 554--556, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/2749327>.

emanated from Operation Big Switch, the official post-Armistice return of twelve thousand United Nations prisoners from communist forces. Exploiting them for knowledge of enemy targets was 'urgent':

A flow chart was maintained at Annex "6". Report numbers were written on the chart with a grease pencil. By 1600 hours of each day, the clerk had checked the flow of reports and made [any] necessary change[s]. By maintaining the flow chart, it was possible to see the overall picture of the organisation at a glance.

This chart was studied daily for "bottlenecks", productivity of each team, number of reports pending in translation, number of reports in each stage of the process, etc. At the height of "Operation Big Switch", when four teams were operating at Annex "5", a similar chart was maintained there so that the advisors and the team leaders would know at a glance the status of the team reports. By a mere coincidence, the presence of such a chart aroused a competitive spirit in the interrogators which boosted the productivity.³⁵⁶

³⁵⁶ USAFE 6004th AISS, "Semi-annual History of 6004th AISS," June 1953, Folder: 2-6223-11A, Reel K0534, AFHRA, 199.

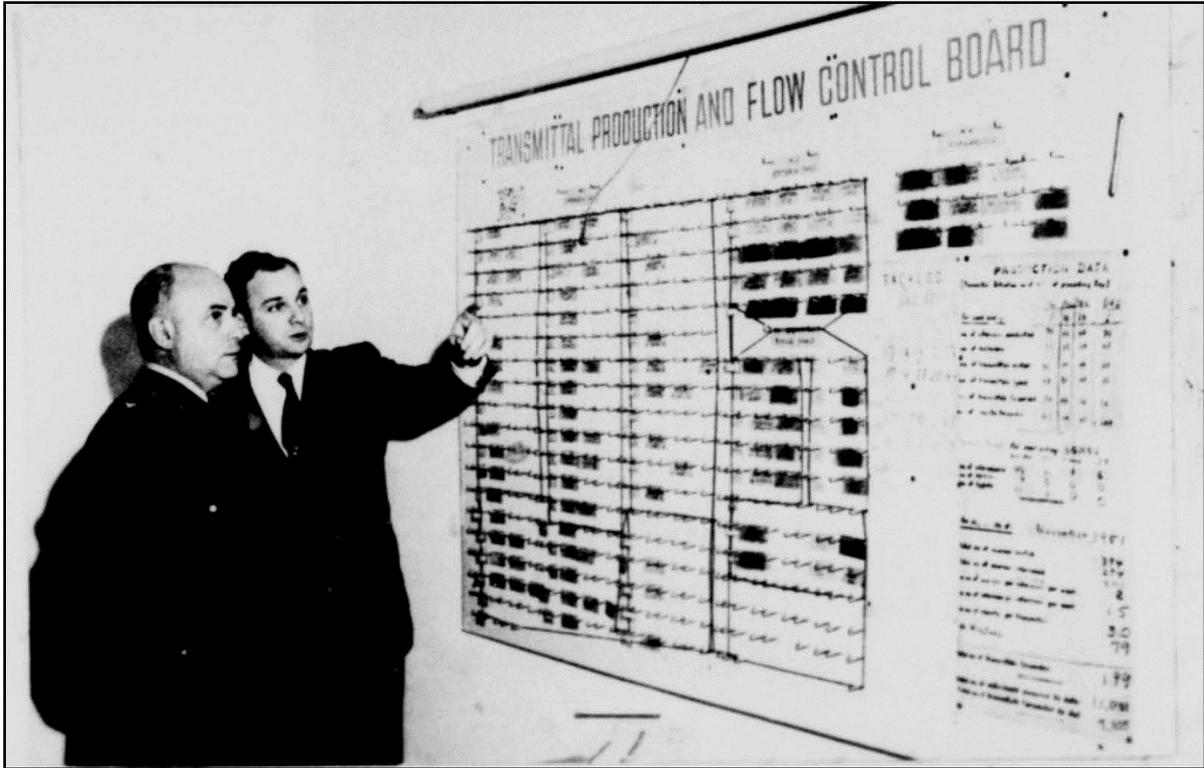


Figure 4.11 Project Wringer interrogation report production and flow control, Nuremberg 1951. Its original caption reads: ‘Major Gallagher points out the flow of transmittals. A bottleneck can be detected at a glance’.³⁵⁷

These words underscore the managerial-industrial nature of the project and its planners’ preoccupation with rationalising the mass production of reports. In frequent updates to Wiesbaden and Washington, DC, squadrons trumpeted their successes by offering impressive quantitative measures of production. In February 1952, European operations claimed to have produced almost 100 000 intelligence transmittals ‘totalling approximately 200 000 pages of single spaced thirteen-inch paper and including roughly 140 000 detailed maps, layouts, diagrams, and sketches, and several thousand inclosures such as official documents, photographs, material samples and machine parts’.³⁵⁸ The resonance with Henry Nash’s compartmentalised work processes and quantifiable achievements in the Air Targets Division is palpable.

³⁵⁷ Image available in "Historical Data of 7053 AISS," December 1951, Folder: K-WG-7050-HI, Reel P0248, AFHRA, Appendix VIII.

³⁵⁸ USAF 7050th AISW, "History of the 7050th AISW," 29 February 1952, Folder: K-WG-7050-HIQ, Reel P0248, AFHRA, i.

However, volumetric imperatives should be tempered by prudent planning. As Kim finds, the archives of mass interrogation during the Korean War disclosed its administrators' near-constant anxiety about the need to stabilise the industrialisation of report production with its economisation.³⁵⁹ This balancing act repeats throughout the history of later modern US military interrogation. For example, as chapter 6 explores, during the Vietnam War, the head of US military intelligence during mid-1960s, Joseph McChristian, was an enthusiastic supporter of interrogation as a means of knowing the enemy and mapping 'his' territory. However, McChristian warned that poor management of intelligence 'production' led to 'the overload' of 'an exploitation system by forwarding volumes of meaningless documents'.³⁶⁰ Likewise, at almost every phase of Wringer's production process, coordinators expressed the corresponding concern that the disorienting excesses of deluging data required the moderating principles familiar to the world of industrial rationalisation.

³⁵⁹ Kim, *The Interrogation Rooms of the Korean War*.

³⁶⁰ Joseph A. McChristian, *The Role of Military Intelligence, 1965--1967* (Washington, DC: Department of the Army, 1994), first printed 1974, 25.

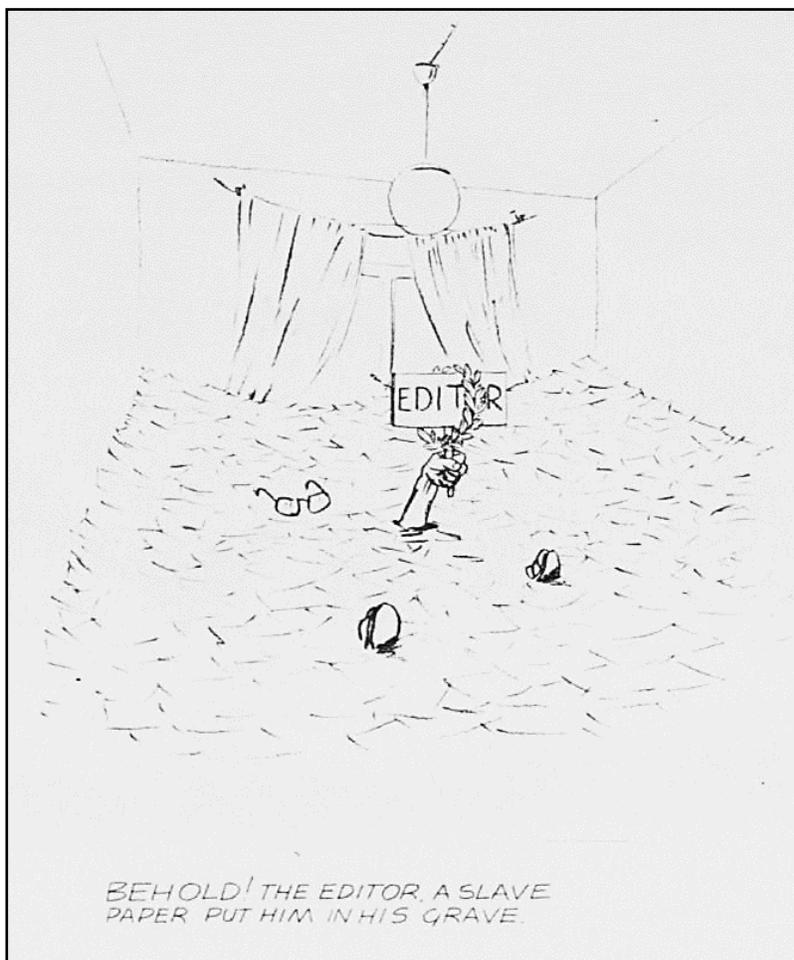


Figure 4.12 An interrogation data deluge. A Project Wringer unit cartoon drawn for a squadron party in Munich, November 1951.³⁶¹

A business-like, economising discipline was needed to streamline the processing of bodies and reports. As an intelligence assembly line, Wringer's technical settings were geared not just to handling torrents of new records but zealously editing emerging ones, to checking that they conformed to the rigid standards of USAF's target intelligence nomenclature and formatting protocol. One unit produced a cartoon depicting a report editor drowning in a room filled with paper sheets, its caption reading: 'Behold! The Editor, a slave. Paper put him in his grave' (see figure 4.12).³⁶² Such droll office humour reflected that, while it was crucial that returnees'

³⁶¹ USAF 7051st AISS, "7051 Air Intelligence Service Squadron, History 1 November 1951 to 31 December 1951," Reel K0534, AFHRA, slide 1163.

³⁶² USAF 7051st AISS, "Transmittal of Historical Data, January, 1952," Folder: K-SQ-INTEL-7051-HI, Reel K0534, AFHRA, Appendix B.

memories were gathered in order to know the enemy, just as pressing was the nagging problem of adhering to sometimes overwhelming bureaucratic imperatives. In fact, *most* of Wringer's collective labour-power was expended not in the interrogation room but in the back rooms, where dossiers were systematically stripped down and hardened into abstract accounts through the monotonous process of verifying coordinates and standardising language and graphics. This meant that the majority of the staff of 7050th AISW in Germany were not trained interrogators, but administrators, draftsmen, typists (many of whom were civilian women), and custodial staff. The space of interrogation intelligence often resembled a modern office, complete with filing cabinets and copying machines (see figure 4.13).

Accordingly, and as in the later US mass interrogation apparatuses we will visit, Wringer's intelligence was very much knowledge tractable to a bureaucratic form of rationality. Its reports were made to divulge mechanical objectivity, the kind of media that could be used in further impersonal calculations. To perform this capacity to move as rational information freed from interrogatees' bodies, many of the staff at the Wringer Posts were set to work to ensure interrogation reports came with the trappings of data. This was done through painstaking tabularisation and conversion to standardised artefacts that could be mobilised and recombined by target compilers elsewhere, a grinding process that required routine competence, rather than strategic expertise.

The rationalisation of intelligence work extended inside the interrogation room. Interrogators were exhorted to repeat scripted questions from their two-inch-thick 'Air Interrogation Guides', a text redeveloped with help from the Columbia behavioural scientists and constantly updated. Its authors hoped that its exhaustive coverage of 'the many fields of air intelligence' would permit interrogators' to 'induce a flow of required information in a routine manner'.³⁶³ It broke down the entire gamut of relevant subject matter into industrial target classes, arranged 'as systematically as possible in order to achieve the greatest possible economy in time and energy during the interview process'. The Guide thus suggested that, in the mass production of intelligence, interpretation should give way to economical extraction. Interview personnel were required to undertake at least twenty-six hours of instruction in changes to the Guide ever year, as much as any other kind of training. And the instructional approach continued

³⁶³ USAF, *Air Interrogation Guide*, loose in Box 25, BASR Records, UA-CU, ii.

in the text itself, with hundreds of questions encased within the methodically imperious language of a drill sergeant. Six ‘guideposts’ structured its instructional ‘Interrogation Techniques’ and included: “BE FRIENDLY!”, “INDUCE HIM TO TALK!”, “WHAT DOES HE KNOW?”, “WHERE AND WHEN WAS IT?”, “HOW DOES HE KNOW IT?”, “WHAT SORT OF A CHAP IS HE?”.

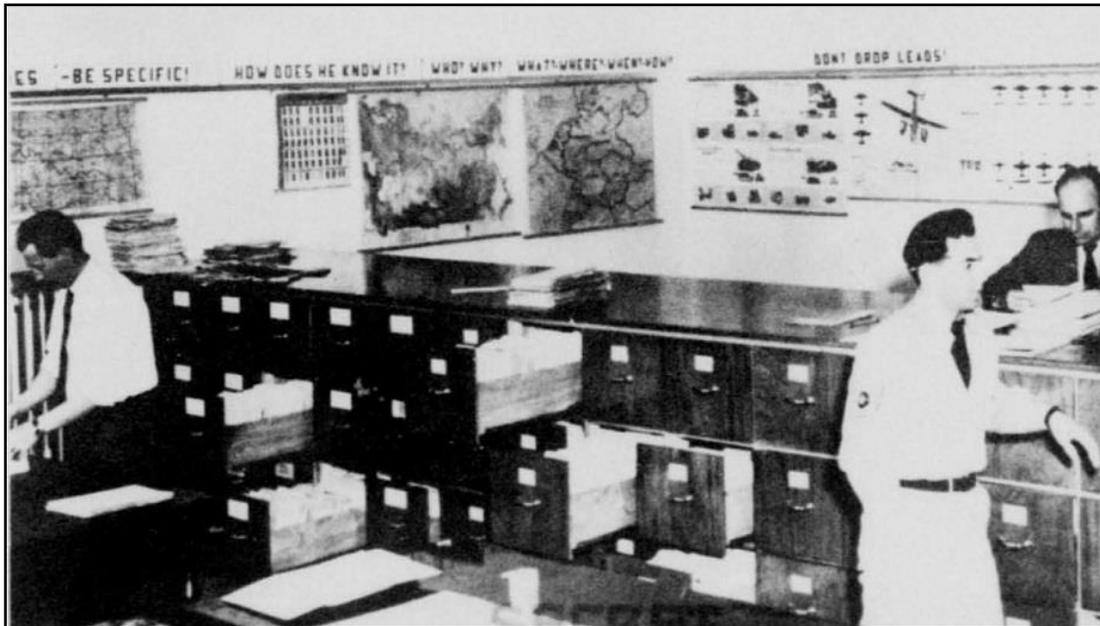


Figure 4.13 Project Wringer operations room, Nuremberg, June 1951. Note the Air Interrogation Guide injunctions pinned to the walls: “Be specific!”, “How does he know it!”, “Who? What? When? Where? How?” “Don’t drop leads”.³⁶⁴

The Guide was another technical element in the achievement of total information production. Its structure mirrored the spatial gridwork of strategic targeting, with its sections arranged according to the Bombing Encyclopedia’s index (for example, ‘Aircraft engines’, ‘Coke and ferrous metals’, ‘Atomic energy’), so that interrogators could jump quickly between priority installation categories.³⁶⁵ This encouraged the interrogations to circle back to concrete memories of buildings, transport infrastructure, and military sites, rather than trail off into time-

³⁶⁴ USAF 7053rd AISS, "History of 7053 AISS," June 1951, Folder: 7053-52-832-7, Reel K0534, AFHRA, 66.

³⁶⁵ USAF, *Air Interrogation Guide*, loose in Box 25, BASR Records, UA-CU.

wasting synthetic judgments, such as introspective reflections or observations about the intangible aspects of Soviet life and economy.³⁶⁶

As forced labourers, most returnees were submitted to highly rationalised versions of an ‘Installation Interrogation’. The Guide’s authors noted that this was a specifically structured ‘pattern’ of systematic interrogation that had ‘slowly been in the process of evolving’ since the Second World War (the British CSDIC system utilised a similar process).³⁶⁷ It involved walking an ex-prisoner through his—or her, a very small number of sources were women—precise recollections of industrial work in eight stages, moving concentrically through progressively larger scale geographical observations. It began with a subject’s direct perceptions—‘what went on under his hands’—the most important material to be ‘tapped’, before spiralling outwards to include the increasingly less authoritative memories of ‘what went on beside him’, ‘what went on in his room’, ‘what he saw on his travels’. The final stage might involve gauging interrogatees’ sophisticated ‘conclusions’, analytical assessments, and more complex experiences. The Guide warned, however, that such advanced levels of questioning were beyond most interrogatees: ‘it will be rare that the maturity and competence of a source will justify’ even attempting it.³⁶⁸ Rather, focus should generally remain set on drawing out the various corpuscles of geospatial and political-economic truth that would support planning industrial and nuclear warfare, or, as the Guide put it:

Exact dates, time-spans, dimensions, accurate sketches, specific facts ...
In each case the information given should be broken down into limited segments concerning which the informant has firsthand competence ... It is the interrogator’s responsibility to interpret the requirements listed under each [tabulated section] in this Guide ... so that a faithful and factual transfer of that experience is achieved by means of the interrogation report.³⁶⁹

By 1955, the Air Interrogation Guide had helped to induce hundreds of thousands of returnees to talk. Interrogators had compiled tens of millions of memories and experiences, but in ‘broken down’ form, as datapoints for use at USAF Headquarters. Rationalised tools and disciplinary

³⁶⁶ Ibid., ii.

³⁶⁷ Ibid., xiii.

³⁶⁸ Ibid., xv.

³⁶⁹ Ibid., xvii.

techniques established an industrial-managerial epistemic culture. It structured the moving parts of a productive system whose products—the paper Wringer Reports—could be churned out through logical, economical, and linear work processes. That epistemic culture drew together the expertise of behavioural scientists, for improving rapport with sources, but also more prosaic expert elements native to corporate management, including flowcharts, office rivalry, and rigorous procedures for writing up results and tracking progress, allowing ‘bottlenecks’ to be weeded out. Even if the notion of the interrogation room as a rational space of information production must be critiqued, it was certainly a palpable desire for Wringer’s administrators and had performative effects. The ‘bits of truth’ produced were not false, but artefactual and, as we will see, were deeply consequential as far as they contributed to cold war targeting.

Spatialisation, circulation, and recombination

In mass interrogation, the meticulous construction of reports often takes precedence over the veracity of the information they communicate. As opposed to its forensic or criminological forms, military interrogation aspires to construct a state archive of geography, with a volumetric approach based on speedy distribution, for further verification elsewhere in the intelligence infrastructure. Framed by this ‘collect-it-all’ rationality, USAF encouraged Wringer interrogators to adopt a data-centric approach to questioning.³⁷⁰ The fourth set of conditions required for the project to operate as an instrument for perceiving and targeting a distant enemy in a closed world involved the spatialisation and circulation of intelligence materials. As a geographical archive for use in a state apparatus, the Wringer Reports returned knowledge to key centres of calculation in ‘recoverable’ form, for storage and further transformation.³⁷¹

To do so, DOI planners mandated that reports conform to standard format: text must be chunked and technical, memory sketches polished into schematic graphics. In these forms

³⁷⁰ In this sense cold war mapping efforts such as Project Wringer might be seen to anticipate some of the characteristics of ‘big data’ in its future enrolment as ‘collect it all’ principles within the twenty-first century national security state, minus the algorithms. See Jeremy W. Crampton, "Collect it All: National Security, Big Data and Governance," *GeoJournal* 80, no. 4 (2015): 519--531, <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10708-014-9598-y>; Jeremy W. Crampton, Susan M. Roberts, and Ate Poorthuis, "The New Political Economy of Geographical Intelligence," *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 104, no. 1 (2014): 196--214, <https://doi.org/10.1080/00045608.2013.843436>.

³⁷¹ Michael Heffernan, "Mars and Minerva: Centres of Geographical Calculation in an Age of Total War," *Erdkunde* 54, no. 4 (2000): 320--333, <https://doi.org/10.3112/erdkunde.2000.04.03>.

interrogation intelligence was fungible, easily interpolated into compatible information systems by other USAF intelligence agencies. As with other US mass interrogation systems since, planners imagined its various offices and sites as a modern, corporate infrastructure, or a data economy spread across information storage sites, data pumps, and communication through-points. If officers and posts were to continue to be 'productive', it was vital for each phase to maintain a regulated flow of communicative action. For this reason, while the Air Interrogation Guide advised officers that 'there must be no emphasis on quantity production' of material *reports*, there was nonetheless an overwhelming imperative for speedy processing with streams of *information* constantly emanating from Posts.³⁷²

To maintain and constantly streamline information flows, Wringer officers were ordered to conserve productive time and energy by dispatching material covered in pinpoints but 'unevaluated'. This decision emerged in response to bottlenecks in the assembly line. In late 1949, for example, after only a few months of operation, the Tokyo office already faced a significant productivity headache. Almost a third of the one million Japanese repatriates returning from the Soviet Union were categorised as possessing some kind of useful information. This number presented Wringer interrogators with a breathtaking challenge. There was no clear and obvious means to select rationally those sources that would yield the best accounts. In-depth interrogations of every source would take many years, with fading memories jeopardising the accuracy of the intelligence collected, but random selections would fundamentally undermine the totalising ambition of the project. Administrators admitted that these thorny 'evaluation problems' were dragging down the centre's intelligence production rates.³⁷³

Confronted with the 'formidable task' of simultaneously collecting and evaluating new intelligence, USAF administrators ordered Wringer personnel to sacrifice the latter to a significant degree. Interrogation and clerical staff in Tokyo were instructed to raise the tempo of work, prioritising speed and breadth, and to push through 'unevaluated intelligence, without regard to substantiating or contributory data'. By the end of the 1950, the office was largely forgoing 'local evaluation' of data altogether. That job was taken up by other DOI experts in Washington, perhaps workers such as Henry Nash, who could compare new material with old.

³⁷² USAF, *Air Interrogation Guide*, loose in Box 25, BASR Records, UA-CU, xvi.

³⁷³ USAF, "Far East Air Forces History, 1 July-31 December 1949," Tokyo, 1 May 1950, Folder: 2-5138-1A, Reel A7244, AFHRA, 63.

No longer committed to verifying painstakingly the details of interrogatees' accounts, Wringer's Tokyo officers were transmitting six hundred reports each month, up from January's ten.³⁷⁴

The administrative emphasis on speedy circulation mediated the interrogation's spatialising strategies as well. Rather than integrated or free flowing narratives, the much requested spatial 'pinpoints' elicited the kind of responses enterable onto a map: sharp answers to direct questions presented with a mechanical rigour and, wherever possible, annotated with estimates of measurements and distances to the inch.³⁷⁵ This allowed non-expert interrogators to quickly transmit hundreds of rudimentary recollections about a complex industrial facility or an entirely unfamiliar town. Distant record keepers, photo analysts or expert Bombing Encyclopedia compilers could then integrate and compare disparate accounts themselves. Approached in this way, interrogational questioning was a critical moment in the transformation of subjective materials into a 'calculative cartography' of enemy territory.³⁷⁶ The ordering powers of quantification and tabularisation broke testimonies into elemental datapoints and helped Wringer convert irreducibly complex and personal geographical knowledge into mobile and recombining human intelligence before it 'perished' into misremembrances or irrelevance.

A calculative cartographic approach mediated both the material composition of the Wringer Reports and the geographical forms they described. Pointillist data collection allowed intelligence staff to go under the rooftops of an industrialised enemy's factories, inside its machining rooms and labour camps. Interrogation report templates changed little between sites and over time, thus providing a uniform table of elements that officers used to perform comparisons or interpret changes over time. Besides spaces dedicated to an interrogation's metadata—collection date, a brief source biography, a rating of their reliability, the 'area reported on', and so on—the bulk of most reports was devoted to indexing in nanoscopic detail the mundanities of labour, detention, and transportation.

Much of this material was distilled into the Wringer Reports' memory sketches, which were also produced in highly regimental, rationalised fashion. In providing them, interviewees might be asked to hand draw not just the plants, camps, ports, mines, and town centres where

³⁷⁴ Ibid.

³⁷⁵ USAF, "Far East Air Forces History, 1 July-31 December 1949," Tokyo, 1 May 1950, Folder: 2-5138-1A, Reel A7244, AFHRA, 66.

³⁷⁶ Crampton, "Cartographic Calculations of Territory."

they laboured, but also the commodities they helped produce, the vehicles in which they were transported, and much more. What began as crude pencil outlines were then schematised into polished and annotated diagrams by professional drafters tracing in India Ink and working with supplementary geospatial materials (see figures 4.14 and 4.15). In this period, the millions of processed memory sketches flowing into USAF intelligence each year were probably DOI's sharpest instrument for bringing the communist world into geostrategic vision.

In order to compile memory sketches and geo-locate them, Wringer interrogation centres became acutely cartographic spaces. Across Germany, the 7050th AISW's squadron posts were fitted with cabinets that held over one million maps. Staff would access them while designing interrogations, so that when they engaged with a source they could draw from a customised 'map folder' filled with selected extracts from the Bomber's Baedeker, target mosaics, World Area Chart navigational sheets, and Second World War-era maps of the Soviet Union at scales as small as 1:10 000.³⁷⁷ These spatialising tools and techniques provided a technopolitical context, ideological significance, and recombinant power for even the most banal memories, such as the positions of factory windows, conveyer belts, or dock jetties. Most important, it injected strategic and cartographic firmness into inexperienced accounts.

In one interrogation report produced at Wringer's Mannheim office, a 'layman woodworker' describes 'what went on under his hands' while forced to work in the gigantic 'Svetlana 211' tube and lamp factory in Leningrad.³⁷⁸ Interrogators requested a scrupulously detailed description of the plant and memory sketches of many of its components, right down to its roofing struts and the dimensions of the light bulbs he saw manufactured (see figure 2.8, page 84). His dossier notes that he had 'no technical training' and so at Svetlana 211 was tasked simply with nailing packing crates together. However, his report also notes that in this role he gained a valuable power: mobility. As a crate packer he was free to 'wander all over the plant', and thus to collect snippets of knowledge in the process. This freedom, however limited, meant that under rigorous questioning he could become the source of a vital memory sketch, complicit in a process that eventually yielded a calculative blueprint of the facility itself.

³⁷⁷ USAF 7051st AISS, "Squad SOP #55-3, 'Briefing and Debriefing,' 7051 AISS," Folder: K-WG-7050-HI, Reel P0248, AFHRA, Appendix: Air Force Justification, 1--2.

³⁷⁸ USAF, "Report No. 74 604-60-3901D," Folder: Leningrad VII, Box 994, RG 341, NARA II.



Figure 4.14 A German returnee prepares a memory sketch in Wiesbaden, February 1952.³⁷⁹

As a set of spatialised pinpoints and memory sketches, the Svetlana 211 report compiled in Mannheim could be circulated into a larger state archive, finding its way to USAF offices in Washington, DC. There, figures such as Henry Nash utilised the map and recombined their datapoints into new artefacts of cold war military perception. Sure enough, in an August 1955 volume of the Bombing Encyclopedia, listed under category code 525—‘Civilian End Products, Communication and Electronic Equipment’—there is an entry titled ‘Leningrad Tube a[nd] Lamp Pl[an]t Svetlana 211’ (see figure 2.9, page 86). From the account of a subjugated woodworker, and no doubt other ex-prisoners, the factory is abstract target data, rendered in limpid numerical objectivity. Its full BE number reads: 6001-0302-1-100-0103-0111-178. That is, coordinates—quadrant-country code—first installation number (World Aeronautical Chart area code)—second installation number (specific target number within the area)—grid number. At this point, it is worth emphasising, no systematic aerial reconnaissance had yet been carried out by a US agency over the Soviet Union. Project Wringer was mapping it from a distance for the purposes of planning a strategic air war.

³⁷⁹ USAF 7054th AISS, "History of the 7054th AISS, February 1952," Reel P0248, AFHRA, microfilm 1448.

Eyes in the cold war darkness

The preceding example dramatises how the planning of a war between industrial behemoths could involve calculations drawing on the knowledge of those who operated the assembly lines and lathes themselves. In fact, throughout the Project Wringer-Bombing Encyclopedia apparatus, DOI planners often considered non-officers to be better receptacles of geographical-industrial data than returning generals because they were commonly tradespersons or engineers before the War, and therefore observant informers and often given more tasks by their Soviet captors.³⁸⁰ Another report presents the strategic value of quotidian cold war experiences with graphic clarity. In 1950, two Japanese informants' memories were assimilated in a single report on Kazakhstan. The subjects, Tamai Susumu and Aizeki Yoshiro, were interrogated at USAF's Central Interrogation Centre in Tokyo about their time in Alma Ata and at a coal liquefaction plant in Karaganda, respectively. The report's civilian preparer ('Nakamura') recorded Aizeki's 'Personal Characteristics' candidly: 'not too observant; at first he was reluctant to talk', and when he finally opened up, he 'did not have too much information', 'was not too sure of his directions', and exaggerated distances. He 'was always asking if [he] could leave to return home.'³⁸¹

³⁸⁰ On this point see Boog, "The WRINGER Project," 84.

³⁸¹ Report no. 1170-3, Folder 378, Box 10, Entry no. A1 1006, RG 341, NARA II, 1.

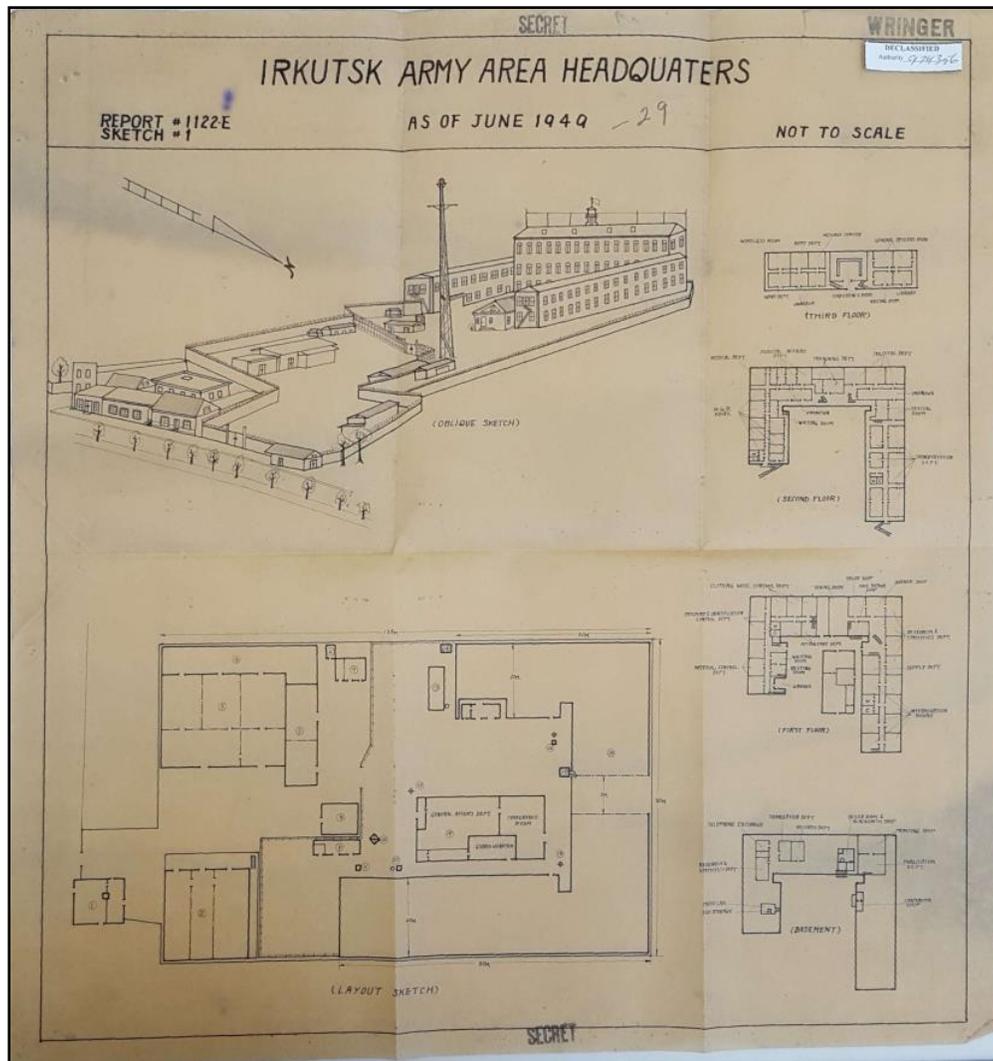


Figure 4.15 Memory sketch of the Irkutsk Army Area Headquarters made through the interrogation of Kato Tadaomi by USAF intelligence in Tokyo, April 1950. Kato had been recently sent home from Siberia.³⁸²

Yet, Aizeki's report is another quite remarkable achievement in calculative cartography from a distance, even allowing for approximated distances and doubtful directions. On the one hand it is indeed filled with vague 'rumours' gleaned from word of mouth (for example, about Russia's imminent ability to 'conquer the world' with nuclear weapons). But on the other, it anatomises several factories with extraordinary precision, incorporating hundreds of pinpoints and a list of thirty-eight surrounding military industrial sites. Even if he was an unreliable narrator, Aizeki's account yielded a provisional, but stunning town plan of Karaganda, an

³⁸² Available in Folder 614, Box 7, Entry no. A11006, RG 341, NARA II.

oblique technical landscape of the area, and minute details of the coal plant. (It attracted a BE number as well: 100-0238-0036-074).³⁸³ The Kazakhstan dossier also includes detailed schematic measurements for a range of other sites, including an oxygen plant that later became a strategic USAF target (BE number: 100-0329-0014-04),³⁸⁴ personnel numbers for a tactical 'ski unit' nearby, and hundreds of other sites, storehouses, and structures. Attached to the reports are twenty-five detailed memory sketches and a metre-long, marked-up city plan of Alma Ata (see figure 4.16).

Of course, as established, the Japanese civilian interpreters and USAF officers in Tokyo were ordered to do little more to confirm the pinpoints supplied by sources than compare newly acquired material with the limited geospatial information they had on hand. Many of Aizeki's contributions may have been wildly inaccurate. However, all military geography is performative, intervening in and ordering the world as it is spatialised. As his accounts were rationalised and schematised, they were nonetheless rendered as concrete intelligence stripped of subject-specific flaws. This work was carried out by labourers whose geopolitical microwork is also largely written out through the abstracting work of industrialised organisation and managerial authority. And the industrial mass production of military geography during this period exhibited similar performative effects. Matthew Farish argues that the Second World War and early cold war was a time when new spatial forms of knowledge emerged that recast the 'entire planet' as 'an American strategic environment'.³⁸⁵ One ubiquitous political technology that achieved this transformation was the detached viewpoint of 'global perception', a framing that represented and performed the world as a socio-political and geopolitical system disclosing a strategic unity. The Project Wringer-Bombing Encyclopedia apparatus performed this abstracting trick exactly. As figures 4.15 and 4.16 show, memory sketches depicted Soviet space from a bird's eye view or oblique angle. This was a characteristic perspective adapted in earlier and non-American forms of strategic cartography. But the connection between the Wringer graphics' aerial point of view and the global perspective of the Bombing Encyclopedia's target indexes offered an apparatus of disembodied perception that would have particularly significant consequences. It was a means of

³⁸³ USAF DOI, "Bombing Encyclopedia, Categorical Listing, Sixteenth Edition, Volume III, August 1955," Folder: 5-4221-46, Box 2, Entry no. A1 160-A, RG 330, NARA II, 17.

³⁸⁴ USAF DOI, "Bombing Encyclopedia, Categorical Listing, Sixteenth Edition, Volume III, August 1955," Folder: 5-4221-46, Box 2, Entry no. A1 160-A, RG 330, NARA II, 31.

³⁸⁵ Farish, *The Contours of America's Cold War*, 1--2.

performing strategic bombing at an unprecedented scale in a closed world and on a rational basis by bringing the communist world to the strategic centre with seemingly exact cartographic and data management precision. Unsurprisingly, Wringer's memory sketches were often cited by USAF officers as providing them with 'eyes' in the cold war, a sense of long-distance x-ray vision:

... memory sketches of areas and factories [went] beyond previous aerial photographic coverage. Thus, many white spots in the Ural region could be filled in by putting together, like the pieces of a jigsaw puzzle, hundreds of descriptions of the same object by different observers. The pictures created this way were so accurate that they seemed to allow walking safely in darkness through 'Uralsmashzavod' in Sverdlovsk or the steel and aircraft plants in Zaporozhje.³⁸⁶

³⁸⁶ Boog here is drawing from the account of a US Wringer officer, see "The WRINGER Project," 84.

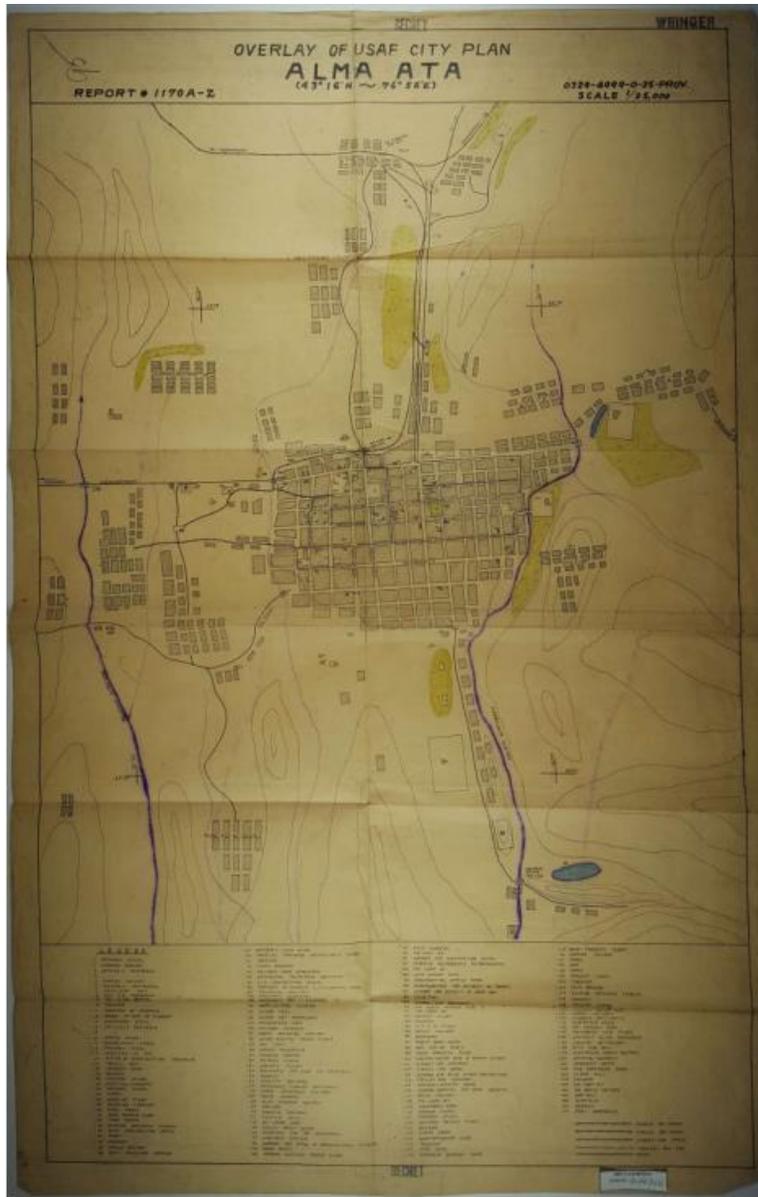


Figure 4.16 A city plan for Alma Ata, Kazakhstan, marked up in extraordinary detail following the interrogations of Susumu Tamai and Yoshiro Aizeki in Tokyo, 1950.³⁸⁷

By the mid-1950s, geographical data in the form of one million reports and millions of sketches had circulated back to Washington, DC. They did not just allow USAF target compilers to imagine the other side of a political barrier, but literally to map an industrial enemy's nuts and bolts. Once spatialised into a low-dimensional databank, 'bits of truth' seemingly free of any subjective body or material substrate, Wringer's countless pinpoints took on a life of their own.

³⁸⁷ USAF, "Report No. 1170-3," Folder 378, Box 10, Entry no. A11006, RG 341, NARA.

They moved around the national security system and were repurposed. In 1953, for example, the CIA's cartographic unit used memory sketches to redraw a Siberian rail route's entire course, a memorandum explaining that 'Two convict [prisoners of war] that were in the area' reported that 'new tunnels were built through the Bureinsky Ranges', and that 'tens of thousands of Japanese and German prisoners were used to extend the line'.³⁸⁸ Elsewhere, microfilm copies of reports were requested and received by senior staff at the State Department, Radio Free Europe, and to the upper reaches of the just-inaugurated Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe.³⁸⁹ However, the most important recipient for the Wringer Reports remained USAF DOI whose strategic targeting offices soaked up and recombined interrogation information for new entries into totalising lists of massive retaliation.

Conclusion

During the 'war on terror', Douglas Feith remarked that high technologies such as satellite surveillance were America's 'eyes in the skies' during the cold war. But at least initially, those devices were not available to the emerging US national security state. This chapter has argued instead that mass interrogation was the chief source of the 'perfect avalanche' of target data that was compiled in order to plan for a strategic war in a closed world.

The Bombing Encyclopedia and Project Wringer were two Air Force responses to the cold war imperative to index a vast and industrialised enemy from a distance. Both initiatives involved assembling technical and political elements within an abstract spatialising geography, forming a production network or 'economic web'. The overall ambition was the delivery of massive firepower by agencies like Strategic Air Command wherever deemed necessary. Such a mission presented significant organisational and technical challenges, many of which converged on the problem of gathering disparate geographical materials and distilling them into forms that permitted strategic targets to be indexed and located. To understand how Air Force Intelligence

³⁸⁸ Central Intelligence Agency, 'Map Intelligence Review, CIA/RR MR-37S-7', 1 September 1953. CIA Electronic Reading Room, released 30 May 2001, Document no. CIA-RDP79-01005A000200020007-5, <https://www.cia.gov/library/readingroom/docs/CIA-RDP79-01005A000200020007-5.pdf>.

³⁸⁹ Memorandum from Evron Kirkpatrick, Office of Intelligence Research, Department of State to Jesse M. MacKnight, Special Assistant to the Secretary of State, "Air Force Project WRINGER," 25 July 1950, Folder: Research Contracts, Projects, Institutions, 9.043 – Project Wringer, Box 12, Entry P310, RG 59.

managers sought to overcome these obstacles, the chapter examined the ‘intimate details’ of such projects—their technopolitics and spatial practices. Focus centred on the crucial processes of rationalisation and abstraction made possible by putting interrogation and target indexation on a mass production footing.

The links between Project Wringer and the Bombing Encyclopedia underline why it is necessary to examine mass interrogation as a technopolitical apparatus, not just an interpersonal encounter. First, while its artefacts and outputs may seem on first reading to convey abstract geographical and other ‘information’, once we enter into its production cycles and working machine spaces we find that, in fact, human (and other) intelligence data discloses an acutely embodied, material politics. Its truth power emerges from an arrangement of technical manoeuvres that is more than the sum of its parts. No element in the production process ultimately determines its facticity because intelligence is not just pure knowledge. It is made, emerging from technical, political, and epistemic processes. Specialised actions for fabricating materials and imbuing them with the ‘effect’ of abstract military-strategic insight must be orchestrated. As Monica Kim argues, the authority and power of mass interrogation seems to derive in part from the ‘assumed, self-evident nature of the information [presented] in the form of the interrogation report’.³⁹⁰ Project Wringer exemplifies just how much effort is required if they are to cycle ‘bits of truth’ out of interrogations and into a broader bureaucracy.

The second broad corollary that Project Wringer and the Bombing Encyclopedia calls to attention is that, by the early cold war, US military intelligence was increasingly appropriating and adapting forces and tools from outside the military sphere. Mass interrogation and target production both disclosed a deepening bureaucratic and industrial-managerial character. This theme recurs through the following empirical chapters, albeit in distinct ways. After 1945, US mass military interrogation was expected to be less an unpredictable, artful encounter than a production enterprise requiring modern management techniques. Its organisation increasingly centred on new and sophisticated administrative architectures, ever-more precise divisions of labour, and calculative and machinic tools for tracking and improving efficiency. Human sources and interrogators became mechanical variables in these rationalised, manufactural models. The throughputs on the interrogation assembly-line were oral accounts and messy dossiers derived

³⁹⁰ Kim, *The Interrogation Rooms of the Korean War*, 12.

from extended debriefings. However, after being rationalised, disarticulated, mobilised, and recombined, this material crystallised into something much firmer and less subjective—‘targeting intelligence’.

Today, 40 000 of Wringer’s primary data products, the Air Intelligence Information Reports, rest in 1300 boxes at the National Archives II facility in Maryland as wads of semi-translucent carbons. At first glance the files seem beyond any order; largely unindexed, with rusting staples burning through onionskin-thin pages, stray documents and broken photographs scatter through many series simply labelled ‘Miscellaneous’. At one point, however, they were a paragon of ordered military geography, each relating a wealth of pinpoints, memory sketches, and other intelligence from a detached and objective perspective, ‘seeing without being seen’ as Deleuze and Haraway might both say. This required that a state archive be aggregated through an economical and disciplined corporate process. Through their rational production, distant, compartmentalised Bombing Encyclopedia target compilers could continue the process of transforming ‘human intelligence’ into something much more abstract: target codes further stripped of the trappings of subjective narrative. As we will find in the next chapter, however, around this period mass interrogation was not only used to produce targets for a cold war between industrial superpowers. It was also incorporated into the performance of ‘asymmetric’ wars, its machine spaces repurposed to index and intervene in the space of counterinsurgency. Again, human intelligence seemed to permit enemies to be seen without being seen.

Chapter 5: Forces of Order

Mass interrogation in colonial Malaya, Algeria, and the Philippines

The twilight zone

In June 1961, President John F. Kennedy travelled to Vienna to meet the Premier of the Soviet Union, Nikita Khrushchev. The two-day summit yielded modest gains for cold war de-escalation as well as an opportunity for sombre displays of diplomacy. Privately, however, Kennedy felt he had been browbeaten by Khrushchev. During their meetings, his counterpart seemed to pack a disconcerting confidence in the inevitable triumph of ‘world communism’. Two days later Kennedy took to public broadcast to declare a strategic redirection for American society and its warfighting apparatus. ‘In the nineteen forties and early fifties’, he stated, ‘the great danger was from Communist armies marching across free borders.’³⁹¹ Such threats could be deterred by assets like SAC, with its extraordinary payloads, and the industrial-scale production of strategic intelligence by activities like Project Wringer. But Kennedy’s Vienna trip proved that

now we face a new and different threat. We no longer have a nuclear monopoly. Their missiles, they believe, will hold off our missiles, and their troops can match our troops should we intervene in these so-called wars of liberation.

Thus the local conflict they support can turn in their favor through guerrillas or insurgents or subversion. A small group of disciplined Communists could exploit discontent and misery in a country where the average income may be \$60 or \$70 a year and seize control, therefore, of an entire country without Communist troops ever crossing any international frontier.

The televised address flagged a redoubling for the global countercommunist mission facing ‘our Nation and the West and the free world’. However, its focus would shift to crushing the subversive bands stoking chaos within nations and bettering the conditions of the wretched they

³⁹¹ John F. Kennedy, Radio and Television Report to the American People on Returning from Europe, 06 June 1961, The American Presidency Project, UC-Santa Barbara, <https://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/documents/radio-and-television-report-the-american-people-returning-from-europe>

sought to control. In outlining this ‘burden’, Kennedy singled out for praise ‘the people of France’, who had been hammering away for years already, ‘doing far more in Africa’ than the US, for example. He meant here French economic and humanitarian projects, but also its security forces’ training and equipping of local armies to quash colonial insurrections. Months later, Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara formalised the strategic reorientation, adding details. The American military machine must indeed smother so-called ‘wars of liberation,’ but by recognising that they were not wars at all.³⁹² As the French knew well, they were battles in the ‘twilight zone between political subversion and quasi-military action.’ In it communist guerrillas adopted opportunistic tactics: sniping, raiding, and acts of political sabotage like assassination. Consequently, McNamara demanded new methods for countering them that relied more on ‘ingenuity than in money or manpower’. Rather than with ‘big weapons,’ the French and others were learning that in the twilight zone enemies had to be confronted ‘locally,’ with ‘companies and squads, and individual soldiers’ moving through the population systematically. To do so, a countercommunist state’s forces of order had to collect intelligence that was equally local, population-centric, and systematic.

The next chapter examines how this emergent modality of later modern warfare—counterinsurgency—was remade and performed by the US military in South Vietnam, in part through experiments with mass interrogation. But leaping to that conflict would leave much out of the story. Just a few short years separated McNamara’s ‘twilight zone’ speech and the operation of complex intelligence systems in Vietnam for navigating it. Construction that rapid could only occur because certain essential elements of his Defense Department’s counterinsurgency apparatus were transported there in a state of pre-fabrication. Their colonial imprints were still fresh, the lineaments of US mass interrogation in southeast Asia already drawn by neo-imperial armies waging recent campaigns of suppression against rebellions in southeast Asia, northern Africa, and elsewhere.

This chapter explores several of the genealogies and geographies of mass interrogation as it took root and metastasised in the late colonial counterinsurgency campaigns of the twentieth century. Critical in these conflicts was the processing of human intelligence from the

³⁹² Speech by Robert McNamara to the Fellows of the American Bar Association, Chicago, 17 February 1962, quoted in Paul Kecskemeti, *Insurgency as a Strategic Problem*, February 1967, RM-5156-PR (Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation), 5, https://www.rand.org/content/dam/rand/pubs/research_memoranda/2006/RM5160.pdf.

transportation, confinement, and interrogation of multitudes of detained subjects. Once again, large-scale technopolitical apparatuses were constructed to represent and control the spaces of war. However, as McNamara hinted, these systems were retooled in order to service a new mode of military reasoning. Rather than totalising conflicts between advanced industrial state armies, in counterinsurgencies mass interrogation needed to spatialise the geography of ‘limited’ war and dominate the political cankers festering inside stricken non-European societies.

In the performance of these functions counterinsurgents after 1945 recast colonial nations as machine spaces. Order was reinstated within them by installing modern bureaucratic security regimes capable of taking control over the body politic and manipulating its component parts by physical and administrative means. Accordingly, counterinsurgency intelligence spatialised the civilian population so that ‘terrorists’ ensconced within it were rooted out and liquidated. Mass interrogation was a key means by which colonial bodies were efficiently processed, with the resulting geographical, socio-political, and other information rapidly circulated to mobile security forces. This meant it involved less backhauling of insignia-bearing enemy prisoners from determinate frontlines, and almost never the categorical listing of nodes of industrial-economic vulnerability. More often counterinsurgency mass interrogations were conducted by roving patrols in the field or required the extraction of ‘suspects’ from zones of urban or political strife, and their propulsion through facilities that blurred the line between intelligence fabrication and military detention. In the field and in purpose-built machine spaces, the sought-after bits of truth were ‘local’ too, names and locations of other dubious inhabitants so that search and sweep operations spiralled and expanded. As a means of colonial policing, mass interrogation in this form was at once calculative, requiring the management of an ‘economy of forces’, as one expert put it, and facilitative of spectacular violence.

Kennedy’s avowed admiration for the French *mission civilisatrice* in Africa was not incidental. In his June broadcast, the two other world leaders he recounted meeting other than Khrushchev were de Gaulle and the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom, Harold Macmillan. Tapping French and British experiences were vital not just to shoring up the transatlantic geopolitical order but to the specific maturation of counterinsurgency, a discipline in which Kennedy took a keen personal interest. The following two sections adumbrate the key features of that discipline in the post-Second World War period, before explaining why human intelligence was deemed vital to its performance. Three case studies proceed. They examine how mass

interrogation was conceived and utilised in late-colonial counterinsurgencies, beginning with its experimentation by British experts in Malaya before its utilisation by two French neo-colonial warriors in Algeria. Finally, the links to US counterinsurgency expertise are established by discussing Edward Lansdale and his neo-imperial adventure in the Philippines. All these performances of counterinsurgency mass interrogation laid down vital pre-conditions for the construction of similar apparatuses during America's war in Vietnam.

Know your (colonial) enemy

The previous chapters have largely examined mass interrogation in terms of its place in the performance of total, industrialised warfare, or 'conventional' wars, as military experts commonly label them. However, since the 1960s, it has been utilised more frequently as a solution to a different modality of later modern war: counterinsurgency, or 'asymmetric warfare'. Formal principles for conducting these kinds of operations began to coalesce in the US national security state during the early cold war period, with the institutional support of senior figures like Kennedy and McNamara. The next two chapters examine how intelligence interrogation came to assume a central position in the challenges of asymmetry in Vietnam and the 'war on terror'. However, the historical geography of this mode of warfare extends back further, to the frontlines of European armies' myriad 'small wars' of colonial conquest.³⁹³

During the nineteenth century a new fighting tradition emerged to extend and secure the power of imperial armies on expedition. In Britain, France, and Germany, doctrine for fighting 'small wars' formalised some of the methods that hitherto had been innovated but applied unsystematically in the non-European world. Indiscriminate bouts of spectacular violence against native inhabitants, the raiding of settlements, divide-and-rule schemes, blockades and intentional starvation had all been part of the tactical toolbox available to colonial commanders in the Indian Northwest Frontier, Indochina, east Africa, and elsewhere. By the end of the century, however, the professionalisation of the ranks, the deepening of civilian control over military

³⁹³ These sketches of early counterinsurgency programming draw from Douglas Porch, *Counterinsurgency: Exposing the Myths of the New Way of War* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), especially 1--41; Laleh Khalili, *Time in the Shadows: Confinement in Counterinsurgencies* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2013), especially 13--29; and, Patricia Owens, *Economy of Force: Counterinsurgency and the Historical Rise of the Social* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015).

administration, enhanced journalistic scrutiny, and the increasing fragility of the international imperial order meant that these tactics had to be tempered with certain forms of ‘soft power’.

Historically, European colonial armies had conferred little value on native populations as sources of knowledge. In his major survey of nineteenth century insurrections, *Small Wars: Their Principles and Practice*, the British Boer War-veteran Major General C.E. Callwell, concluded that a member of the ‘coloured races’ held no intelligence potential at all. ‘His ideas of time, numbers, and distance are of the vaguest’, he said, ‘even when he is trying to speak the truth’.³⁹⁴ The general understanding that individual ‘natives’ were unreliable and indolent would not disappear entirely, of course. But in terms of their fractional value to human intelligence production, a radical transformation took place from the early twentieth century. As part of the larger socialisation of government, native populations gradually became objects of sociological discourse. In fact, as Patricia Owens’ argues persuasively, the very concept of ‘the social’ was itself extended through the transformation of ‘small wars’ at the frontier into sociological problems of ‘domestic’ colonial space, amenable to the improvements of (armed) social work from without.³⁹⁵ While this did not spell the end for bloody ‘small wars,’ it did mean that the use of raw power to induce the submission of natives to European rule often had to be tempered, or at least joined with, the new political technologies of welfare. Local populations’ bouts of violent resistance could now be explained and ameliorated through their domestication under more administrative forms of rule. Mass interrogation in counterinsurgencies would be made possible by this incorporation of colonial subjects into governmental discourse, thereby rendering them legitimate objects of knowledge.

By the First World War, this sociological imperative and the vast technological disparity between ‘continental’ and ‘colonial’ forms of war meant that the two were often bifurcated into separate military services. In France and Britain in particular, an officer class emerged adept at extending imperial power both by applying military superiority against non-Western populations and engaging them on political or cultural terms. Between the 1890s and the 1930s, French officers such as Joseph Gallieni and Hubert Lyautey in Tonkin and Madagascar, and British exemplars of colonial policing such as Charles Gwynn in Sudan and Orde Wingate in Palestine,

³⁹⁴ C.E. Callwell, *Small Wars: Their Principles and Practice*, originally published by Harrison and Sons, 1906, quoted in Khalili, *Time in the Shadows*, 29.

³⁹⁵ Owens, *Economy of Force*, 1--39 and passim.

all sought the acquiescence of civilian populations by combining terror tactics with the consolidation of markets, the construction of social infrastructure, and the modernisation of criminal codes such that rebels were now delegitimised as merely resistant fanatics. ‘Small wars’ during this period, Khalili writes, meant ‘pacification’ or ‘modernisation’ projects ‘enforced at the point of bayonets and using the blunt instrument of the law.’³⁹⁶

By the early 1960s, US political and military strategists were increasingly alarmed by the number and intensity of the rebellions proliferating in the European colonial sphere. Senior figures in the Kennedy administration and US military apparatus searched for sociological measures that could stabilise and domesticate the ‘local conflicts’ threatening to spill over into traditional societies everywhere.³⁹⁷ In the idea of ‘counterinsurgency’, a technical and political solution was available that effectively translated colonial developmentalism into the discourse of national security more familiar to post-war US planners. It would be crystallised by the concept of ‘nation-building’ for the counter-communist cause. Putting that theory into operation was a coalescing body of experts that spanned Western militaries, social science, and policymaking. Figures such as Robert Thompson, Roger Trinquier, David Galula, and Edward Lansdale were principal members of this remarkably self-aware ‘transnational epistemic community’.³⁹⁸ All were literate, programmatic thinkers who sought to develop a military discipline that specifically targeted rebels and instrumentalised populations in order to defeat them. All attempted to break down counterinsurgency warfare into its component procedures and, in general, they prioritised socio-technical (rather than political) solutions to the crises driving insurgencies.³⁹⁹

Calculus of chaos

For these warriors-turned-friends-at-court, at the heart of post-1945 counterinsurgency was a fear that proliferating guerrilla insurrections posed an *existential* threat to ‘civilised’ nations and their

³⁹⁶ Khalili, *Time in the Shadows*, 24.

³⁹⁷ Owens, *Economy of Force*, 209--242.

³⁹⁸ Khalili, *Time in the Shadows*, 22.

³⁹⁹ Admittedly this is to smooth out a tremendously uneven assemblage of doctrine, military customs, civilian analysis, and policy related to ‘internal’ or ‘small wars’. During the post-war period in the US alone more than fifty terms were used to describe political events involving insurgencies. Despite the heterogeneity, they all seemed to address hostilities involving ‘indigenous’, often multi-clad fighters and demanding the military assume responsibility for both combat operations and re-establishing governmental authority, see Andrew J. Birtle, *U.S. Army Counterinsurgency and Contingency Operations Doctrine, 1942--1976* (Washington, DC: Center of Military History, US Army, 2006), 3--4.

armies.⁴⁰⁰ Infected with the communist pathology, they seemed to suppurate, spreading when colonial administrations lost its legitimate claim to the monopoly of violence. Like a disease, the ease of transmission owed to insurgents' parasitic qualities. Guerrillas did not have to achieve ultimate victory. Rather, success came when they merely prolonged the colonial body politic's psycho-social sickness, thus persuading a population 'that their lives are insecure unless they cooperate with them.'⁴⁰¹

Such wars were thus defined by the radically 'asymmetric' relations between belligerents. While on the one hand counterinsurgents could generally draw on superior 'tangible assets', David Galula explained, insurgents wielded an outsized threat by possessing certain 'intangible' strategic advantages, such as the freedom to choose when conflicts initiated and ideological zealotry.⁴⁰² They pitted rigid state functionaries directed from the colonial metropole against 'fluid' local agitators who stoked rebellion from within the populace. Asymmetry thus owed to a calculus of chaos. The capabilities *and ambitions* of battling parties were so divergent that their most basic terms and strategies could never be agreed upon. Indeed, McNamara's concerns stemmed in large part from his belief that insurgencies seemed unusually 'cheap' for non-state actors, chaos being relatively easy to trigger but costly to resolve.⁴⁰³

For its mid-century experts, radical asymmetry structured the two fundamental political and geographical conditions of counterinsurgency warfare: the presence of an internal enemy who is beyond the law and an indeterminate space of operations. As the next sections show, both would shape how interrogation was mobilised in the period of post-War decolonisation. First, because liberal states regarded insurgents' ambitions as fundamentally illegitimate, their

⁴⁰⁰ Khalili, *Time in the Shadows*, 15--29.

⁴⁰¹ Walter W. Rostow, "Guerrilla Warfare in Underdeveloped Areas," *Marine Corps Gazette*, January 1962, quoted in Bernard B. Fall, *Counterinsurgency: The French Experience*, Publication no. L63-109 (Washington DC: Industrial College of the Armed Forces, 1963), 7, <https://smallwarsjournal.com/documents/bfall.pdf>. Orientalist constructions of foreign space as diseased returned with renewed vigour in the twenty-first century. In particular, contemporary counterinsurgency expert rhetoric has made frequent use of disease metaphors in order to illustrate the challenge of delivering (bio)political aid to stricken societies, see Derek Gregory, "The Rush to the Intimate: Counterinsurgency and the Cultural Turn," *Radical Philosophy* 150 (July/August 2008): 17, https://www.radicalphilosophy.com/wp-content/files_mf/rp150_article1_rushtotheintimate_gregory.pdf.

⁴⁰² David Galula, *Counterinsurgency Warfare: Theory and Practice* (Westport, CT: Praeger, 2006), 4. First published in 1964 by Praeger.

⁴⁰³ Keckskemeti, *Insurgency as a Strategic Problem*. In his seminal piece on the governmental nature of 'revolutionary wars' Bernard Fall made a similar argument about their 'price', see "The Theory and Practice of Insurgency and Counterinsurgency," *Naval War College Review* 18, no. 3 (1965): 35, <https://digital-commons.usnwc.edu/nwc-review/vol18/iss3/4/>.

adherents were also not to be considered genuine actors with legitimate claims to military-strategic interests. They were ideological and racialised vulgarians bent on subverting civilised rule, symptoms of a contagion afflicting the social body. Debilities threatening civilised administration were not the same as wars between high contracting parties and so fell outside the modern principles governing war. While counterinsurgents wielded law in order to re-establish order (by converting the military to a police force, setting up emergency regulations for detaining suspects, and ‘stripping down’ judicial systems for collecting and utilising intelligence), those spreading the pathogen were by definition excluded from the protections of the laws of war.⁴⁰⁴ In this context, to know the insurgent enemy, mass interrogation could be prosecuted with extraordinary latitude and ferocity.

Second, and related, counterinsurgencies were thought to rarely invite the orthodox martial challenges of capturing territory and engaging in standoffs on the battlefield. Rather, the geographies of the ‘twilight zone’ were socio-political, cultural, and territorially unfixed. On the one hand this meant that its central strategic dilemma was not the typical challenge of wielding a preponderance of military force, but the ‘pacification’ of restive peoples in an alien space of colonial difference. On the other, insurgents’ drastically deficient technological resources encouraged them to pursue strategies of sedition and evasion, dispersing into terrain and the populace. Consequently, for its mid-twentieth century experts, limited wars necessitated an amalgam of flexible political and military technologies that together could map and catalogue a subverted nation’s social and physical territory. Anticolonial propaganda and guerrillas’ evanescent tactics were to be vitiated by targeting the ‘hearts and minds’ of the populace (if more in rhetoric than practice) and by tuning traditional military tactics to the population-centric techniques of policing. Means for collecting detailed information about the space of insurgency was a first order challenge, and human inhabitants were very often the object of examination.⁴⁰⁵

Interrogation and counterinsurgency

It is in this historical context that mass interrogation was retooled as a means for spoiling insurgencies in the middle of the twentieth century. As colonial subjects were incorporated into

⁴⁰⁴ Khalili, *Time in the Shadows*, 58--64.

⁴⁰⁵ Robert Thompson, *No Exit from Vietnam* (London: Chatto & Windus, 1969), 32--37; John A. Nagl, *Counterinsurgency Lessons from Malaya and Vietnam: Learning to Eat Soup with a Knife* (Westport, CT: Praeger, 2002), 15--16.

sociological discourse, they became increasingly legitimate sources of knowledge, at least for the purposes of re-establishing government control in the closed space of a debilitated colonial nation. In particular, systematic interrogative questioning became a widely used instrument in neo-imperial missions after 1945, with technical innovations developed during the Second World War extended into the period of formal decolonisation. Broadly speaking, in order to accumulate knowledge on the space of asymmetric warfare in northern Africa, southeast Asia, and elsewhere, European colonial armies and US neo-imperial forces experimented with two modes of mass interrogation for the purposes of gathering intelligence about the politics and space of insurgencies: mobile screenings and static interrogations, that latter often conducted in purpose-built carceral-intelligence centres.

First, after 1945, mass interrogations increasingly formed a core element of the broadscale ‘screenings’ of settlements colonial forces used to pacify restive colonial regions. As Khalili shows, because search and sweep operations served as such graphic performances of neo-imperial power at the local scale, the interrogations that partly constituted them became both practical instruments of counterinsurgency intelligence collection and a prop in the theatre of pacification.⁴⁰⁶ As the next sections show, in Malaya, Algeria, and the Philippines, all the expert figures introduced in the previous section developed tactical procedures for ordering inhabitants into the open for public questioning, the extraction of denunciations, and the imperious recording of minute sociological and biographical details about the populace. For example, the self-proclaimed doyen of French counterinsurgency theory, David Galula, advocated the encirclement and localisation of guerrillas and their ‘spotting’ by means of intelligence sourced ‘from the population’.⁴⁰⁷ Arriving in Algeria he found that rebels there ‘had a headstart’. Adapting Mao’s dictum, he realised that ‘they were Moslems, and we were not. The rebel fish could swim better in Moslem water than the counterinsurgent land mammal. The more reason for us to rely on Moslem supporters.’ But Galula was far from alone in this regard. In population-centric conflicts in the colonies, local inhabitants were at once objects of raw power and knowledge, meaning that socio-political and tactical knowledge could be compiled by

⁴⁰⁶ Khalili, *Time in the Shadows*, 153.

⁴⁰⁷ Galula, *Counterinsurgency Warfare*, 50.

questioning them before being pumped to ‘psychological’ warfare units for use in propaganda production and by mobile strike squads.⁴⁰⁸

In mid-century counterinsurgencies, human intelligence production also took static, infrastructural forms. Rather than out in ‘the water’, the second mode of mass interrogation involved building systems for hooking catch and confining them. Extended spaces of detainment and complex interrogation were signal features of asymmetric warfare during this period and triggered the assembly of systematised networks of interrogation centres regulated according to architectural and compound discipline. Sometimes these reactivated the bureaucratically dense facilities constructed during the Second World War. Most notably, as the next section shows, British intelligence agents in Malaya re-established control there in part by transferring thousands of rebels into CSDIC-style facilities. Thousands of interrogations were conducted in those purpose-built complexes with the aim of drawing up lists of suspects, subjecting them to rationalised procedures of intensive questioning, and cycling new intelligence dossiers out into the broader security apparatus. But such machine spaces were not the preserve of British counterinsurgents. In Indochina, Algeria, and the Philippines as well, colonial rebellions generated many detained subjects—surrendered fighters, suspects arrested on patrol, and defectors—who were collected and analysed in carceral settings such as government camps or prisons. By supplying colonial administrators with intelligence reports from insurgents and their supporters, this more static form of interrogation also offered to chart the unfamiliar terrain where the parasitism of anti-imperial subversion festered.

In these two ways, mass interrogation assisted in the practical task of building the political and geographical knowledge required to sublimate the challenges of asymmetric war in the middle of the century. In doing so entire colonial nations were conceived as mechanical spaces, with interrogation forming a technical means of linking its distant, racially subordinate sociological elements through the large-scale and rapid production of geographies and tactical information. The British and French colonial armies experimented with both these kinds of apparatuses during their post-1945 imperial wars in Malaya and Algeria, respectively. For their part, after the Second World War, American counterinsurgents enthusiastically rehearsed mobile mass interrogation in the putting down of the Hukbalahap insurgency in the Philippines. By the

⁴⁰⁸ David Galula, *Pacification in Algeria, 1956--1958* (Santa Monica, CA: RAND, 2006), 70. Originally published 1963, https://www.rand.org/content/dam/rand/pubs/monographs/2006/RAND_MG478-1.pdf.

early-1960s, the three cases offered object lessons for an emerging cadre of experts devoted to the study and administration of ‘limited wars’. With its origins in the colonial small-war tradition, an accreted power-knowledge had become available that offered up designs for mass interrogation technopolitical apparatuses that could be used to support US forces’ presence in Vietnam and elsewhere. In this conjuncture, mass interrogation was a means for writing the human geography of asymmetric warfare: data on rural settlements could be gathered and plotted, inhabitants’ political convictions represented cartographically, suspected enemies indexed. Both modes of counterinsurgency mass interrogation, mobile and static, offered the sort of ingenuity to which McNamara aspired: ‘locally’ embedded technologies for channelling intelligence to imperial police patrols for use in conducting search-and-destroy missions and disciplining colonial subjects. If the fog of war might cover over an asymmetric space of operations, then perhaps mass interrogation offered counterinsurgents a means to reveal it.

In 1962, that incipient disciplinary formation achieved a state of supreme self-awareness. Counterinsurgents of the new school met at a major symposium in Washington, DC. The meeting—sponsored by the DOD’s Advanced Research Projects Agency (ARPA) and hosted at the headquarters of the RAND Corporation—was an expert response to the rapid escalation of the American intervention in southeast Asia, a chance to learn from a ‘who’s who of liberal counterinsurgencies’.⁴⁰⁹ Its European and American attendees had helped stamp down anticolonial uprisings in Algeria, Greece, Kenya, the Philippines, and elsewhere, their experiences yielding a mix of novel techniques and a range of strategic outcomes. One luminary of British colonial warfare, Frank Kitson, nonetheless observed in the group a unity of purpose. Attendees had initially assumed their theories and procedures were ‘unique and original’, but ‘when we came to air them, all our ideas were essentially the same’: guerrilla conspirators needed to be isolated from susceptible inhabitants, their cells swiftly destroyed.⁴¹⁰ They had another thing in common: they thought the exact opposite to C.E. Callwell. The ‘coloured races’ did have intelligence potential. Though in a space of radical asymmetry the challenge was to gather this information from them carefully, in order to locate and extinguish the scourge of insurgency by systematic means.

⁴⁰⁹ Khalili, *Time in the Shadows*, 33.

⁴¹⁰ Stephen T. Hosmer, and Sibylle O. Crane, *Counterinsurgency: A Symposium, April 16--20, 1962* (Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation, 2006). Originally published 1963, <https://www.rand.org/content/dam/rand/pubs/reports/2006/R412-1.pdf>, iv.

Malaya

The Malaya Emergency (1948--1960) has long been identified as the paradigmatic counterinsurgency success, a conflict in which British forces successfully repelled guerrillas through 'sociological warfare'.⁴¹¹ RAND symposium attendees' recent experiences there were thus the subject of particularly extensive discussion. During the uprising, interrogation had been creatively adapted for use in rooting out supporters of the pro-independence Communist Party's military wing, the Malayan National Liberation Army (MNLA). Both static and roving mass interrogation apparatuses were constructed.

Subject to curtailed citizenship rights within a Malay-majority colony under British rule, after 1945 the mainly Chinese membership of the MNLA sought expanded political freedoms with aggressive determination. With the establishment of the Federation of Malaya in 1948, the British effectively abandoned the Malay Chinese population by encoding a system of indirect rule through provincial sultans, deepening Malay primacy in a racial-colonial state.⁴¹² With experience as guerrilla resisters during the Japanese occupation, around 8 000 MNLA fighters took to forest encampments. Insurgents began to conduct rapid-fire raids, leaving their camps to attack mines and agricultural estates across the countryside. In June colonial authorities declared a state of emergency and provided police with broad detention powers.⁴¹³ The MNLA was declared a 'bandit' organisation and criminalised.

Nonetheless, its adherents persisted with the nation-wide raiding strategy and between 1948 and 1950 chaos reigned across the Federation of Malaya. Local security agencies and Colonial Office administrators in Whitehall decried the 'information panic' stymying a decisive response. Brian Stewart, an intelligence specialist deployed near the onset of the insurrection, found upon his arrival that the 'business of intelligence' was highly disordered.⁴¹⁴ A clattering 'government machinery' afflicted the entire colony: agencies were hobbled by distinct 'corporate cultures' and discordant priorities, the result being that intelligence production was not effectively coordinated from Kuala Lumpur or other centres of tactical and strategic calculation.

⁴¹¹ Owens, *Economy of Force*, 173--189.

⁴¹² *Ibid.*, 179--180.

⁴¹³ Leon Comber, *Malaya's Secret Police, 1945--1960: The Role of the Special Branch in the Malayan Emergency* (Melbourne, Australia: Monash University Press, 2008), 108.

⁴¹⁴ Brian Stewart, "Winning in Malaya: An Intelligence Success Story," *Intelligence and National Security* 14, no. 4 (1999), 269, <https://doi.org/10.1080/02684529908432580>.

Any information gathered could not be funnelled back out to rural patrols quickly enough to make available robust estimates of the number of MNLA raiders ('Communist Terrorists' in state terminology), let alone detect them before they swept back into the forest.⁴¹⁵ Stewart constructed the counterinsurgency challenge in mechanistic terms. Operating the intelligence 'machine' was laborious, consisting of the methodical synthesis and redistribution of packets of socio-political and security information around the closed world of a colonial nation. This framing would become typical of counterinsurgency intelligence discourse. There were two primary ways in which interrogation was used as a way of turning that machine's components over in British Malaya, supplying it with fuel. First, static rounds of mass interrogation would be carried out in purpose-built facilities. Second, control over the asymmetric space of insurrection would be re-established through the collection of interrogation intelligence by mobile colonial police squads.

CSDICs reactivated

While Stewart was dismayed at the state of the intelligence machinery in the capital, colonial police were nonetheless detaining hundreds of suspected guerrillas every week across Malaya. Given the winning example of CSDICs and other interrogation systems rolled out during the Second World War, the lack of infrastructure for appropriating this obvious human resource was galling. Two months into the insurgency, an influential Combined Intelligence Staff Summary was circulated to Whitehall. It warned that the Federation's longstanding colonial Police Force—whose constabulary was utterly bereft of Chinese-speakers—and its understaffed intelligence branch, the Security Service, were both 'overwhelmed'.⁴¹⁶ Administrators on the ground had ordered nothing like the human intelligence programmes necessary to forge the machinic links between planning and counterinsurgency action that Stewart believed was necessary:

Our biggest weakness is the lack of full-time interrogation teams, manned by experienced officers and the very necessary interpreters. Until interrogation can be tackled on a large scale, estimates of enemy strength

⁴¹⁵ Ibid., 276.

⁴¹⁶ Leon Comber, "The Malayan Security Service (1945--1948)," *Intelligence and National Security* 18, no.3 (2003): 136--139, <https://doi.org/10.1080/02684520412331306950>.

remain largely a matter of ‘knocking off noughts’ or ‘dividing by three’ as the occasion appears to warrant it.⁴¹⁷

The Federation’s intelligence administrators acted on the damning Staff Summary. From 1950, a new colonial Combined Intelligence Staff was established in the country. Its overseers expanded the Malayan Police’s nascent Special Branch. Hitherto it had been a skeletal intelligence service and fragmented across the provinces. Now it was confirmed as an elite agency that would embody the concept of ‘political policing’ that was taking hold across the British empire during the period.⁴¹⁸

Stewart later argued that investing Special Branch with autonomy and powers of national intelligence collection provided the broader security apparatus with the kind of coordinated integrity that greased the ‘machinery’ of counterrevolutionary government.⁴¹⁹ A key step involved it assuming responsibility for expanding and integrating a colony-wide system of prisoner interrogations. It would include an array of regional facilities, but the core of the intelligence machine would become vastly more productive when a large-scale interrogation centre was soon opened near Kuala Lumpur—the ‘Holding Centre’. Its purpose was to collect ‘live’ intelligence from MNLAs prisoners and defectors, its design modelled directly on the wartime CSDIC in Burma, where Japanese prisoners of war had been systematically processed.⁴²⁰

In late 1950, Special Branch officers assumed operation of the Holding Centre. Its planners scoured the empire for fluent ‘Chinese experts’ who could form the basis of ‘an organisation for scientific interrogation of prisoners and suspects’.⁴²¹ However, the ‘scientific’

⁴¹⁷ The National Archives [TNA], CO717/172/03, O.H. Morris to Lieutenant Colonel J.V.B. Jervis Read (MI1a), Secret, 31 August 1948, quoted in Tim Maguire, "Interrogation and ‘Psychological Intelligence’: The Construction of Propaganda During the Malayan Emergency, 1948--1958," in *Interrogation in War and Conflict: A Comparative and Interdisciplinary Analysis*, eds. Christopher Andrew and Simona Tobia (London: Routledge, 2014), 136.

⁴¹⁸ Georgina Sinclair, "‘The Sharp End of the Intelligence Machine’: The Rise of the Malayan Police Special Branch 1948--55," *Intelligence and National Security* 26, no. 4 (2011), <https://doi.org/10.1080/02684527.2011.580601>, 461.

⁴¹⁹ Stewart, "Winning in Malaya: An Intelligence Success Story," 276.

⁴²⁰ Khalili, *Time in the Shadows*, 159; Maguire, "Interrogation and ‘Psychological Intelligence’," 137.

⁴²¹ Maguire, "Interrogation and ‘Psychological Intelligence’," 137--140. Most of the expert linguist group were previously attached to London’s School of Oriental and African Studies. While the Kuala Lumpur centre was based on the CSDIC system developed during the Second World War (see chapter 3), it is worth noting that the model had already been extended to Palestine during the post-War uprising against British occupation there. Hundreds of members of the Palestine Police were transferred to Malaya following the end of the British Mandate, including interrogation specialists. See David A. Charters, *The British Army and Jewish Insurgency in Palestine, 1945--47* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 1989), 92.

aspect of its operations was largely rhetorical. Much more salient was the drive to convert administrative power into raw, persuasive violence in the countryside through mechanical, economical processing and disciplined policing procedures.

By 1951, Special Branch experts at the Centre occupied the summit of a complex national counterinsurgency mass interrogation infrastructure in Malaya. Maguire describes it as a ‘three-tier’ apparatus. At its base, on the ‘front-line’, were roving Security Force patrols. When they captured ‘Surrendered Enemy Personnel’ (SEPs)—prisoners, informers, and MNLAs—defectors—they would carry out tactical interrogations for immediately actionable intelligence. If squads came across prisoners who seemed especially valuable, they were to be transferred to one of Special Branch’s provincial detainment facilities for ‘state-level questioning’. Finally, at the apex, the Holding Centre received ‘high-level’ operatives and became the site of the most systematic and arduous rounds of expert interrogation. Like the wartime CSDIC’s before it, its remit was ‘strategic’: to develop an ‘Order-of-Battle picture of the political machinery responsible for directing the bandit offensive’.⁴²² The material gained through ‘high-level’ interrogations was used to produce propaganda and supporting ‘psychological’ warfare.⁴²³ However, it also filtered out for more direct purposes as human target lists for Special Branch’s ‘killer squads’, who were specialists in rapid-deployment abduction and assassination.⁴²⁴ As we will see in the next chapter, a strikingly similar multiplex national interrogation apparatus would later be laid over South Vietnam.

Torture was formally proscribed at the Holding Centre, but the answers underwriting these actions were commonly extracted from prisoners by coercive means. The most common were threats of summary transport to China and the ignominy of publishing detainees’ captures and criminal charges in the press.⁴²⁵ However, interrogators at the state-level facilities employed more callous techniques. Upon his retirement, R.J.W. Craig, a former head of Special Branch,

⁴²² TNA, KV4/424, Director General MI5, Sir Percy Sillitoe to Jack Morton, 29 May 1949, quoted in Maguire, "Interrogation and ‘Psychological Intelligence’," 144.

⁴²³ Maguire, "Interrogation and ‘Psychological Intelligence’".

⁴²⁴ Calder Walton, *Empire of Secrets: British Intelligence, the Cold War, and the Twilight of Empire* (New York: Overlook, 2013), epub e-book, chap. 5.

⁴²⁵ This technique was highlighted in RAND Corporation literature as instructive counterinsurgency practice, see Riley Sunderland, *Antiguerrilla Intelligence in Malaya, 1948--1960*, September 1964, RM-4172-ISA (Rand Corporation: Santa Monica, CA), 44--45, https://www.rand.org/content/dam/rand/pubs/research_memoranda/2005/RM4172.pdf.

was candid about his agents' tactics in these more remote sites, where conditions were often rudimentary:

Officers on the ground were left to collect information in whatever manner they saw fit. *The employment of excessive strong-arm measures to extract information was common, and much use was made of the highly vaunted truth drug.* Such instances were symptomatic of the times. The immediate need was for operational intelligence and this was obtained without convention or restraint. Fortunately, the police soon realised that such measures were proving to be counter-productive because in a guerrilla situation it is of fundamental importance that at least part of the civil population is won over. Prisoners were at least treated in a humane manner and once this was general knowledge, surrenders from the terrorist organisation began to occur. [SEPs] quickly provided valuable tactical information for use by Security Forces and from their full interrogation, a wide range of exploitable intelligence was later obtained.⁴²⁶

The 'humane manner' of interrogations was clearly subject to considerable interpretation and evolution. In any case, less than two years after its human intelligence operations were expanded, the colony's Director of Intelligence was gushing: Special Branch was the 'sharp end of the intelligence machine' and others judged its interrogation apparatus to be the 'most immediate and valuable source of information'.⁴²⁷ Stewart later agreed. Adopting the familiar mechanistic idiom that punctuates the history of mass interrogation in later modern war, he reckoned that it stood as one of the most effective 'parts of the intelligence machine'. Like Craig, he believed that systematic prisoner interrogation was a boon because it furnished police and intelligence agencies with integrated, immediately actionable 'products', material that could be raced to squads ready to launch ambushes on MNLA hideouts: 'rapid local debriefing of the SEP' was vital, he said, a key means for revealing 'speedy tactical exploitation of their information about camps, supply routes, methods and [Communist Terrorist] supporters'.⁴²⁸

⁴²⁶ R.J.W. Craig, "A Short Account of the Malayan Emergency", cyclostyled booklet, September 1964, quoted in Comber, *Malaya's Secret Police, 1945--1960*, 83, emphasis in original.

⁴²⁷ TNA, KV4/408, J.P. Morton, "The Coordination of Intelligence in the Malayan Emergency," Malayan Emergency Lecture Material, September 1951--1952, quoted in Sinclair, "The Sharp End of the Intelligence Machine", 461; Maguire, "Interrogation and 'Psychological Intelligence'," 144.

⁴²⁸ Stewart, "Winning in Malaya: An Intelligence Success Story," 281.

Spatial control

During the Emergency in Malaya, colonial mass interrogation was not confined to dedicated facilities. The ‘twilight zone’ extended out into the population, and so the machine of intelligence production had to be capable of mobility and consist of detachable parts. One of the period’s most influential counterinsurgency warrior-scholars, Robert Thompson, was particularly interested in the role of human intelligence in establishing a force of spatial control in the countryside.

During the emergency Thompson worked in the British directorate of operations in Kuala Lumpur. Later he became Malaya’s Permanent Secretary of Defence before being appointed by Macmillan to head the British Advisory Mission to South Vietnam.⁴²⁹ He distilled this considerable experience in colonial rebellions into a guidebook, *Defeating Communist Insurgency*. In it he announced that rebellions were quelled quickest when ‘one single organization [was made] responsible for all security intelligence within the country ... the special branch of the police force’. There was a spatial dimension to this argument. The police intelligence agency should be a network-like entity, ‘reaching out into every corner of the country’, allowing the army—‘one of the main consumers of intelligence’—to

hook into it at any point where its units are stationed, thereby receiving the information on which to base operations and at the same time feeding into the organization the tactical intelligence which its units require.

Socio-political and other information was imagined as a circulating commodity that had to be tapped at the ‘contact points’ between guerrillas and their surrounding populations. To control space meant drawing up information in the countryside, pumping it to central processing units in provincial capitals. ‘To defeat’ guerrillas, Thompson thought, ‘requires a very delicate machine staffed by well-trained and highly experienced intelligence officers’.⁴³⁰

Such mechanistic imagery was a typical feature of counterinsurgency’s technical culture during this period. If fighting guerrillas meant ‘out-administering’ them, as another prominent figure believed, the ‘machinery of government’ had to purr. Power and knowledge had to be

⁴²⁹ Ian F.W. Beckett, "Robert Thompson and the British Advisory Mission to South Vietnam, 1961--1965," *Small Wars & Insurgencies* 8, no. 3 (1997): 41--41, <https://doi.org/10.1080/09592319708423184>.

⁴³⁰ Robert Thompson, *Defeating Communist Insurgency: The Lessons of Malaya and Vietnam* (New York: Frederick A. Praeger, 1966), 84--89.

cycled around colonial states, connecting local villages to centres of government as if by hydraulic action.⁴³¹ To this end, Thompson argued that another form of mass interrogation had been a vital ingredient in British success in Malaya: roving, field-based interrogation. Raising the ‘contact rate’ (the points at which counterinsurgents meet insurgents on operations) relied initially on building a ‘mass of information’, a resource that could be accumulated in large part by interrogating suspected or surrendered enemy personnel in the field, or extracting information from ‘ordinary members of the population’. In this case, the entire colonial national state was homologised as a machine space itself, with interrogation intelligence connecting its disparate contact points, channelling political energy and information in such a way that rebellious populations would be domesticated.

As in other liberal counterinsurgencies, Thompson recounted how tactical operations in Malaya were continuous with the cataloguing and management of data about the population in the capital.⁴³² Interrogation had to move out of centralised carceral sites such as the Holding Centre and into tactical firefights and rural society itself. In 1950, the colony received a new Director of Operations, the officer responsible for crushing the MNLA, Army General Harold Briggs. Almost immediately he initiated a major program of resettlement in the countryside. The ‘Briggs Plan’ forcibly relocated over half a million people into more than four hundred hastily constructed detention camps.⁴³³ Though often flimsily fortified, the ‘New Villages’ were miniature closed worlds: gated communities surrounded by wire fencing and subject to exquisite military surveillance—each a dramatic illustration of colonial ‘spatial control’.⁴³⁴ They were partly motivated by hopes of networking colonial society, triggering an ‘increasing flow of information’ from a closely observed population now isolated from guerrilla contact. Those suspected of subversion could be apprehended in the camps and drawn into the CSDIC for further interrogation by specialists.

⁴³¹ Fall, "The Theory and Practice of Insurgency and Counterinsurgency," 34. Comparing maps of Vietnam showing worryingly numerous blotches of ‘communist rebel activities’ and Viet Cong tax collection activities, Fall famously pronounced that ‘[w]hen a country is being subverted it is not being outfought; it is being out-administered. Subversion is literally administration with a minus sign in front’.

⁴³² Khalili, *Time in the Shadows*, 159.

⁴³³ Owens, *Economy of Force*, 176.

⁴³⁴ Karl Hack, "Everyone Lived in Fear: Malaya and the British Way of Counter-Insurgency," *Small Wars & Insurgencies* 23, no. 4--5 (2012), 679, <https://doi.org/10.1080/09592318.2012.709764>.

At the RAND symposium, veterans of Malaya (a venerable corps of British and Australian Army figures that included the esteemed Kitson) encouraged their peers to consider similarly population-centric applications for interrogation elsewhere. Its use had to be folded into the questioning of captured guerrillas and wider ‘search-and-sweep operations’. In Malaya government forces could enter rural settlements—often New Villages—and order their temporary shuttering and the public assembly of all inhabitants. There, each ‘social unit’ could be ceremoniously questioned, their personal details and ideological propensities registered in a powerful bureaucratic media: the census-cum-intelligence report.⁴³⁵ The systematic searching of houses and the overt interrogation of adults and even children would hopefully uncover seditious elements and intelligence or, in any case, may intimidate MNLAs operatives concealed nearby.

In this way intelligence officers performed ‘*in situ*’ mass interrogations of villagers in the countryside.⁴³⁶ John F. White, a Royal Australian Army colonel in attendance at the RAND symposium, recalled that on such missions his military special forces could exhaustively ‘screen’ settlements of thousands for revolutionaries, sympathisers, and information.⁴³⁷ Suspected Communist Terrorists would be apprehended, subjected to preliminary interrogations by patrols, and promptly handed up for further questioning by Special Branch officers stationed at local police stations. Regular Army patrols thus instigated the production of ‘accurate dossiers’ on guerrillas and their families both for immediate tactical purposes and for cycling new information into the broader national intelligence machine for other uses.⁴³⁸ New Village

⁴³⁵ Owens, *Economy of Force*, 176.

⁴³⁶ Karl Hack, "Detention, Deportation and Resettlement: British Counterinsurgency and Malaya's Rural Chinese, 1948--60," *The Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History* 43, no. 4 (2015), <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/03086534.2015.1083218>, 619.

⁴³⁷ Hosmer and Crane, *Counterinsurgency: A Symposium*, 95--96. In his ARPA-funded counterinsurgency research on the Malaya conflict for Rand Corporation, Robert Komer singled out for praise the tactic of using militarised colonial police to produce dossiers on guerrillas. The militarisation of police interrogation enabled a ‘flow of intelligence from the ethnic Chinese population’, through the ‘exploitation’ of guerrilla prisoners. Komer undertook this research following his failed tenure as director of MACV’s ‘pacification’ agency, the Civil Operations and Revolutionary Development Support programme. See Robert Komer, *The Malayan Emergency in Retrospect: Organization of a Successful Counterinsurgency Effort*. February 1972, R-9657-ARPA (Rand Corporation: Santa Monica, CA, 1972), 44--45, <https://www.rand.org/pubs/reports/R957.html>.

⁴³⁸ Walton, *Empire of Secrets*, epub e-book, chap. 5; Hack, "Everyone Lived in Fear," 684. Frank Kitson had supported these operations. However, at the RAND symposium he cautioned that prisoner interrogation intelligence during counterinsurgencies must be treated skeptically given its racially dubious origins. Before his work in Malaya he had helped suppress the Mau Mau rebellion in Kenya, where he also interrogated prisoners. He cautioned symposium attendants that intelligence sourced from colonial subjects there was generally a ‘mass of low-level data’, mostly unreliable. However, putting ‘all of them together can furnish the mosaic in which the patterns of enemy activities become discernible’, see Hosmer and Crane, *Counterinsurgency: A Symposium*, 127.

internees later reported strikingly similar experiences of screening. It began with military intelligence or Special Branch squads declaring a curfew and ordering inhabitants into settlements' *padang* (central public space). Hundreds of residents would be filed singly past the headlight glare of a jeep or van in which a hidden SEP or collaborator was concealed. This figure—often hooded and known as a 'ghost head', or *kuai tao* in Cantonese dialect—would identify those deserving further interrogation.⁴³⁹

Several years later, RAND meeting participants with experience in Malaya agreed that both forms of mass interrogation—static, focused on prisoners and roving, directed at the broader population—were now 'routine' techniques to be mastered by any serious counterinsurgent. Still, it was assumed that imperial subjects' partial experiences and crudeness of intellect necessitated that any initiative had to be especially 'systematic'.⁴⁴⁰ Before his work in Malaya, Kitson had interrogated suspected Mau Mau rebels as part of the extraordinarily violent 'Pipeline' system in Kenya—it involved a national 'rehabilitation' network of screenings, detentions, torture, and the extraction of political confessions.⁴⁴¹ Echoing Callwell's remark a century earlier, he claimed that even 'truth serum' was 'quite ineffectual when used on African natives'. He supposed the problem owed to their 'moral code being very different from the Judeo-Christian, [it] does not include the Western concept that truth is good and untruth is bad.'⁴⁴² However, even when their observations were offered with a more empirical slant, the symposium's counterinsurgents agreed upon the broader principle at work: in whatever form it took interrogations in 'asymmetric warfare' could not simply target a narrow set of individuals. They had to be volumetric, data driven, and expansive. A national machinery must be established across a colony capable of sweeping through masses of natives, re-domesticating rebellious elements.

⁴³⁹ Tang-Phee, Tan, "Like a Concentration Camp, *lah*: Chinese Grassroots Experience of the Emergency and New Villages in British Colonial Malaya," *Chinese Southern Diaspora Studies* 3 (2009), 225, http://ch1-old.anu.edu.au/publications/csds/csds2009/CSDS_2009_Tan.pdf.

⁴⁴⁰ Hosmer and Crane, *Counterinsurgency: A Symposium*, 87, 122.

⁴⁴¹ Caroline Elkins, "The Struggle for Mau Mau Rehabilitation in Late Colonial Kenya," *The International Journal of African Historical Studies* 33, no. 1 (2000): 25--57, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/220257>.

⁴⁴² Hosmer and Crane, *Counterinsurgency: A Symposium*, 133.

Algeria

Following the Second World War, French colonial forces also experimented with mass interrogation for the purposes of countering insurgencies. While that empire would falter, a raft of innovations in counterinsurgency warfare were nonetheless trialled and circulated by an emergent cadre of intellectually ambitious warrior experts. The army's conflict with the National Liberation Front (FLN) in Algeria was an especially crucial proving ground. There novel methods for conducting population-centric operations were also devised. As for the British in Malaya, mass interrogation was central and, once again, was utilised as an instrument for identifying the names and locations of insurgents' political organisation. That process seemed to require relentless searches and sweeping arrests, particularly in cities under tight control, as well as the extraction of information from arrestees at almost any cost, and before they entered into the criminal justice system proper.

Key elements of the French counterinsurgency in Algeria crystallised into a conceptual apparatus and a series of concrete tactics. They would significantly shape army practice during America's war in Vietnam and long after find a place in US military doctrine. The links between these mid-century French and US counterinsurgencies were discursive and technical, coming in the form of shared training techniques, indoctrination, and personal connection. In particular, during the 1960s, the prominent colonial warriors, Roger Trinquier and David Galula, were identified as exemplary commando tacticians by US Army planners.⁴⁴³

Trinquier at the Battle of Algiers

The first example of French neo-colonial mass interrogation concerns its use by one of the originators of counterinsurgency theory, Roger Trinquier. During the mid-1950s he emerged from his army's humiliation in Indochina with unusual esteem. As a major there he led a revered parachutist battalion, and it was there where he claimed to have realised that 'traditional' battles were a thing of the past. 'Modern warfare', he pronounced, was asymmetric warfare. Just as the British were learning in Malaya, in Indochina French armies seemed to be sucked into battles for control over the colonial 'populace', rather than 'a given terrain', as war had been classically

⁴⁴³ Khalili, *Time in the Shadows*, 44--64; Douglas Porch, "David Galula and the Revival of COIN in the US Military," in *The New Counter-Insurgency Era in Critical Perspective*, eds. David Martin Jones, Celeste Ward Gventer and M.L.R. Smith (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014), 173--197.

conceived.⁴⁴⁴ By extension, Trinquier believed that this experience proved that in modern wars enemies take a new form as well. They were not traditional armies, but ‘terrorists’, groupuscules within a worldwide communist plot. With even more ferocity than the British in Malaya, he sought the ‘complete destruction’ of the ‘clandestine organisations’ who were bidding to impose their noxious influence on gullible populations. The theory went that ‘revolutionary terror must be met with counterrevolutionary military terror’.⁴⁴⁵ But force had to be channelled by intelligence, and the exact lineaments of guerrilla organisations needed to be identified before they were eradicated.

Trinquier turned beliefs to works at his next campaign, in Algeria, where he battled the anti-colonialist FLN. His experiments there would involve integrating interrogation into a broader programme of population-centric warfare. At the Battle of Algiers, he deputised for General Jacques Massu, taking command of a large contingent of elite airborne soldiers. From January 1957, Massu assumed total authority over the city and invested the army with extraordinary powers.⁴⁴⁶ Trinquier thus found himself looking down upon a turbid zone of urban insecurity and inside the leadership corps of an army he thought of as ‘the forces of order’.⁴⁴⁷ In the space of unconventional warfare he saw a formidably modern enemy: not ‘just a few armed bands’ but ‘an organization installed within the population—an organization that constitutes the combat machine of the enemy.’⁴⁴⁸ To pull this machine apart and disable its components, the city was designated an ‘operational area’ and carved into discrete zones. The colonial commanders’ task was to survey and control these zones, with intelligence services called upon to ‘determine as accurately as possible’ their limits and to index their populations. This was a key step in cleansing them and putting the city back to order.⁴⁴⁹

To do this Massu included Trinquier in the crop of uncompromising colonels delegated to implementing a key phase of state-sanctioned political terror for Algiers. *Quadrillage* involved maintaining ‘contact’ with the urban population by slicing the city into a plane of grids,

⁴⁴⁴ Roger Trinquier, *Modern Warfare: A French View of Counterinsurgency* (Westport, CT: Praeger, 2006). First published 1964, 6--9.

⁴⁴⁵ Trinquier, *Modern Warfare*, 19--18; Marnia Lazreg, *Torture and the Twilight of Empire: From Algiers to Baghdad* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2008), 16.

⁴⁴⁶ Alistair Horne, *A Savage War of Peace: Algeria 1954--1962* (New York: New York Review of Books, 2006), epub e-book, chap. 9. Originally published 1977 by Macmillan.

⁴⁴⁷ Khalili, *Time in the Shadows*, 37.

⁴⁴⁸ Trinquier, *Modern Warfare*, 67.

⁴⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, 87.

neighbourhood-based structures of surveillance, and reporting posts. It was a spatial tactic ostensibly mirroring that of the cellular guerrilla organism to be exterminated.⁴⁵⁰ Each ‘square’ on the map represented a regimental command and was to be cordoned off, border crossers searched at checkpoint. The city’s arrondissements became ‘sectors’, each canton became a *quartier*, with further dissections of neighbourhood blocks on the map, and numbers painted on buildings’ frontages, so they could be indexed.⁴⁵¹ For Trinquier, this war by ‘gridding’ went hand in hand with mass interrogation, much of it brutally performed.⁴⁵² After all, Massu’s zone and search system was premised not only on taking control of social space but also political information. To unearth clues about each sectors’ inhabitants, the paras set up a citywide system of informers and relieved the Sûreté of their authority, ransacking police outposts for files and dossiers. These would aid in transforming *quadrillage* from an exercise in geography to a technology of state suppression.⁴⁵³

In 1958, Trinquier’s paras studied police dossiers when he led them in crushing the Casbah. There he brought police intelligence and the grid system together as ingredients of a key weapon of ‘direct action’ for any counterrevolutionary commander: raiding.⁴⁵⁴ He was made head of the *Dispositif de Protection Urbaine*, the unit of 10 000 paratroopers put in charge of drawing up lists of suspects and using them to carry out zone sweeps.⁴⁵⁵ Any possible FLN subversives were to be first catalogued, their links to the population surrounding them noted and diagrammed. With those materials in hand, sectors would be subjected to their own ‘system of minute house-to-house searches’ during night-time curfews, with paras scouring neighbourhoods for sources to interrogate, arrest, and remove to facilities for further interrogation.⁴⁵⁶ Inside a zone of such intense control, preliminary questioning could be undertaken *in situ*, as in Malaya. Trinquier advocated the mechanical processing of the population in this way, with small grains of truth—informational and corporeal—piling up and swept away:

⁴⁵⁰ Lazreg, *Torture and the Twilight of Empire*, 16.

⁴⁵¹ Horne, *A Savage War of Peace*, epub e-book, chap. 9; Trinquier, *Modern Warfare*, 72.

⁴⁵² Khalili uses the term directly in her treatment of Trinquier’s use of *quadrillage* in Algiers, see *Time in the Shadows*, 35.

⁴⁵³ Horne, *A Savage War of Peace*, epub e-book, chap. 9.

⁴⁵⁴ Trinquier, *Modern Warfare*, 43--46.

⁴⁵⁵ CIA, "National Intelligence Survey, Algeria: Section 54 - Public Order and Safety," National Intelligence Survey 45, June 1960, document number 0000649434, released September 2001, https://www.cia.gov/library/readingroom/docs/DOC_0000649434.pdf, 47.

⁴⁵⁶ Horne, *A Savage War of Peace*, epub e-book, chap. 9; Khalili, *Time in the Shadows*, 37.

We cannot wait ... until [a civilian] intelligence network has been set up before obtaining from the population the information we need.

Operations must begin as soon as the army has taken up its position.

The inhabitants are first mustered entirely, by city district. They are quickly interrogated, individually and in secret, in a series of previously arranged small rooms. Any noncommissioned officer of the unit can ask them simple questions, the most frequent of which will be, 'Who in your district collects the organization's funds?'

As time goes on, we increase the number of interrogation teams. Certain inhabitants, assured that their identities will not be disclosed, will readily give the information requested. After verifying this data, we proceed to the arrest of the individuals who have been singled out. In this manner, we can capture the first-echelon elements of the enemy organization.⁴⁵⁷

In advocating the sweeping of entire communities, and the snowballing of banks of socio-political information, the resemblance to the New Village actions in Malaya is clear. However, in this case, more details about the severity of the process are available. Trinquier did not mince his words. These were highly visible and hostile operations and, when carried out in an industrial tempo, were the kind of 'harsh actions' that would confront a 'sensitive public' looking on: 'In the process of extirpating the terrorist organization from their midst, the people will be manhandled, lined up, interrogated, searched.'⁴⁵⁸

Those were just the interrogations conducted in plain view. During the Battle of Algiers, thousands of arrestees were taken for further interrogation at a network of *Centres de tri et de transit* (Triage and Transit Centres, CTTs). Within these sites of prolonged, static mass interrogation, torture was institutionalised and endemic. In 1959, when a visiting ICRC committee was finally permitted access to some of the interrogation centres (many remained secret), its members discovered that 'practically all prisoners interviewed in private complained of having been tortured'.⁴⁵⁹ Electrocuting, drowning, and the pillory were common tactics.⁴⁶⁰ For Trinquier, the equation was simple:

⁴⁵⁷ Trinquier, *Modern Warfare*, 45.

⁴⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, 48.

⁴⁵⁹ CIA, "National Intelligence Survey, Algeria: Section 54 - Public Order and Safety," 27.

⁴⁶⁰ Horne, *A Savage War of Peace*, epub e-book, chap. 9.

If the suspect makes no difficulty about giving the information required, the interrogation will be over quickly, otherwise specialists must use all means available to drag his secret out of him. Like a soldier he must then face suffering and perhaps even death which he has so far avoided.⁴⁶¹

But an apparatus of cultural distancing worked to ensure that, while the paras felt they had the right to wound and kill an FLN fighter as if they operated ‘like a [uniformed enemy] soldier’, the laws of war seemingly did not intrude into the interrogation room. Another para colonel confessed that, as the war ground on, the army began to regard a prisoner as ‘no longer an Arab peasant’ but simply ‘a source of intelligence’.⁴⁶² Paul Aussaresses was Massu and Trinquier’s deputy for intelligence and their mobile executioner. He was even more candid than Trinquier, recollecting unapologetically in 2006 that if regiments captured suspects who were deemed to possess information relevant beyond their territorial sector

they would send the prisoner to me and I would question him again ... On very heavy days I would get all those the regiments could not handle or didn’t have time to question.

We began the interrogations as quickly as the suspects were brought in ... just as for all the regiments that were responsible for other sectors, torture was used as a matter of course if the prisoner refused to talk, which was a common occurrence. The information we obtained sometimes lead us to take another trip ourselves, for instance to find an arms or explosives cache...

Once a prisoner had talked or appeared to have nothing more to say, the worst we could do to him was to set him free on the spot ... Once outside, the man was practically guaranteed to have his throat slit by the FLN before dawn.

Most of the time my men traveled about twenty kilometers outside Algiers to some “remote location” where the suspects were shot with submachine guns and then buried...

At the end of each night I wrote down the events that had taken place in a top-secret notebook called the “manifold,” which made four copies at once.⁴⁶³

⁴⁶¹ Ibid.

⁴⁶² Ibid.

⁴⁶³ Paul Aussaresses, *The Battle of the Casbah: Terrorism and Counterterrorism in Algeria 1955--1957* (New York: Enigma, 2006), 122.

In the urban machine space of colonial mass interrogation, deaths and reports were both products to be funnelled to managers for use in further direction. The contents of Aussaresses' manifold were cribbed for reports for transmission back to Massu and Trinquier. Interrogation intelligence was also sent daily to the army command centre where another colonel, Yves Godard, oversaw production of a citywide index system (the counterinsurgency '*fichier*'), what he called his *organigramme*. As figure 5.1 shows, it was a tool for visualising the political crisis. As Horne writes, it was a complex spatial illustration of the FLN political apparatus in Algiers: with more arrests, the diagram 'began to take shape on a large blackboard, a kind of skeleton pyramid in which, as each piece of information came from the interrogation centres, another name (and not always necessarily the right name) would be entered'.⁴⁶⁴ The underlying strategy involved 'decapitating' the FLN organisation.⁴⁶⁵ Trinquier suggested that the production of the index and the *organigramme* were some of counterinsurgency's key phases. After bombings, assassinations, general strikes, and fomented unrest, the anti-colonialists' political structure was finally 'revealed to us through numerous interrogations'.⁴⁶⁶ In the process, however, during the Battle of Algiers, between thirty to forty per cent of the entire male population of the Casbah was arrested, and thousands disappeared.⁴⁶⁷

Under the leadership of Trinquier and his fellow colonels, counterinsurgency interrogation was again massed, systematised, developed into a machine for graphing space and society. It was also almost unparalleled in its brutality. Following the war, Massu posed rhetorically, 'Was there really torture? ... I can only reply in the affirmative, although it was never either institutionalised or codified. ... I am not frightened of the word.'⁴⁶⁸ But Massu's confidence in evading the charge of war crimes was borne in part by his own artifice. During the Battle of Algiers, violent interrogations were made possible by the suspension of the rule of law and the rolling out of extraordinary powers for senior officials and army commanders.⁴⁶⁹ For the colonial government, the war was in fact not a war, but a crisis of 'public order'. As Trinquier

⁴⁶⁴ Horne, *A Savage War of Peace*, epub e-book, chap. 9.

⁴⁶⁵ Jim House and Neil MacMaster, *Paris 1961: Algerians, State Terror, and Memory* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), 56.

⁴⁶⁶ Trinquier, *Modern Warfare*, 12.

⁴⁶⁷ Horne, *A Savage War of Peace*, epub e-book, chap. 9.

⁴⁶⁸ Jacques Massu quoted in Horne, *A Savage War of Peace*, epub e-book, chap. 9.

⁴⁶⁹ The French government only acknowledged that it was legally at war in Algeria in 1999, see Neil MacMaster, "Torture: From Algiers to Abu Ghraib," *Race & Class* 46, no. 2 (2004): 6, <https://doi.org/10.1177/0306396804047722>.

later re-affirmed, it was not waged by enemy soldiers, but instigated by ‘bandits’, rebels ‘taken captive while in possession of weapons’.⁴⁷⁰ Consequently, the laws of war were not to be extended to interrogatees, even when they were confined to military-style detention facilities.

⁴⁷⁰ Luis Lema, "Torture in Algeria: The Report That Was to Change Everything," *Le Temps*, 19 August 2005, <https://www.icrc.org/en/doc/resources/documents/article/other/algeria-history-190805.htm>.

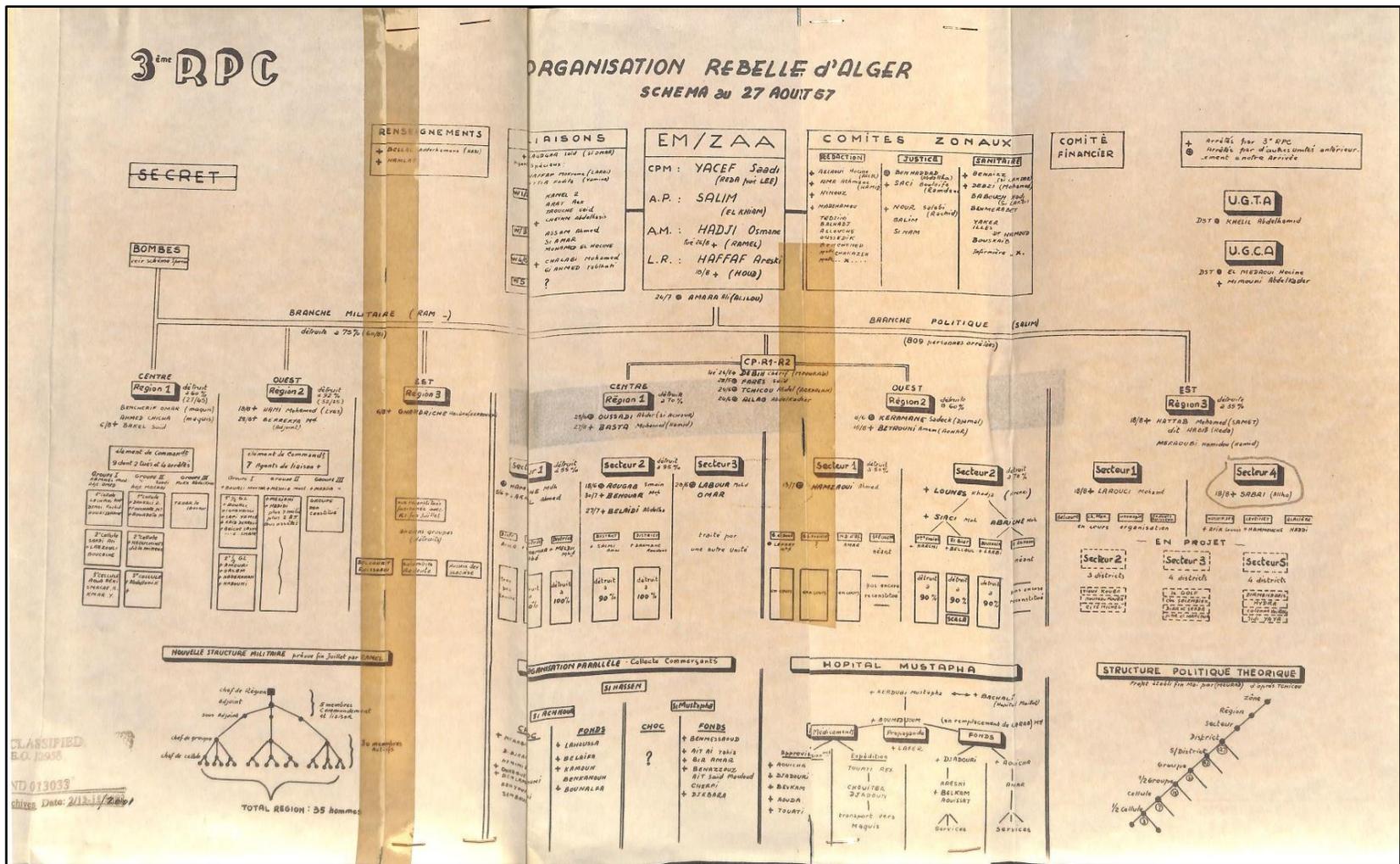


Figure 5.1 Colonel Yves Godard's August 1957 *organigramme*. This version depicts the French estimation of the FLN's organisational structure in Algiers.⁴⁷¹

⁴⁷¹ Report, "Contre-Terrorisme Alger, Juillet - Août 1957," Folder: Algeria and France - Documents and Dossiers on Terrorism and Counterterrorism, Box 3, Yves Jean Antoine Noël Godard papers, Hoover Institution Archives.

As in Malaya, the Algiers interrogation facility apparatus was arranged in a multi-tiered system. After initial 'triage' at the site of arrest, 'suspects' would be taken to one of at least twenty army CTTs in the region. In practice, this included almost every adult male discovered on zone sweeps.⁴⁷² Those could absorb up to 20 000 people a day and counted on their staff teams of specially trained interrogators. If a subject was deemed particularly valuable or otherwise not to be released, they were issued to confinement quarters in *Centres Militaires d'Internés* to await military tribunal while no charge or arrest was officially registered. In those sites, subjects could be held for months for interrogation, and almost certainly tortured again. Finally, they could be channelled to one of a series of concentration camps euphemistically named *Centres d'hébergement* ('sheltering centres') that from the mid-1950s were mushrooming across the city. This multi-staged network meant that torture would be 'inflicted at several points during the itinerary of a suspect', from triage to imprisonment.⁴⁷³ As in most mass interrogation systems, particularly those supporting counterinsurgency, across the Algiers apparatus 'speed was of the essence: as soon as the identity and location of FLN activists were uncovered by intelligence-gathering centres commandos would be sent out to make arrests'.⁴⁷⁴ From across this complex apparatus, interrogation intelligence spiralled out and into *Centres de renseignement ed d'action* where it underwent further integration and storage, ready to be utilised for index production and for updating the central *organigramme*.⁴⁷⁵

To any neutral observer, those were demonstrably military facilities, not merely police posts. They were given formalised 'psychological and intelligence' functions, bore the distinct technical and doctrinal characteristics of wartime detention and intelligence, and their colonial army managers were given the powers to hold detainees under 'house arrest' for up to a month incommunicado. In 1957, the General Secretary of the Algiers police resigned upon discovering that at least 3 000 of the 24 000 interrogatees he had holding orders for had disappeared out of the system without explanation.⁴⁷⁶ Yet, General Salan, the commander-in-chief in Algeria, decreed in March 1958 that:

⁴⁷² CIA, "National Intelligence Survey, Algeria: Section 54 - Public Order and Safety," 47.

⁴⁷³ Lazreg, *Torture and the Twilight of Empire*, 47.

⁴⁷⁴ House and MacMaster, *Paris 1961: Algerians, State Terror, and Memory*, 56--57; Lazreg, *Torture and the Twilight of Empire*, 46--47.

⁴⁷⁵ Lazreg, *Torture and the Twilight of Empire*, 46.

⁴⁷⁶ House and MacMaster, *Paris 1961*, 56.

it is understood that the military internees should not be considered prisoners of war. The Geneva Conventions do not apply to them and their being handed over to an appropriate civil body will be continued and the search for intelligence information through their interrogation still allowed.⁴⁷⁷

Here, as Laleh Khalili's argues, we find one of the salient features of asymmetric warfare: the instrumentalisation of prisoners' legal and administrative categorisation.⁴⁷⁸ In counterinsurgencies, state agencies are often invested with the arbitrary power to deem the law suspended on behalf of a colonial state (hence Salan's sanguinity, 'it is understood'). In this case that power was not utilised to increase imprisonment as an end in itself. The suspension of the laws of war were motivated by the need to accumulate the human inputs needed to extend and deepen the process of information production. *Quadrillage* fundamentally required mass interrogation if it was to spatialise and liquidate political enemies 'in the population'. Later, Trinquier was forceful on this point. Re-capturing the populace demanded *relentless action* and, given the political nature of its battles, 'modern warfare' required that interrogation subjects be considered *primarily* as vessels of information. When a terrorist is interrogated

what the forces of order who have arrested him are seeking is not to punish a crime, for which he is otherwise not personally responsible, but, as in any war, the destruction of the enemy army or its surrender. Therefore he is not asked details about himself or about attacks that he may or may not have committed and that are not of immediate interest, but rather for precise information about his organization ... No lawyer is present for such an interrogation. If the prisoner gives the information requested, the examination is quickly terminated; if not, specialists must force his secret from him.⁴⁷⁹

As noted in chapter 3, in modern war, the 'in-between zone'—the topological space whose frontiers begin on arrest and end before legal categorisation—is fertile ground upon which mass

⁴⁷⁷ "Appendix 3: Directive of 19 March 1958 by General Salan," included in Françoise Perret and François Bugnion, "Between Insurgents and Government: The International Committee of the Red Cross's Action in the Algerian War," *International Review of the Red Cross* 93, no. 883 (2011): 707--742, <https://doi.org/10.1017/S1816383112000227>.

⁴⁷⁸ Khalili, *Time in the Shadows*, 62--68; see also Gregory, "Black Flag: Guantánamo Bay and the Space of Exception," 405--427.

⁴⁷⁹ Trinquier, *Modern Warfare*, 19.

interrogation may germinate and grow. Trinquier understood this point exactly and urged fellow counterinsurgents to consider detainees not as prisoner subjects, but as objects ready-to-hand, a standing reserve to be put to use, inputs in a machine. They were not to be categorised as enemy soldiers, or even ‘ordinary criminals’, but something more like a human commodity—‘mustered inhabitants’—containers of perishable information in need of rapid, clinical processing by expert specialists.⁴⁸⁰

Galula on patrol

Another key theorist of counterinsurgency who innovated mass interrogation in Algeria was Tunisian-born David Galula. After serving with de Gaulle’s French army during the Second World War, he was sent to China as a military attaché, where he was captured by Communist forces. In 1947 he spent a week in a rural village under the custody of the People’s Liberation Army, later declaring that this vivid experience sparked his preoccupation with Maoist revolutionary warfare.⁴⁸¹ With the French calamity at Dien Bien Phu in 1954, he committed himself to explaining insurgencies more systematically by deconstructing the underlying dynamics that led guerrillas to pursue protracted, population-centric tactics.⁴⁸² If Maoist revolutionaries and other anti-colonial forces could operate according to a theoretical programme of operations, then surely, Galula reasoned, counterinsurgency could be made similarly axiomatic. Through the 1950s he laid out his programme in a series of reports for the French military-intellectual class. Today we have access to his theories principally through two major translated works, the long-classified RAND study, *Pacification in Algeria: 1956-1958*, and *Counterinsurgency Warfare*.

By offering an architectonic framework for prosecuting modern small wars (*Counterinsurgency Warfare* is presented as a proceduralised manual, while *Pacification* concludes with Galula’s ‘essential laws’ for waging them), these two texts have done more than almost any other to translate the motley variety of practices and ambitions of late-colonial wars into the highly mobile and durable idea of ‘counterinsurgency’. Central to Galula’s package of lessons is the notion that irregular warfare occurs within a closed-off national domestic space.

⁴⁸⁰ Trinquier, *Modern Warfare*, 45.

⁴⁸¹ Galula, *Counterinsurgency Warfare*, 34--36.

⁴⁸² Ann Marlowe, *David Galula: His Life and Intellectual Context* (Carlisle, PA: Strategic Studies Institute, US Army War College, 2010), 27--31. <https://ssi.armywarcollege.edu/david-galula-his-life-and-intellectual-context/>.

Commanders must picture the war as an opportunity for experimental interventions in and around populated settlements. The development of new techniques for applying pressure and persuasion on rural populations to encourage them to give up the insurgents that lurked within them required an empirical mindset.

Galula agreed with Mao that guerrillas, if they were to succeed, had to mimic the behaviour of a 'fluid' or a 'gas'. In this way they could circumvent counterinsurgents who, because of their modern equipment and command hierarchies, necessarily operated across the domestic space in much more mechanical, routinised fashion. Nonetheless, he believed the latter could target a key strategic resource because

if the insurgent is fluid, the population is not. By concentrating his efforts on the population, the counterinsurgent minimizes his rigidity and makes full use of his assets. His administrative capabilities, his economic resources, his information and propaganda media, his military superiority due to heavy weapons and large units, all of which are cumbersome and relatively useless against the elusive insurgent, recover their full value when applied to the task of obtaining the support of the static population. What does it matter if the counterinsurgent is unable on the whole to run as fast as the insurgent? What counts is the fact that the insurgent cannot dislodge a better-armed detachment of counterinsurgents from a village, or cannot harass it enough to make the counterinsurgent unable to devote most of his energy to the population.⁴⁸³

Fluidity, assets, economic resources, value, making use of energy. In these terms Galula not only displaced the strategic problem of insurgency from politics to population, he reinforced an even more basic axiom: population was the core problem of asymmetric warfare, and the zone of operations was a machinic space to be manipulated and put to efficient order.

Galula conceived of units of traditional, non-European collective life as closed socio-political systems that could become lodged with either pernicious or civilised political forces. The challenge for counterinsurgents was to calculate how their operations are to be 'spread in space', physically and politically, with their strategies built around 'the principle of economy of forces'.⁴⁸⁴ In simple terms this meant that soldiers, information, and resources must be circulated

⁴⁸³ Galula, *Counterinsurgency Warfare*, 58; see also A.A. Cohen, *Galula: The Life and Writings of the French Officer who Defined the Art of Counterinsurgency* (Santa Barbara, CA: Praeger, 2012), 81--83.

⁴⁸⁴ Galula, *Counterinsurgency Warfare*, xii.

to the zones where insurgents still counted on the sympathy of the population—he advocated mapping the space of revolutionary war, marking in red areas where insurgents were in control, in pink where their activities were gestating, and white areas where ‘all seems quiet’. But those calculations could only be made on the back of analytical evidence that recorded and spatialised inhabitants’ political loyalties.⁴⁸⁵

In Galula’s scheme then, the space of insurgency was a socio-political one that had to be occupied by the government apparatus. In his terms, ‘the basic mechanism of counterinsurgency warfare’ was a ‘political machine’, one constructed ‘from the population upward’ and capable of knowing it in detail.⁴⁸⁶ That machine therefore needed fuel in the form of information: ‘when an organization is set up to collect intelligence, intelligence is bound to flow in,’ he believed, ‘the only problem is how to prime the pump and hasten the flow’.⁴⁸⁷ For this reason, Khalili writes, compared to Trinquier, who advocated the liquidation of ‘exogenous (read, communist) causes of insurgency’ by ‘whatever means necessary’, the programmatic writings Galula produced in this period revealed a greater sensitivity to ‘image and representation’ within the domestic colonial space.⁴⁸⁸ Victory would redound to the counterinsurgent who could win the population over to the forces of order by accumulating knowledge about them and tailoring an appropriate combination of violent deterrence, patronage, and canny persuasion. The weaponisation of state bureaucracy was key—‘a mimeograph machine may turn out to be more useful than a machine gun’, he advised—and much has been made of Galula’s belief that control of the population began ‘obviously with a thorough census’, to be followed by the conversion of other mundane governmental encounters into opportunities for intelligence collection.⁴⁸⁹ However, much less analysed has been his belief that once this kind of knowledge has been collected, interrogation would form part of a more violent phase in the re-establishment of control over the a population.

In 1956, Galula volunteered to join the army in the war in Algeria and was posted to Kabylia. There he was given command over a battalion of colonial soldiers operating expansively across the north of the region. His two years’ service there confirmed that it was unrealistic to expect a counterinsurgency force to maintain a permanent presence in every

⁴⁸⁵ Ibid., 49.

⁴⁸⁶ Ibid., 95.

⁴⁸⁷ Ibid., 84.

⁴⁸⁸ Khalili, *Time in the Shadows*, 37; see also Cohen, *Galula: The Life and Writings*, 142--145.

⁴⁸⁹ Galula, *Counterinsurgency Warfare*, 66, 82.

settlement. Rather, problem populations had to be identified through administrative means and, once identified, ‘encircled’ and rapidly ‘purged’ of guerrillas. To kickstart this process however, he believed that the initiating ‘intelligence has to come from the population’.⁴⁹⁰ The key grains of truth in a counterinsurgency come in the form of names of suspects, garnered from the populace and conveyed to battalion leaders.

In Kabylia, he found that his ‘main source of operational intelligence’ was captured *fellagha* militants and the judicious itemisation of their fragmentary statements.⁴⁹¹ Once a counterinsurgency commander had accumulated enough knowledge of the inhabitants within the rural compartment he was charged with suppressing, Galula advocated transitioning operations into a new and more aggressive phase of ‘police operations’. Subtle bureaucratic encounters would give way to more forceful techniques for compiling intelligence in order to disassemble insurgents’ local political organisation. Galula later told participants at the RAND symposium that once his battalion had encircled and garrisoned a population, *rattonade* was ‘his favourite and most successful technique’. It involved the simultaneous arrest of ‘several citizens for minor infractions’ and keeping them ‘locked up without further punishment or trial’.⁴⁹² Isolated in separate cells and subjected to daily interrogations, these initial subjects would be pressured to implicate other inhabitants and thereby trigger a gradually cascading programme of village purging. Any names of possible FLN members were to be circulated into new arrest lists, used to supply fresh sources in the next cycle of interrogations.⁴⁹³

In this way Galula’s approach to mass interrogation mixed old-fashioned violence with a facility for innovation. Expert techniques of psychological interrogation were to be taken up by ‘professional’ interrogators in order to gather the names of suspects efficiently.⁴⁹⁴ This discovery was borne of trial and error. Initially prisoners were questioned at the point of capture by colonial soldiers who utilised ‘crude techniques’. The resulting intelligence was poor and elicited at lethal cost to prisoners. In 1957, Galula reported, the interrogation system in Kabylia was thus vastly retooled. A new set of procedures and technologies were introduced so that prisoners could be helicoptered to zone headquarters for interrogation by specially trained intelligence

⁴⁹⁰ Galula, *Counterinsurgency Warfare*, 50.

⁴⁹¹ Galula, *Pacification in Algeria, 1956--1958*, 183.

⁴⁹² Hosmer and Crane, *Counterinsurgency: A Symposium*, 98.

⁴⁹³ *Ibid.*

⁴⁹⁴ Galula, *Counterinsurgency Warfare*, 87--88.

officers. (He would later advocate that a similar system of airborne transport and interrogation be set up by US forces in Vietnam.) It meant that the interrogation process and administration of the special camps where it was carried out required exacting methods and a new list of counterinsurgency ‘professions’.⁴⁹⁵

The speedy interrogation of ‘suspects’ was one of those professions. Galula had learned that it was simply ‘dangerous and inefficient’ to leave the job of interrogating villagers to amateurs. It had to be undertaken by a dedicated cadre of ‘professionals’ in a concealed ‘organization that must in no way be confused with the counterinsurgent personnel working to win the support of the population’.⁴⁹⁶ Rather than the premature breaking of bodies, during such hidden processes Galula advocated the calculated application of psychological intimidation and pressure in an environment of detailed information recording. He claimed to have learned this after an operation in Tizi Ouzou. He described the interrogation process he set up in the village after it was encircled during the night and its houses raided by his troops:

One by one, suspects were brought to the gathering place, properly tied, and laid on their stomach. From the looks on their faces when they saw each other, I was certain I had made a good catch...

Not trusting the skills or patience of his officers, Galula took charge of interrogating the group himself in the effort to gather the names of local FLN adherents. He set about applying a range of measures for increasing pressure on the prisoners but, after several days of intimidation and a water diet, he was still met with frustrating silence. A breakthrough occurred, however, when his men began to lock prisoners in a bakery oven and threaten to ignite it. Soon, ‘I got my first confession’, an initial bit of truth for taking control of Tizi Ouzou.⁴⁹⁷ Galula continued using sweeping interrogation in another operation, during a hunt for *fallaghas* near Tala Ilane. Here he applied the ‘oven treatment’ on inhabitants also, and claimed that it, when combined with aerial photography and a rough census, yielded an apparently limpid ‘picture’ of the FLN organisation in the territory in only two weeks.⁴⁹⁸

⁴⁹⁵ Galula, *Pacification in Algeria, 1956--1958*, 183.

⁴⁹⁶ Galula, *Counterinsurgency Warfare*, 87.

⁴⁹⁷ Galula, *Pacification in Algeria, 1956--1958*, 118.

⁴⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, 129--130.

In ordering brutal interrogations and killings, Galula confessed that he ‘felt no more guilty than the pilot who bombs a town knowing the existence of, but not seeing, the women and children below’.⁴⁹⁹ As with Trinquier, for Galula the bounds of brutality during a counterinsurgency were obviously ill-defined at best. In order to match the chaotic tactics of insurgents, a counterinsurgent had perforce to engage in terrifying ‘police work’. His concerns were not just to weaponise bureaucracy, but with the ‘economical’ calibration of terror across the space of asymmetric warfare. Mobile means for delivering pressure against the population had to be established and applied ‘within decent limits’, or hidden, so as not to cause ‘irreparable damage’ to the more visible work of pacification.

American performances

By the middle decades of the twentieth century, counterinsurgency had cohered into a recognisable discipline of neo-colonial warfare. For its British and French experts, it represented a suite of calculative and suppressive techniques for prevailing in ‘asymmetrical wars’. However, the leading lights of counterinsurgency were not only European military officers. Their ideas travelled. In the US, the principles of subversive counterinsurgency warfare were taken up and extended most enthusiastically by Edward Lansdale. He too advocated the use of mass interrogation in order to accumulate the extensive information banks required to prosecute a population-centric war. Most notably, he had tried it in his rehearsals of calculated terror in the Philippines’ countryside. As in Malaya and Algeria, Hukbahalap rebels’ bodies and minds were recast as reservoirs of intelligence, objects for examination by specialists in re-establishing neo-imperial security. In addition to the example of Lansdale’s service, his participation at the RAND-ARPA symposium confirm that by the early-1960s established instruments from the European colonial warfare tradition were beginning to be added to the American counterinsurgency toolbox. As the American ground war in Vietnam was poised to escalate, its experts adapted European colonial mass interrogation principles for winning territory in the twilight zone.⁵⁰⁰

⁴⁹⁹ Ibid., 119.

⁵⁰⁰ While in this section I focus on Lansdale’s mid-century actions in southeast Asia, there is a much longer history of US military interrogation and policing in the Philippines, of course. Responding to a ‘critical lack of field

Crediting accounts

Though dominated by the leading lights of European anti-guerrilla warfare, the RAND-ARPA symposium guestlist did extend to an American expert, Edward Lansdale. In 1950 he arrived at the Joint US Military Advisory Group in Manila as a fêted USAF intelligence officer, now on loan to the CIA. His remit was to guide senior figures in the Filipino government in the suppression of the Hukbalahap guerrilla movement. Lansdale believed that whatever the political exigencies they confronted counterinsurgents prevailed when they catalogued ‘thorough information about conditions’ on the ground.⁵⁰¹

Lansdale’s later reconstructions of his service in the Philippines laid down some of the conceptual precepts that would mediate US mass interrogation in South Vietnam. An erstwhile advertising agent, his theory of counterinsurgency involved, as Jonathan Nashel argues, fusing the communicative tactics of psychological warfare with ‘notions of economic prosperity and power’ and cost effectiveness. He favoured high impact, low cost methods for persuading rural inhabitants to renounce any support for the Huk rebels. For example, his ‘eye of God’ propaganda technique involved entering villages during the night and painting ‘malevolent eyes’ on the walls facing ‘suspects’ houses. At the RAND symposium, attendees agreed that, if it worked, it was a particularly instructive example of counterinsurgency ‘on the cheap’.⁵⁰² Similar to Galula, Lansdale believed that that insurrections needed to be put down by mustering an economy of forces against pernicious elements in the population. His writings frequently drew on pecuniary metaphors to illustrate the problem of maximising the efficient accumulation of information. In the US and Philippines military intelligence offices in Manila, he discovered a state archive of prodigious reports, a ‘treasury’ of ‘current facts’ about ‘the people and the land’. The stockpile of population data, governmental lists, and maps was so detailed that Lansdale believed it would permit a kind of ‘numerical accounting’ of the rural population, providing a

intelligence’ on colonial patrols, at the turn of the twentieth century US Army forces took a free-wheeling and brutal approach to the interrogation of prisoners and rebels while on patrol there, most notoriously through widespread use of the ‘water cure’ to educe ‘confessions’. See Alfred W. McCoy, *Policing America’s Empire: The United States, the Philippines, and the Rise of the Surveillance State* (University of Wisconsin Press: Madison, 2009), especially 132--134.

⁵⁰¹ Edward Geary Lansdale, *In the Midst of Wars: An American’s Mission to Southeast Asia* (Fordham University Press, New York, 1991 [1972]), 5.

⁵⁰² Jonathan Nashel, *Edward Lansdale’s Cold War* (Amherst, MA: University of Massachusetts Press, 2005), 41.

mass of information that could facilitate further calculations of the enemy's composition and movements.⁵⁰³

One means of adding to the existing information in his accounts would be mobile interrogations in problematic villages. Later, he said that while on patrol across the rural Philippines, he found each inhabitant was 'a gold mine if the interviewer was a good miner and knew how to go after such things'.⁵⁰⁴ But this principle was not always obvious to ground forces and sometimes needed to be demonstrated in dramatic terms. Reportedly, on one patrol, Lansdale witnessed government soldiers indiscriminately kill and behead a prisoner. To their shock, he picked up the head and submitted it to a spate of histrionic questioning about the Huks' organisation, slapping and berating it. When the soldiers appealed—'Colonel, Colonel, it is dead. It cannot talk to you'—Lansdale threw it to the ground and concluded his lesson: 'No, you stupid son of a bitch, of course, it can't ... But it could have, if you hadn't been so fucking stupid as to sever the head from the body.'⁵⁰⁵

Lansdale's ruthless concern to 'mine' informational 'gold' from enemies' heads and to circulate it back to his treasury was not limited to such visceral improvisations on patrol. He also believed that, during counterinsurgencies, mass interrogation needed to be conducted in an incremental and infrastructural setting, supportive of assassination and propaganda plans at a more systemic level. With his mission in Manila largely deemed a success, Lansdale was rewarded with a transfer to Vietnam and instructed to replicate his anti-Huks campaign there.

⁵⁰³ Lansdale, *In the Midst of Wars*, 5. Lansdale described the repositories he found as an 'impressive amount of data'. His enthusiasm for lists, data, and stacks of seemingly unfiltered information was symptomatic of a broader American empirical imperial culture. If, as McCoy argues, European colonial powers 'prized erudition'—a mastery of language, deep bodies of cultural knowledge—for 'manipulation from within', modern American imperial subjects in Asia disclosed an insatiable appetite for contemporary, raw data for intervening in fluid situations 'from without'. This included cadastral maps, censuses, reductively compact handbooks, and police surveillance databanks: all superficial, technical, and pragmatic gridworks of knowledge. This imperial disposition found its way to the counter-communist mission in Vietnam. An empirical logic also pervaded military intelligence operations there, encouraging the mechanical accumulation of pointillist, morselised, data reports and the elaboration of sophisticated bureaucratic platforms by which these paper edifices could be manipulated and transformed into strategic insight. See McCoy, *Policing America's Empire*, 44, and Oliver Belcher, "Sensing, Territory, Population: Computation, Embodied Sensors, and Hamlet Control in the Vietnam War," *Security Dialogue* 50, no. 5 (2019), 416--436, <https://doi.org/10.1177/0967010619862447>.

⁵⁰⁴ Edward Lansdale, U.S. Air Force Academy Oral History Interview by Kenneth Alnwick, 25 April 1971, Maxwell Air Force Base, Alabama, quoted in Nashel, *Edward Lansdale's Cold War*, 41.

⁵⁰⁵ Denis Warner, *Certain Victory: How Hanoi Won the War* (Kansas City, Mo.: Sheed Andrews & McMeel, 1978), 103--4.

With the US ‘advisory’ mission struggling to clarify its objectives and mechanisms for measuring progress, he again referred to the possibilities offered by interrogation. This time he imagined its scale dramatically enlarged; its function more strategic. In a July 1961 memorandum to Robert McNamara, he suggested ‘a way of getting a sharper picture of how we’re doing in Vietnam.’⁵⁰⁶ It was a list of questions that related to a series of ‘x-factors’, his term for the aspects of strategic knowledge that had remained obstinately out of the reach of planners at the American ‘advisory mission’ in Saigon. Some of these many questions—the memo listed more than two hundred—were to be directed to civil officials and the Republic of Vietnam government’s (GVN) own soldiers. Most, however, concerned the datapoints that had to be gathered by those out ‘in’ the insurgency: the questions to be asked of villagers, civilians, and captured prisoners; their detailed knowledge of territory and enemy locations, the structure of village life and local government, rules about property and land, and civilians’ attitudes to the National Liberation Front (NLF, or ‘Viet Cong’). What was happening to NLF fighters upon capture, he asked? Were they being ‘questioned promptly’ and submitted to lengthier interrogations? Or were they being wastefully ‘liquidated on the spot?’, their asset value depreciating to zero on the balance sheet.

Solving these mysteries, Lansdale maintained, would be ‘vital to [gaining] true measurements’, of seeing a sharper picture in Vietnam. Unlike the grotesque Philippines incident, in Vietnam they could be answered by expert administrators. A ‘dedicated staff’ should direct an interrogation-intelligence infrastructure at MACV, he advised. As Galula also favoured, Lansdale suggested that helicopters should be used to transport rapidly detainees to a central ‘interrogation center, where the really talented interrogators and massive detailed records could be used to get the most information in the shortest time from prisoners.’ These experts should pay especially close attention to geography. ‘Since conditions vary from locality to locality’, he advised, ‘it is important to get a geographic fix on each locality reported upon; results could be translated on charts or maps, after analysis; every significant locality should be reported on.’⁵⁰⁷

⁵⁰⁶ *Foreign Relations of the United States* [FRUS], 1961--1963, Volume II, Vietnam, 1962, eds. John P. Glannon, David M. Baehler, and Charles S. Sampson (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1990), document 237, <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1961-63v02/d237>.

⁵⁰⁷ Memorandum from Edward Lansdale to General Burchinal, Office of the Secretary of Defense, 20 April, 1962, Folder: Correspondence: U.S. Department of Defense, Office of the Secretary of Defense, Rand Corporation, 1962--1963, Box 40, Edward G. Lansdale Papers, Hoover Institution Archives, Stanford, CA.

Robert McNamara was grateful for Lansdale's suggestions. 'An excellent set of questions Ed—it is this kind of info I need and am not receiving', he wrote.⁵⁰⁸ In subsequent years, McNamara would return repeatedly to mass interrogation, considering it a necessary instrument for illuminating facts on the ground for war managers in Vietnam. In 1965, for example, he showered support on an extensive programme of interrogations of defectors and prisoners run by social scientists at RAND Corporation. The ARPA-funded 'Viet Cong Motivation and Morale Project' would be the thinktank's most significant attempt to investigate the twilight zone in southeast Asia, its architects consciously framing it in response to a question McNamara posed that then percolated down the Defense hierarchy: 'Who are the Vietcong? What makes them tick?'⁵⁰⁹

That strategic anxiety had dogged McNamara. Despite his recent realisation that counterinsurgencies needed to be fought 'locally,' his attempts to do so were failing. National Liberation Front insurgents were continuing to prove resilient, elusive, and disciplined, apparently inured to the dissuasive powers of his 'graduated pressure' approach. RAND's scientific researchers promised to answer the Secretary of Defense's questions not just by interrogating captured NLF prisoners in South Vietnam, but by circulating their results to Washington, DC, in quantified, spatialised form. In taking up the numbers game they 'spoke to the gods', as one former RAND interviewer put it to me, winning access not just to McNamara but William Westmoreland and other senior planners of the war.⁵¹⁰ In mid-1965, the Rand project's budget was increased tenfold after McNamara received their reports based on interrogation responses, which had been coded and statistically analysed. They were interspersed with trendlines showing with statistical certainty that enemy morale was cratering.⁵¹¹ However, for one RAND statistician, the process of 'turning the opinions of the Viet Cong and defectors into data' was fundamentally faulty. The necessary 'theoretical structure for a statistical analysis was just not there'.⁵¹² Nonetheless, as hard data mass interrogation provided McNamara with

⁵⁰⁸ FRUS, 1961--1963, Volume II, Vietnam, 1962, document 237, <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1961-63v02/d237>.

⁵⁰⁹ Mai Elliott, *RAND in Southeast Asia: A History of the Vietnam War Era* (Santa Monica, CA: RAND, 2010), 49.

⁵¹⁰ Joseph Carrier, interview by author, Los Angeles, 30 October 2017.

⁵¹¹ Sharon Weinberger, *The Imagineers of War: The Untold Story of DARPA, the Pentagon Agency that Changed the World* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2017), 174--175.

⁵¹² Ralph Strauch, interview by author, Los Angeles, 30 October 2017.

exactly the kind of numerical measures and incrementalistic feedback he relied on to brief President Johnson on the conflict's trajectory.⁵¹³ As we will find in the next chapter, that was just one of the many moments where the calculative capacities of mass interrogation meant it could 'speak to the gods' during America's war in Vietnam.

Joining the hunt

During this period, experiments in colonial and neo-colonial insurrections in Malaya, Algeria, the Philippines and elsewhere directly influenced the course of US counterinsurgency knowledge and practice. In particular, and relevant to this study, a range of technical and political innovations in mass interrogation were influential, some of them reactivated in the new asymmetric war in southeast Asia ramped up by the Kennedy administration.

Although not in attendance at the RAND symposium, Robert Thompson was a particularly important disciplinary go-between in this regard. The foremost British counterinsurgency intellectual during the early-1960s and a veteran of the Malaya conflict, he would become an influential force shaping US strategy in southeast Asia. As head of the British Advisory Mission to South Vietnam he was counsellor to the Ngo Dinh Diem regime. Later, installed in Washington, DC, he drew from his colonial experience to recommend population-centric tactics to the Kennedy Administration, including the relocation of inhabitants into surveilled villages.⁵¹⁴ Judging by the anti-MLNA operations he co-directed, he believed that counterinsurgency interrogation worked best when it was large in scale and organised, aimed at building a 'dragnet' that could snowball abundant slivers of data from many apprehended subjects. In 1964, after it became clear that this approach resulted in indiscriminate arrests and widespread torture by police in South Vietnam, Thompson recommended that a Malaya-style Police Special Branch be set up. Its specially-trained interrogators were spread across the Republic's provincial intelligence centres.⁵¹⁵ As well as captured guerrillas, he advocated incorporating non-combatants and rural villagers into the mass interrogation apparatus. Paying civilians to undergo interrogations released the 'natural cupidity of many members of the

⁵¹³ FRUS, 1964--1968, Volume IV, Vietnam, 1966, eds. David C. Humphrey (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1998), document 26, <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1964-68v04/d26>.

⁵¹⁴ Beckett, "Robert Thompson and the British Advisory Mission to South Vietnam, 1961--1965," 41--63.

⁵¹⁵ Valentine, *The Phoenix Program*, epub e-book, chap. 5.

population’, involving ‘them in the hunt.’ In so doing, colonial intelligence organisations might better accumulate the ‘basis of a mass of information’ upon which further information could be added.⁵¹⁶ Many disparate pieces of evidence could be assimilated if human intelligence could be pumped into the machine of government, setting it into motion so that the space of insurgency could be mapped and further populations known.

Roger Trinquier was a similarly influential figure shaping the disciplinary formation of US counterinsurgency during this period. His treatise, *Modern Warfare*, became a touchstone in counterinsurgency circles, heavily informing military doctrine. In the early-1960s, for example, Trinquier was in regular correspondence with instructors at American military colleges.⁵¹⁷ One course reader in counterrevolutionary warfare at the West Point Academy extracts lessons from his mass interrogation of the Casbah, noting that while contentious, Trinquier ‘feels that the use of torture was justified.’⁵¹⁸ His knowledge of Indochina as a space of asymmetric warfare was recognised when US forces began to build up there. When his catechistic teachings arrived in Saigon and became known to military advisers, he was tapped to provide instruction at American special forces training centres in Korea and Japan, with officers travelling to Vietnam with him as part of their learning.⁵¹⁹ Later, Trinquier’s acolyte, interrogator, and deputised executioner, Paul Aussaresses was seconded to teach US special operations cadets at Fort Bragg who were preparing for deployment to Vietnam. Witnesses recall him arriving with his copy of *Modern Warfare* in tow and later acknowledged Trinquier’s and Aussaresses’ influence on the development of experimental torture techniques used in Vietnam.⁵²⁰ As part of the mass interrogation aspect of the CIA-led assassination Phoenix Program, US personnel utilised a range of harsh techniques including water ingestion, strappado, and electric shock using field telephone and generators. All had been standard practice during the Battle of Algiers and eventually were generalised for use in mobile interrogations in Vietnam, as the next chapter shows.⁵²¹

⁵¹⁶ Thompson, *Defeating Communist Insurgency*, 87.

⁵¹⁷ Khalili, *Time in the Shadows*, 36.

⁵¹⁸ "Revolutionary Warfare, Volume V—French Counterrevolutionary Struggles: Indochina and Algeria," US Military Academy, West Point, New York, 1968. Item 2171512010, Folder 12, Box 15, Douglas Pike Collection, VCA-TTU, 114.

⁵¹⁹ Bernard Fall, introduction to *Modern Warfare*, xiii.

⁵²⁰ Marlowe, *David Galula: His Life and Intellectual Context*, 41.

⁵²¹ MacMaster, "Torture: From Algiers to Abu Ghraib," 8.

But no expert colonial warrior has been more influential on later modern US counterinsurgency doctrine than David Galula, even if he was more obscure than Trinquier in military circles in the 1960s.⁵²² In 1962, when the French army found itself policing a shrinking sphere of colonial influence, he relocated to the US, where he found his expertise in counterinsurgency much in demand. William Westmoreland, McNamara's future commander of Military Assistance Command, Vietnam, arranged for him to write up his major treatise as a research associate at the Harvard Center for International Affairs.⁵²³ That same year he attended the RAND symposium in Washington, DC, where he explained his army's *quadrillage* strategy of compartmentalising Algeria, charging officers and their units to interrogate every person within a determinate sector so that the entire local population could be known. Beyond locating insurgents, Galula emphasised that interrogation had a broader political function. It could deter the 'neutral majority' from supporting insurgents' cause. Upon sufferance of constant, debilitating questioning, 'worn out,' arrestees 'would talk one by one'. Arrests and interrogations could then spiral outwards, permitting the full acquiescence of local inhabitants. It was partly this focus on information operations that led Galula's treatises to be taken up with gusto in US counterinsurgency circles in the twenty-first century, with his the most influential historical works guiding the development of the Army's 2006 *Counterinsurgency Field Manual* and rekindling the colonial small wars tradition. Its authors quoted Galula's edict that 'military action is secondary to the political one', drawing directly from his programmatic texts in order to integrate civilian and military tactical operations.⁵²⁴ The *Counterinsurgency Field Manual* combines these two precepts in its human intelligence collection procedures, establishing that interrogations are crucial tasks to be completed during counterinsurgency operations. Through their expert performance at a sufficient scale, the information that detained insurgents can supply 'about the internal workings of an insurgency' remains unsurpassed.⁵²⁵

⁵²² Khalili, *Time in the Shadows*, 35.

⁵²³ Grégor Mathias, *Galula in Algeria: Counterinsurgency Practice Versus Theory*, translated by Neal Durando (Westport, CT: Praeger, 2011), 102.

⁵²⁴ Department of the Army, *Field Manual 3-24, Counterinsurgency* (Washington, DC, December 2006), §2-1, <https://www.hsdl.org/?view&did=468442>.

⁵²⁵ *Ibid.*, §3-27.

Conclusion

More than forty years earlier, however, President Kennedy left his summit meeting in Vienna with a much less certain conception of asymmetric warfare. A body of expertise in the world's 'internal' wars was beginning to merge in order to resolve its strategic and tactical challenges. Counterinsurgency offered a means for taking up the 'burden' of pacifying restive populations and extinguishing 'local conflicts' so that they did not become platforms for communist expansion. Powerful agencies in the US national security state recommended that Kennedy deploy its experts and precepts and draw a line in the sand, beginning in southeast Asia. Home from Europe, Kennedy took their advice, telling the *New York Times*: 'Now we have a problem in making our power credible, and Vietnam is the place'.⁵²⁶ He had recently examined a Pentagon report written by Lansdale and was shaken. New investments were needed, Lansdale said, President Diem needed to be shown by 'deeds, not words alone, that we are his friend'. The years of planning and funding for 'massive retaliation' against only the Soviet Union were over. Henceforth a strategic 'flexible response' would be directed towards brushfire wars and, in the Republic of Vietnam, a moderate counterinsurgency 'task force' would be assembled whose use of force would be significant, but nonetheless measured, in every sense of the word. While influential warrior-scholars such as Lansdale and Robert Thompson would supply the technical solutions for prosecuting a population-centric war of 'nation-building', their effect would be stringently assessed by a coterie of experts who were actuarially oriented.⁵²⁷

In working to achieve this balance and win a new kind of war, mass interrogation would be called on again. Between 1945 and the early 1960s, it had been recast as a weapon of counterinsurgency—a method for disclosing the machine spaces and producing the streams of intelligence required to satisfy the ambitions of neo-imperial adventurers in the non-European world. As the next chapter shows, transposed into US operations, it would form part of the broader mobilisation of managerial 'technowar' in Vietnam, the conceptual apparatus that establishes a military and technopolitical context in which 'the production of warfare' becomes an end in itself. Incorporated into it, mass interrogation was expected to support data production and circulation on an enormous scale, as in Project Wringer, but amenable to the latest

⁵²⁶ Stanley Karnow, *Vietnam: A History* (Harmondsworth, UK: Penguin, 1984), 248. First published 1983 by Viking.

⁵²⁷ *Ibid.*, 254--255.

techniques of scientific management. At the same time, however, as this chapter has begun to suggest, not everything about US mid-century mass interrogation was brand new. Influential experiments in population-centric warfare and technical innovations in mass interrogation were undertaken by European neo-colonial warriors in Malaya and Algeria, mimicked by Americans like Edward Lansdale. Mass interrogation was long a crucial instrument for the forces of order. In America's war in Vietnam, a series of familiar spatial tactics would be borrowed and adapted: *in situ* operations by roving patrols, the use of mass arrests and questioning to facilitate violence in the countryside, the construction of central hubs of detention and intelligence assembly in the city, with expert and institutional links to the colonial metropole. The elements of intelligence interrogation that had proved so obvious and crucial in updated performances in colonial small wars now circulated to Vietnam, where they would help put into practice an even more acutely calculative and mechanical counterinsurgency military enterprise.

Chapter 6: Nickels and Dimes

Managing mass interrogation in America's war in Vietnam

Are the commanders getting their money's worth from HUMINT resources?⁵²⁸

US Army Headquarters, Vietnam, 1969

Making money

In 1969, Tim Holmes was assigned to the US 1st Marine Division's 13th Interrogation Translation Team. It was based in Quảng Nam Province, in the Republic of Vietnam (South Vietnam).⁵²⁹ In twenty months he participated in two thousand interrogations in the field and at district headquarters, sometimes with Army of the Republic of Vietnam (ARVN) counterparts. It was work, 'making money':

First off, you find out his unit ... if he tells you 9th Battalion, 36th Regiment and if you know that 9th Battalion, 36th Regiment has been there for a fuck of a long time and it's no big deal, then you're not going to make any money ... You can make some money when you find out his unit is, say, the 3rd Battalion, 575th Regiment, which, according to all your information is 20 miles away ... That's something to sweat. So then you question him heavily about the unit's movement; you're checking this against what you already know.⁵³⁰

Like money, in America's war in Vietnam interrogation information performed multiple functions. At one level, and as Edward Lansdale thought in the Philippines, intelligence was a means of 'numerical accounting'. Not because it only contained numbers, but because it circulated to officers the data about rural populations and enemies' movements that allowed

⁵²⁸ "Combat Intelligence Lessons," July 1, 1969, Headquarters United States Army, Vietnam, Folder 2, Box 323, RG 472, NARA II, 6.

⁵²⁹ This section draws from "Making Money," an oral account provided by Tim Holmes. See *The Short-Timer's Journal: Soldiering in Vietnam 9--10*, no. 2 (1980), 55--74.

⁵³⁰ *Ibid.*, 64.

them to perform tallies, calculations, and plan action from a distance. In Holmes' telling, interrogation intelligence in this form imitated money's power to express relative value, to convey a pricing signal—while almost every piece of information was worth something, not all datapoints were equal. Returns fluctuated depending on their novelty, scarcity, and the demands of customers higher up in the command structure. Interrogators had to tune themselves to this intelligence market and focus on the most valuable material, 'something to sweat'.

But beyond meeting urgent and specific requests, intelligence was like money in another, deeper sense: it could be saved up. Upon accumulation, interrogation dossiers amounted to a counterinsurgency database, an emergent political technology. In this form, human intelligence was more than the sum of its parts. It was capital, a store of value permitting leverage. When mass interrogation was set to mechanical rhythms, made responsive to the volumetric imperatives of machine space, the 'outputs' it accumulated were capable of unleashing entirely new forces for defeating guerrillas. Holmes thus explained that interrogators always sought to grow their accounts aggressively, pursuing open-ended lines of questioning:

It is necessary to be really methodical by going over every little thing.
This is the way to "make money"...

So the dude is from 70-C, Front 4, which is the highest you could go in Quảng Nam province. You know where he was picked up, so you try to find out why he was there, who was with him, what he was doing, where he was coming from, where his unit is, how many people, how is it set up, whether there are bunkers, how deep, how large, the exact measurements, how many rifles, how many rounds does each man have per rifle, how much they eat, what they've been discussing when they have their group discussions, what they have been doing, what the political officer's been telling them, *everything*.⁵³¹

The need to accumulate intelligence in this way contributed to the organisational pressure for interrogators to 'exhaust' sources of all they knew, emptying the reservoir. That's partly why visceral brutality became an endemic part of the process. Holmes claimed that during the thousands of interrogations he witnessed, a source completely refused to talk only once. That was because violence was 'standard', part of the 'job' of getting 'all the information possible'. Slapping and beating occurred in 'ninety percent' of interrogations by 1st Marines on patrol. As

⁵³¹ Ibid., 65, emphasis added.

in Algiers a decade prior, also commonplace was forced standing, waterboarding, delayed medical treatment (most subjects had fresh wounds), and the use of field telephones to wire electricity to victims' ear lobes or genitals.⁵³²

However, none of those actions 'made money'. Not yet. As we have learned, human intelligence is a modality of later modern warfare, not an end in itself. The chapters so far have shown that the ultimate ambition driving the performance of mass interrogation is not the interpersonal encounter, or to direct killing and injuring. It is the activation of war's more extensive circuits of violence. Indeed, Holmes recounted, a successful interrogation in Vietnam involved more than just coercing answers to myriad questions. It meant painstakingly compiling and rapidly circulating new information for use elsewhere in the command structure. Everyone wanted to 'make money', but good interrogators knew that the value of their information grew dramatically when it was accrued during operations and put into motion as intelligence. In Quảng Nam, interrogators made more money with new 'products', those which conveyed previously unknown geospatial information about the enemy:

The main thing you want to know right there is *where they are*. To "make money" means finding out where they are *and getting a hit*. When you find out unit 70-C is at "X", you go up with your team commander to the colonel. Your team commander says, "They're right here," such and such six-digit co-ordinate, and if he believes you, then they'll do a bombing run. Usually they'll do a Phantom with a Bronco spotter if it's a regular unit ... If it's a big unit, they'll use B-52s. *And getting a B-52 strike is making the most money!* This is where you find out how good you are and how much he lied. He could have been telling the truth and you could have map-tracked wrong. It's a bitch. The map shows steep hills; it's all jungle and you've got to track them. It's an acquired skill.⁵³³

Despite his map-tracking and questioning skills, Holmes only made money with one B-52 strike, and even then, the payoff was hard to quantify ('I don't know how many bodies they got'). But he wasn't the only one to try. With remarkable frequency in America's war in Vietnam, mass interrogation was glossed as work conducted in a specific kind of machine space: a warzone of managed value production.

⁵³² Ibid., 63--64.

⁵³³ Ibid., 65--66, emphasis added.

As presaged in the previous chapter, by the 1960s US mass interrogation was no longer primarily directed at spatialising the ‘economic web’ of a vast industrial enemy. In America’s mid-century wars in southeast Asia, it was retooled for the purpose of neo-imperial counterinsurgency. In ‘the twilight zone’, interrogations now aimed to root out guerrillas, map their networks, and trace their furtive lines of movement. At the same time, it was subject to a broader political and technical revolution that was reshaping the US military apparatus. A regime of ‘managerial technowar’ now infused almost every aspect of its planning and operations in Vietnam, harnessing the techniques of modern management to the physical forces of war more tightly than ever. Managerialism reconceived military judgement as a series of technical-analytical calculations. In the process, later modern war was recast again. Now it was a corporate problem, of maximising the efficiency in combining material inputs and know-how to produce the greatest volume of output.

Intelligence production was part of this same management transformation. Consequently, the technopolitical apparatuses that performed mass interrogation in Vietnam were mediated by languages and techniques of scientific management, driven by new priorities of cost effectiveness and officers’ responsibility to respond to supply and demand signals. Interrogations in the field were output-oriented, part of the numbers game, shot through with economic jargon and managerial imperatives. As well, strategic interrogations conducted in dedicated facilities were modelled on the multidivisional structure of the modern capital-intensive industrial firm. Quantified measurements were prioritised, centralised control over operations were instituted, work processes were modelled on the factory setting. Inside these machine spaces, agents like Tim Holmes developed ‘products’ for ‘customers’, maximising returns on investment, optimising administrative efficiency.

The next section explicates the concept of managerial technowar, describing how the ‘production model of war’ dominated America’s war in Vietnam conflict. Within this regime, officers throughout the command structure came under intense pressure to demonstrate the material results of missions. ‘War managers’ demanded their programmes be broken down into constitutive mission elements for the purposes of constant progress performance measurement, with data often quantified for analysis. As a result, almost every phase of the war underwent radical proceduralisation, with the maximisation of measurable outputs and destructive force ends in themselves.

This ‘war by numbers’ reshaped mass interrogation.⁵³⁴ As before, human intelligence was produced mechanically, with volumetric zeal. But technowar reengineered interrogation apparatuses according to managerial principles. The third section analyses how managerial technowar mediated the performance of field interrogation by US personnel in the Republic, conducted ‘out in the bush’, as Holmes put it. Here, mass interrogation was designed to serve counterinsurgents’ tactical needs. As part of roving patrols, these interrogations conformed to the ‘meat grinder’ tempo set by the ‘search-and-destroy’ missions that they supported. Much has been written about the torture inflicted by the forces of order roving across South Vietnam. However, this section also shows that mobile interrogations were used to assemble the intelligence used to direct artillery and aerial bombing, wiring together some of technowar’s vital components. Field interrogation’s violent geographies were both intimate and extended.

The fourth section examines how managerial technowar mediated the conduct of strategic interrogations in static settings. From 1965, Major General Joseph McChristian became the ground war’s intelligence manager. He believed his officers should think of themselves as ‘bankers’, and that intelligence reports were the ‘nickels and dimes’ that made their ‘business profitable’. For him, making money through interrogation required a network of CSDIC-style facilities and his primary site of profitmaking was the Combined Military Interrogation Center (CMIC). Its design and operations were subject to an acutely managerialist style of administration, with conditions set for maximising ‘efficiency’ and for constantly measuring outputs against production objectives.

In America’s war in Vietnam mass interrogation was a field of mechanical invention, its machine spaces disclosing the challenge of the volumetric production of information. The central challenge was to organise subjects according to compound discipline, arraying the technical equipment to get the most data for the least expenditure of effort. In doing so, war managers did not merely analogise warfare to the corporate-industrial sphere but understood them to be contiguous, involving literally the same techniques, devices and conceptual manoeuvres. For example, cashbooks were used to track the progress of interrogation subjects at CMIC, while McChristian operated his intelligence apparatus as a ‘manufacturing sector’. Further, the information material interrogators sought out seemed to adopt some of the characteristics of

⁵³⁴ Trevor J. Barnes, "War by Numbers: Another Quantitative Revolution," *Geopolitics* 20, no. 4 (2015): 736--740, <https://doi.org/10.1080/14650045.2015.1095588>.

money. At one level like money it was abstract—representational knowledge for waging war. At another, and also like money, it was concrete—circulable, commoditised. It was literally ‘in’ subjects’ heads and bodies and in need of ‘extraction’ and ‘processing’. ‘*Making money*’—turning the concrete into the abstract and back again—required specialist procedure, techniques of resource management, quantitative measurement, and architectures for instrumentalising Vietnamese bodies.

Managerial technowar

The US military’s tendency to model warfare on industrial and machinic terms is by now familiar. However, the vast counterinsurgency apparatus it constructed in southeast Asia during the middle of the twentieth century exhibited an especially ‘mechanistic view of the world’.⁵³⁵ For James Gibson, it was a regime of ‘technowar’. That is, war run according to the bedrock principles of modern corporate administration and scientific management; or a ‘business according to calculable rules’.⁵³⁶ The corporate model of war meant that the conflict’s American planners came under constant pressure to disarticulate programmes and missions into their constitutive elements, making each separately tractable to the techniques of modern management, systems analysis, and organisational rationalisation.

When this management model was implemented in the Republic of Vietnam, the entire nation was reconceived as a machinic space of war. Its human geographies became operational settings, and the only conceivable forms of power that could adjust them were those guiding high-technology capital-intensive production. Consequently, the only authorised forms of knowledge acceptable were calculative and bureaucratic.⁵³⁷ The concomitant use of ‘scientific management’ techniques right across the counterinsurgency meant that quantified measures for assessing performance were ubiquitous. Time and again, complex social and political problems were given over to procedural solutions with the overall effect of reducing the war to a series of production problems within a high technology bureaucratic hierarchy.

⁵³⁵ James William Gibson, *The Perfect War: Technowar in Vietnam* (New York: Atlantic Monthly Press, 2000), 17. First published 1986.

⁵³⁶ Max Weber, quoted in Khalili, *Time in the Shadows*, 150.

⁵³⁷ Gibson, *The Perfect War*, 3--27.

The numbers game

From 1961, when the Kennedy Administration expanded its military commitment, to the drawdown of ground forces under President Nixon's 'Vietnamisation' policy from the late-1960s, the Vietnam conflict was run by managers. In Washington, DC, where the national security apparatus steered strategy, and at MACV, where the ground war was coordinated from 1962, planners borrowed practices and lexicons from the world of business administration as they attempted to reform policy and improve operational effectiveness.

This development was part of a longer story. From the Second World War, the US military apparatus began to be radically remade, refitted to the 'corporate model of organisation'.⁵³⁸ During the late-1940s and 1950s, as the technological complexity and industrial scale of war planning and weapons development grew dramatically, the military and corporate-industrial spheres intertwined.⁵³⁹ The armed services began to take on the multidivisional structures and control and cost-management techniques implemented by capital-intensive industrial firms.⁵⁴⁰ This meant that, rather than classical military training and fighting prowess, planners in the Defense Department and the service branches were now increasingly likely to advance professionally when they were university-trained and possessed generic skills in programme running, human resources, and corporate procurement.

This shift was given thrust by the Kennedy Administration's decision to establish civilian control over military spending. The plan involved implanting non-military figures at the top of the Defense hierarchy and assigning them considerable power over the armed services by granting them the power to centralise budgeting, contract tendering, and to direct industrial production processes.⁵⁴¹ This decision hastened the incursion of self-declared 'managers' into

⁵³⁸ Gibson, *The Perfect War*, 3--27.

⁵³⁹ Andrew Pickering, "Cyborg History and the World War II Regime," *Perspectives in Science* 3, no. 1 (1995): 1--49, <https://www.uni-due.de/~bj0063/doc/Pickering.pdf>; Barnes and Farish, "Between Regions: Science, Militarism, and American Geography from World War to Cold War," 808--812.

⁵⁴⁰ Alfred D. Chandler, "The Competitive Performance of U.S. Industrial Enterprises since the Second World War," *Business History Review* 68 (1994), 11--23, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/3117015/>.

⁵⁴¹ Lawrence Kaplan, Ronald D. Landa, and Edward J. Drea, *History of the Office of the Secretary of Defense, Vol V: The McNamara Ascendancy, 1961--1965* (Washington, DC: Historical Office of the Secretary of Defense, 2006), 72--117, https://history.defense.gov/Portals/70/Documents/secretaryofdefense/OSDSeries_Vol5.pdf.

war planning, professionals socialised in the world of advanced military-industrial firms and information-heavy civilian bureaucracies.⁵⁴²

War managers carried into the Pentagon cutting-edge thinking in business organisation, resource allocation, and systems analysis.⁵⁴³ However, because of their backgrounds their domination over programming restricted the possibilities available to senior officers when the political crisis in Vietnam escalated. In managerial technowar, planners' primary duty becomes the allocation of capital resources within a 'technologically equipped bureaucratic hierarchy', as Gibson terms it.⁵⁴⁴ To maintain their positions in the Defense hierarchy, deskilled war managers are obligated to offer technical-managerial solutions to political-strategic challenges. From the early-1960s, the effect was continually to traduce external problems particular to the cultural and political geographies of southeast Asia into organisational and production challenges internal to the US military apparatus.

For present purposes, managerial technowar resulted in two fatal consequences for the counterinsurgency in South Vietnam. First, the military apparatus's overwhelming focus on rationalising technological and bureaucratic settings depoliticised warfare, rendering its operations mechanical. At both the strategic and tactical levels, military action was theorised as the confrontation of competing technological systems: victory redounded to the political power that mustered a preponderance of productive, physical force. Technowar 'projects the foreign Other as like itself', as Gibson says, and so, rather than a struggle between social actors with fundamentally divergent worldviews and political interests, US war managers habitually converted the conflict into a 'bargaining contest' between equivalent and recognisable systems. 'The enemy' in Vietnam (a complex and heterogeneous assemblage that included a North Vietnamese state, a supportive guerrilla force in the Republic, oppositional political movements, and so on) was continually identified as another high technology machinic system of production that could only be brought to heel through the application of physical force. The same political apparatuses that elevated certain managers up the military apparatus due to their skills in rationalising internal processes, translating the elements of warfare into quantities, and mastering managerial techniques ensured that they could rarely offer solutions recognising adversaries on

⁵⁴² Douglas Kinnard, *The War Managers* (Hanover, NH: University Press of New England, 1977), 111--114.

⁵⁴³ Gibson, *The Perfect War*, 23; see also Gregory, "War and Peace," 160.

⁵⁴⁴ Gibson, *The Perfect War*, 151.

their own terms. Political propositions, such as Vietnamese nationalism or social revolution, often became ‘theoretically invisible’ to war managers.⁵⁴⁵

In addition to its depoliticisation, technowar thus also mechanises the administration of war. During the Kennedy and Johnson administrations, managerial science was gradually ordained as the primary resource of policy reform within the Defense Department. As Khalili argues, this resulted in a ‘peculiarly American style’ of military bureaucratisation, one hyper-concerned with establishing and gauging accountability within a hierarchical organisation.⁵⁴⁶ When managerial techniques (systems analyses, game theory, and microeconomics, for example) suffused administration at the Pentagon and MACV, participants throughout the command hierarchy were urged to break down roles and responsibilities. In disarticulated form, centralised managers could analyse discrete tasks and suggest steps for optimising them. However, this corporate model tended to emphasise only technical and instrumental forms of knowledge.⁵⁴⁷ Managers invariably demanded that tasks align to production outputs and be measurable so that progress could be demonstrated, preferably by quantitative means. Statistical reporting became an especially expedient means for translating disparate work processes into legible forms.⁵⁴⁸

Search and destroy

With their calculative forms of knowledge, it was thought that war managers were well-equipped to perform the formidably complex comparative analyses and budgeting decisions that later modern war required. Certainly, the Kennedy decision to assert civilian control over military spending alleviated some of the parochialism that had beset the armed services during the early cold war.⁵⁴⁹ However, the suffusion of managerial techniques into the US military enterprise also transformed the conflict in southeast Asia into a devastating ‘war by numbers’.⁵⁵⁰

⁵⁴⁵ Ibid., 79--80; 151.

⁵⁴⁶ Khalili, *Time in the Shadows*, 149.

⁵⁴⁷ Ibid., 78.

⁵⁴⁸ Leo McCann, "‘Killing is Our Business and Business is Good’: The Evolution of ‘War Managerialism’ from Body Counts to Counterinsurgency," *Organization* 24, no. 4 (2017): 491--515, <https://doi.org/10.1177/1350508417693852>; see also Michele Chwastiak, "Taming the Untamable: Planning, Programming and Budgeting and the Normalization of War," *Accounting, Organizations and Society* 26, no. 6 (2001): 501--519, [https://doi.org/10.1016/S0361-3682\(01\)00010-1](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0361-3682(01)00010-1).

⁵⁴⁹ Kaplan, Landa, and Drea, *History of the Office of the Secretary of Defense, Vol V*, 74--75.

⁵⁵⁰ Barnes, "War by Numbers," 736--740.

Counterinsurgency—a modality of later modern war with much deeper roots in colonial warfare, as the previous chapter described—was soon revised according to a ‘production model of war’, reduced to a series of mechanical decision-making and production processes. One effect was to reimagine South Vietnam’s military and human geography, recasting it as an abstract socio-political system that was to be bent to the US will by force.⁵⁵¹

The tendency of managers to analyse war by taking it apart in this way filtered down the war’s command structure. The war became a matter of routinising the identification, location, and destruction of NLF (or ‘Viet Cong’) guerrillas and their supportive political cadre (the ‘Viet Cong infrastructure’, VCI) on the ground or from the air. Within this mechanical framing, senior managers moved to establish new metrics of success that gauged cost effectiveness and rendered the war’s phases measurable and progress reportable. The examples of Robert McNamara and William Westmoreland show how managerial credo at the top of the Defense tree translated war’s most basic acts—killing, wounding, and destruction—into the technocentric and rationalised pursuit of outputs detached from any integrated political purpose.⁵⁵²

McNamara, US Secretary of Defense between 1961 and 1968, is regularly identified as the figure most responsible for the managerialisation and quantification of the American war in Vietnam.⁵⁵³ As a Kennedy appointee, former Harvard Business School professor, and president of Ford Motor Company, he believed in civilian control over military planning and national arms production. In pursuing this ambition, he met resisters inside the Pentagon. However, with political backing McNamara was able to disseminate a range of scientific management techniques across the military and, in the process, provisioned a coterie of handpicked experts with extraordinary influence. As its transformational leader, he oversaw the dissemination of systems analysis throughout Defense, beginning with his new Planning, Programming and Budgeting System.

Beginning in the 1963 fiscal year, the McNamara budgeting revolution demanded the armed services submit their funding requests to his central management unit for integrated assessment and long-range forecasting. For the first time, strategic analysis promised that military planning and budgeting would be united. To do this McNamara reformed the budgeting

⁵⁵¹ Gibson, *The Perfect War*, 23, 124.

⁵⁵² McCann, "Killing is Our Business and Business is Good", 494.

⁵⁵³ Chwastiak, "Taming the Untamable," 505--507.

offices that served the Secretary of Defense, demanding the armed services break their programmes into constituent parts so it became possible to interrogate every line of a funding request on the basis of cost effectiveness. Unlike in the past, when military budgets were expressed in terms of inputs and work power (such as construction materials, personnel, maintenance costs, for example), McNamara's analysts required their restatement as functional outputs (such as missions conducted, forces organised, missiles arrayed, or men trained, for example). This enabled a small cabal in the Office of the Secretary for Defense to gain a bird's-eye view of war planning, allowing sweeping managerial decisions. Under this management structure, alternative methods for accomplishing the same tasks could be sought out and compared, the factors of production rationalised, funding promises set against investment returns. The focus at all times was fiscal planning, the need, as McNamara put it, to guarantee 'security for the nation at the lowest possible cost'.⁵⁵⁴

McNamara and his acolytes believed that systems analysis and other forms of managerial control could thus be used to steer virtually any complex modern entity, from warfighting machines, to corporations, to scientific institutions.⁵⁵⁵ However, under his administration, the Defense Department would often become so focused on managing costs, efficiency-finding, and boosting outputs that higher, less quantifiable aims were squeezed out of the equation.

Managerial logic profoundly affected the ground war in Vietnam. By 1963, as the US intervention escalated, the institutional context was in place to ensure that cost effectiveness (though, importantly, not absolute *cost reduction*) reigned supreme at MACV. In devising standards for gauging tactical and strategic success, only 'technology and production counted'.⁵⁵⁶ Figures such as General William Westmoreland, supreme commander in Saigon from 1964 to 1968, fully internalised the new world of military management, believing that counterinsurgency could be remade into a more objective and rational process if its phases were separated into component objectives and progress stringently measured. To do this, a programme's anticipated means of production and outputs needed to be clearly defined, communicated, and key

⁵⁵⁴ Ibid.

⁵⁵⁵ Leo McCann, "'Management is the Gate'—But to Where? Rethinking Robert McNamara's 'Career Lessons'," *Management & Organizational History* 11, no. 2 (2016): 168--188, <https://doi.org/10.1080/17449359.2015.1098547>; Robert S. McNamara, with Brian VanDeMark, *In Retrospect: The Tragedy and Lessons of Vietnam* (New York: Vintage, 2017), 237--238.

⁵⁵⁶ Gibson, *The Perfect War*, 14, 23.

performance criteria set for all serving personnel, including counterinsurgency's labourers—troops on the ground. This meant that the 'production' of outputs (enemies killed, villages swept, prisoners detained, for example) would need to be keenly monitored, with results compared over time and alongside alternative solutions.⁵⁵⁷

The waging of war through technological superiority and constant measurement ensured that MACV's programmes became subsumed under the need to deliver outputs as if by means of mechanical production. Missions were performed as if they were single assembly lines in a much larger corporate-industrial apparatus. Whether it be a season-long bombing campaign over the Ho Chi Minh Trail, roving 'search-and-destroy' patrols by Marines like Tim Holmes, or a humanitarian development scheme, almost all operations were reduced to their technical and budgetary elements, to be evaluated by superiors for their efficient integration of capital and resources.⁵⁵⁸ This reframing was vividly demonstrated over the period of 1963 to 1965. In these years, political solutions to the insurgency in South Vietnam appeared evermore elusive, even as US resources and firepower were deployed on a substantially greater scale. With the support of McNamara, Westmoreland and his managers determined that the best course of action was a strategy of attrition against NLF guerrillas and any regular North Vietnamese Army (NVA, or People's Army of Vietnam) forces that may be infiltrating into the Republic.⁵⁵⁹ This reorientation fundamentally reframed the ground war as a programme of killing, rather than territory capture. Mission victories were determined arithmetically, through the achievement of a high ratio of dead enemy bodies 'produced' relative to the (American) personnel and material costs of a mission (the 'body count' method). The Pentagon compared the process to a 'meat grinder', with kinetic operations now centring on the repeated 'combing' of terrain and the unselective hunting and killing of (apparent) enemies. In this phase of managerial technowar, Westmoreland and McNamara imagined, political victory would ultimately come when so many

⁵⁵⁷ Michele Chwastiak, "Rationality, Performance Measures and Representations of Reality: Planning, Programming and Budgeting and the Vietnam War," *Critical Perspectives on Accounting* 17, no. 1 (2006): 29--55, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.cpa.2004.05.006>.

⁵⁵⁸ Gibson, *The Perfect War*, 103.

⁵⁵⁹ Andrew F. Krepinovich, *The Army and Vietnam* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1988), 165--168.

enemies were killed that a technical ‘cross-over point’ was reached, their rate of replacement flipping negative.⁵⁶⁰

As a seasoned war manager, calculating military decisions largely on the basis production data and statistical trendlines made perfect sense to Westmoreland. But his attrition strategy relied on the supposition that ‘the enemy’ operated according to a similarly mechanical worldview, and even possessed a parallel system of numerical accounting and managerial performance pressures. In 1967, he said, ‘We’ll just go on bleeding them ... until Hanoi wakes up to the fact that they have bled their country to the point of national disaster for generations. Then they will have to reassess their position.’⁵⁶¹ But even if America’s enemies didn’t recognise this fact, a whole generation of US commanding officers would nonetheless make careers out of this unblinking commitment to measuring the bleeding, even when it resulted in disastrous, or farcical, outcomes on the ground. The body count method, for example, involved the systematic rewarding of maximal killing, with the result that US units were thrown into competition over their respective ‘kill ratios’ and efforts to depopulate geographical areas (‘box scores’). Those forms of output-oriented warfare came to symbolise the pernicious use of simplistic measures of military ‘performance’ and for encouraging careerist officers to become preoccupied with manipulating metrics in order to navigate an intricate bureaucracy of citations and promotions.⁵⁶²

After 1965, however, mechanical logic and metrical techniques for gauging progress extended well beyond the body count method. Managerial imperatives meant that virtually all the American war’s phases and circuits were incorporated into the challenges of budgeting, efficiency seeking, and output maximisation.⁵⁶³ This included the various components of the ‘intelligence war’. After all, ‘bleeding the enemy’ on the ground and bombing them from the air required means for spatialising the geography of war, for detailed knowledge of territory, population, and enemy forces to be compiled and delivered to commanders. Once again, in this sphere of operations, only technology and production counted. Whether mobile or static, success in counterinsurgency mass interrogation could only be gauged on mechanistic, managerial terms.

⁵⁶⁰ Gibson, *The Perfect War*, 102.

⁵⁶¹ Quoted in Bernd Greiner, *War without Fronts: The USA in Vietnam* (London: Vintage, 2010), 56.

⁵⁶² James A. Tyner, *War, Violence, and Population: Making the Body Count* (New York: Guilford, 2009), 77--81; Gibson, *The Perfect War*, 109--121.

⁵⁶³ Gregory A. Daddis, "The Problem of Metrics: Assessing Progress and Effectiveness in the Vietnam War," *War in History* 19, no. 1 (2012): 73--98, <https://doi.org/10.1177/0968344511422312>.

Violence and interrogation on patrol

It is difficult to comprehend the enormous scale of the US-GVN mass interrogation apparatus when its operations extended into the countryside. Between 1966 and 1970, around 220 000 people were detained as civil prisoners (those considered political enemies or VCI) or arms-bearing prisoners of war during ARVN and US military operations and imprisoned in the broader provincial and military prison systems respectively in South Vietnam.⁵⁶⁴ By 1975, around 100 000 detainees had been categorised as enemy prisoners of war by US Army units and directed into prison facilities.⁵⁶⁵ However, over the course of the American war, millions more were rounded up and apprehended more informally, sometimes for only minutes. When mobile US and ARVN patrol operations moved through rural areas, for example, inhabitants would be frequently stopped and searched by the wayside, or rural settlements cordoned off and swept, their inhabitants screened and questioned. Some of those detainees were also deemed to be suspects, arrested, and shuttled off for unofficial questioning on a massive scale. For example, as part of a single large operation in 1967, the US 1st Cavalry Division and their National Police Field Force counterparts reported conducting over 300 000 interrogations in Bình Định province alone.⁵⁶⁶

In line with the broader war they served, when US ground units moved out on patrol, they conducted field interrogations on an industrial scale, establishing human intelligence collection as a basic component of the ‘production model of war’ in the Republic. These field interrogations were implicated in the violence of war in two main ways. First, military intelligence detachments within field forces—often subsidiary interrogation squadrons accompanying patrols on search-and-destroy missions or in cordoning villages for NLF suspects—were responsible for apprehending subjects in the theatre of counterinsurgency operations and instantly interrogating them. Once reported, this information could be used to support ground operations, most obviously by animating an extended geography of long-range destruction. Once extracted from detainees, responses to interrogators’ questions could be used in the construction of new tactical targets, inserted into the communication circuits required to

⁵⁶⁴ Greiner, *War without Fronts*, 76.

⁵⁶⁵ Nisa, "Between Capture and the Camp," 175.

⁵⁶⁶ George L. MacGarrigle, *Combat Operations: Taking the Offensive, October 1966 to October 1967* (Washington, D.C.: Center of Military History, 1998), 322.

direct aerial bombing and artillery strikes. In this way, interrogations carried out on patrol simultaneously wrote and violently rearranged the space of counterinsurgency. Second, with MACV's roaming 'meat grinder' strategy premised on the overt display of sovereign power, interrogations on patrol could become moments of grotesquely uninhibited violence in a more immediate, intimate way. Separable at an analytical level, in practice these two forms of violence were entangled. First, however, MACV had to devise means for granting US personnel the powers to detain and interrogate non-uniformed persons in the field.

Tapping the human intelligence reservoir

For mass interrogation to take place in the field, US interrogators attached to patrols needed access to an apparatus of formal procedure for screening new detainees and a material system of carceral-intelligence sites to which valuable sources and field reports could be directed. They also had to be legally empowered to arrest and question 'suspects' en masse.

From the time they arrived in the Republic in the late-1950s, US advisors had encouraged GVN authorities to expand and modernise its civilian and military prison systems. Under their assistance agreement, prisoners detained by US forces were still passed into government control and processed under its authority. However, the Geneva Conventions established that, as the detaining power, the US military would continue to be held responsible for those it had originally detained. With GVN authorities almost completely bereft of dedicated facilities for confining or caring for enemy prisoners of war and, with overcrowded civil detention sites in poor condition, most captives, especially civil arrestees, were freed within six months.⁵⁶⁷ Not only were US forces concerned that they may be held accountable for violations of the laws of war, no institutional mechanisms were in place to collect the intelligence that was walking out of detention sites.

In 1965 the problem worsened. As US ground forces scaled up their strategy of securing rural zones for the establishment of territorial bases of operation, their soldiers captured increasing numbers of suspected enemy combatants. The attrition strategy saw arrests grow dramatically, and they soon took on a mechanical, routinised rhythm.⁵⁶⁸ Westmoreland fumed

⁵⁶⁷ George S. Prugh, *Law at War: Vietnam, 1964--1973* (Washington, D.C.: Department of the Army, 1991), 63.

⁵⁶⁸ Nisa, "Between Capture and the Camp," 177--178.

that a poor regulatory and carceral system meant that prisoners were being harmed or freed unprocessed, taking their knowledge with them, later writing that

the South Vietnamese have greater tolerance for cruelty than most Americans. Having long experienced the calculated cruelty and terrorism of the Viet Cong—parading the severed head of an official through a village was commonplace—some South Vietnamese saw little point in observing niceties with prisoners of war. Yet responsible officials recognized—and I constantly stressed—that aside from humanitarian reasons, there were advantages in taking prisoners and treating them decently. *Live prisoners can talk, establishing a basic source of intelligence...*⁵⁶⁹

In 1965, Westmoreland extracted a commitment from GVN authorities to confer prisoner of war status upon all captives. The next step was to implement a regulatory mechanism which would formalise US forces' powers to categorise—and therefore screen—prisoners soon after arrest. To do this Westmoreland issued Directive 381-11 in March 1966. This regulative tool opened up a cavernous space within which interrogation would become embedded in the process of apprehension.⁵⁷⁰

On its surface, Directive 381-11 aimed to entrench the relevant provisions of Geneva III in all US and ARVN interactions with detainees.⁵⁷¹ It declared that all captives apprehended on combat operations, even if non-uniformed or 'non-declared' guerrillas, were to be treated initially as if they were enemy prisoners of war, before being transferred to a unit or division brigade where a formal process of detainee 'classification' would take place.⁵⁷² At that point subjects would either be confirmed by military intelligence officers as prisoners of war, or classified as 'Innocent Civilians', 'Returnees' (an amnesty permitted surrendered NLF fighters to

⁵⁶⁹ William C. Westmoreland, *A Soldier Reports* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1976), 244, emphasis added.

⁵⁷⁰ MACV Directive 381-11, updated 5 August 1968, Folder: Interrogation and Intelligence, Box 1, Entry A1 567, RG 472, NARA II.

⁵⁷¹ Westmoreland seems to have been genuinely concerned with the moral, political, and strategic consequences of widespread prisoner mistreatment, particularly by GVN authorities. He followed up the decree by writing to all senior commanders, reminding them it was 'vital' that captives were 'properly processed and handled in accordance with International Law', see Elizabeth Grimm Arsenault, *How the Gloves Came Off: Lawyers, Policy Makers, and Norms in the Debate on Torture* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2017), 63--64.

⁵⁷² MACV Directive 381-11, NARA II, Annex B.

be directed into the *Chieu Hoi* camp system), or ‘Civil Defendants’, that is, those deemed criminal ‘terrorists’, cadre in the NLF political ‘infrastructure’ or political enemies of the GVN.

In practice, regulations such as Directive 381-11 licensed the wholesale interrogation of almost anyone apprehended in the field and even after their transport to detention sites. As Roger Trinquier proved in Algeria, when roving counterinsurgents acquired extraordinary powers of arrest and the authority to screen detainees for their legal categorisation, interrogations could spiral. Similarly, Directive 381-11, and similar protocols later established by MACV, opened up a juridico-legal space within which mass interrogation could begin in the field. This is because classification bestowed upon intelligence officers a powerful disciplinary weapon. In theory, the provisions of Geneva III stipulated that a prisoner had the right to disclose nothing but their name, rank, service number, and date of birth, in order to categorise detainees. Yet, in application, MACV’s new arrest and screening process permitted a much more extensive process of intelligence gathering to take place. It institutionalised the practice of directing interrogative questions about captives’ backgrounds, intentions, political beliefs and more, ostensibly in order to categorise them.⁵⁷³ On remote search-and-destroy patrols, such screening would be carried out in an environment of relative impunity, and so the promise or threat to be categorised as a combatant was very often used to coerce apprehended subjects into interrogations.⁵⁷⁴

Screening in the field began to sow the seeds for mass interrogations on search-and-destroy missions, and thus to support the broader production process of managerial technowar. One interrogator recalled the enormous pressure emanating from his American Division commanders to classify detainees as prisoners and Civil Defendants. Their capture could be notched up on the attrition war’s ledger books as a performance outcome, with the result that ‘the brigades were in competition’. Consequently

the majority of the people classified were classified as civil defendants.

We were supposed to determine, without any knowledge of the

⁵⁷³ See for example the ambiguous screening instructions in "Application of the Geneva Prisoner of War Convention in Vietnam," Command Information Pamphlet 14-16, Office of Information, MACV, Part II, Item Number F015800080426, Sam Johnson Vietnam Archive Collection, VCA-TTU, https://vva.vietnam.ttu.edu/repositories/2/digital_objects/554870.

⁵⁷⁴ Alexander Casella, "The Politics of Prisoners of War," *The New York Times*, 28 May 1972, <https://www.nytimes.com/1972/05/28/archives/the-politics-of-prisoners-of-war-the-politics-of-pows.html>; and, Don Luce and Ngo Ba Thanh, "In South Vietnamese Jails," *The New York Review of Books*, 5 November 1970, 26, <https://www.nybooks.com/articles/1970/11/05/in-south-vietnamese-jails/>.

Vietnamese culture, without any knowledge of the Vietnamese Constitution or law, whether or not in fact a Vietnamese peasant had violated the law [by supporting the insurrection]...⁵⁷⁵

When one interrogator insisted on applying a black and white interpretation of regulations, ‘he came out with something like ninety-nine percent of the people being classified as innocent civilians.’ But this was to undermine the performance assessments required by MACV. Hence,

every time he classified someone as an innocent civilian [his Executive Officer] would come back to him, “Interrogate him again.” ... It would happen two, three, or four times in a day. He was under constant harassment; he was always being called up first to the brigade S-2 [intelligence officer], later to the division commander of military intelligence.⁵⁷⁶

These situations unfolded across South Vietnam in no small part due to Westmoreland’s blurring of humanitarian law with the intelligence component of his search-and-destroy programme. In fact, MACV specified explicitly that when undertaking categorisations, capturing units were not to neglect the immediate ‘exploitation of human sources’ for information that might ‘satisfy the priority intelligence requirements of capturing units.’ And the net widened even further, with patrols encouraged to direct potentially valuable detainees into a soon-to-be-constructed network of detention-interrogation facilities in each corps area and in Saigon, to which I return below. ‘Arrangements should be made’, Westmoreland’s orders declared, ‘for subsequent access to sources by interrogators’ from almost any security agency in the Republic.⁵⁷⁷

Further doctrinal notices adjured military intelligence officers at points of capture to be alert for ‘detainees who possess immediately exploitable information concerning enemy plans, positions and supply caches. It is vital that such information be obtained as a matter of priority as

⁵⁷⁵ Ronald V. Dellums and the Citizens’ Commission of Inquiry on U.S. War Crimes in Vietnam, *The Dellums Committee Hearings on War Crimes in Vietnam: An Inquiry into Command Responsibility in Southeast Asia* (Vintage: New York, 1972), 85 [hereafter *Dellums Committee Hearings on War Crimes in Vietnam*].

⁵⁷⁶ *Dellums Committee Hearings on War Crimes in Vietnam*, 101–102.

⁵⁷⁷ Directive 381-11 was subject to periodic incremental updates. The version I have access to forms part of the omnibus file “Military Intelligence Exploitation of Human Sources and Captured Documents,” 5 August 1968, Folder: Interrogation and Intelligence, Box 1, Entry A1 567, RG 472, NARA II.

soon as possible after capture'.⁵⁷⁸ During the attritional phase of the war, intelligence officers in the field were to fill out detailed 'Detainee Report Forms', which would follow the body of arrestees through the detention and interrogation hierarchy. Officers were instructed that the form had to be

completed to reflect facts concerning the activities performed by the detainee. This is important because a major factor for determination of status is the act being performed by the detainee at the time of capture ... The name of the detainee will be checked against the blacklist ... The fact that a suspect was picked up in a [Viet Cong]-controlled area does not in itself justify the classification of a detainee as a PW ... [but] *every bit of information that tends to substantiate the correct status of the detainee must be entered on the forms.*⁵⁷⁹

Here humanitarianism and intelligence production fused in the collection of later modern war's 'bits of truth'. The combined effect of doctrinal procedure was to license the expansion of interrogation inside an ambiguous space of mechanical 'processing'. On the one hand, dictates were handed down to US and ARVN soldiers that outlined their personal responsibility to uphold the provisions of Geneva III. For example, MACV distributed instructional cards headed 'The Enemy in Your Hands', which spelled out obligations to detainees under the laws of war. However, as Richard Nisa argues, these artefacts of battlefield regulation effectively instructed soldiers on the outer '*limit* between lethal battlefield violence ... and legal care and custody'.⁵⁸⁰ Through distributed bulletins and pocket cards, MACV reminded arresting soldiers to safeguard the integrity of 'HUMINT resources' and the 'extremely valuable' information concealed inside them.⁵⁸¹

⁵⁷⁸ Tab A (Detailed Screening Procedures), Appendix 6 (Civilian Detainees), Annex A (Intelligence) to Combined Campaign Plan 1-68, *Report of the Department of the Army Review of the Preliminary Investigations into the My Lai Incident, Vol. III, Exhibits, Book 1 – Directives*, 14 March 1970, https://www.loc.gov/rr/frd/Military_Law/pdf/RDAR-Vol-IIIBook1.pdf, 382--383.

⁵⁷⁹ Tab A (Detailed Screening Procedures), Appendix 6 (Civilian Detainees), Annex A (Intelligence) to Combined Campaign Plan 1-68, Department of the Army, *Report of the Department of the Army Review of the Preliminary Investigations into the My Lai Incident, Vol. III, Exhibits, Book 1 – Directives*, 14 March 1970, https://www.loc.gov/rr/frd/Military_Law/pdf/RDAR-Vol-IIIBook1.pdf, 382--383.

⁵⁸⁰ Nisa, "Capturing Humanitarian War," 2277.

⁵⁸¹ Graham A. Cosmas, *MACV: The Joint Command in the Years of Withdrawal, 1968--1973* (Washington, DC: United States Army Center of Military History, 2006), 227, emphasis added; "Application of the Geneva Prisoner of War Convention in Vietnam," MACV Office of Information Pamphlet Number 14-16, Sam Johnson Collection,

By promulgating methodical guidelines for an ‘expeditious’ system of detainee screening, while also specifying that it should be carried out according to ‘collection priorities’ and reporting protocols, texts like Directive 381-11 established that interrogations could become a metricised process of output production, virtually guaranteeing that many of them would become highly pressurised encounters.⁵⁸²

Under the mechanical rhythms of attritional technowar, classification and interrogation during village sweeps and search-and-destroy operations became another instrument for establishing spatial control and raising the body count. In January 1967, during Operation Cedar Falls, the journalist Jonathan Schell witnessed how semantic solutions were concocted to justify the wholesale apprehension of residents of the ‘hostile villages’ marked for destruction in the treacherous ‘Iron Triangle’ region. In this case, interrogators were involved in sorting and relocating all inhabitants. The inclusion of captured intelligence sources in coordinating officers’ performance metrics had a predictable effect:

When I asked the captain at Rach Bap how the Army sorted out the enemy from the friendly civilians, he answered, “In a VC area like this one, there are three categories of classification. First, there are the straight VC. They’re the activists, the real hard core. Then, there are the VC sympathizers, who support the VC with taxes. Then, there’s the ... there’s a third category. There are three categories. I can’t think of the third just now, but I can say that there’s no middle road in this war. Either you’re with us or you’re against us. We’ve captured eleven straight VCs and sixty-three suspects, and had thirty-two *hoi chanh* [defectors for the *Chieu Hoi* system]. The body count isn’t in yet.”⁵⁸³

Once regulations were put in place to deepen the ‘reservoir’ of bodies available to commanders, technowar demanded that measures be introduced to improve the ‘efficiency’ of human intelligence collection from detainees. Just as a decade previously USAF administrators were encouraged in Project Wringer’s Tokyo office, the administrators of the US mass

VCA-TTU; "Combat Intelligence Lessons," July 1969, Headquarters, United States Army Vietnam, Folder 2, Box 323, RG 472, NARA II, 6--7.

⁵⁸² Gibson, *The Perfect War*, 184--185.

⁵⁸³ Jonathan Schell, "The Village of Ben Suc," *The New Yorker*, 8 July 1967, <https://www.newyorker.com/magazine/1967/07/15/the-village-of-ben-suc>. ‘*Hoi chanh*’ were internees in the *Chieu Hoi* programme.

interrogation technopolitical apparatus in the field in South Vietnam were encouraged to understand that their role was the efficient collection and reporting of data, grains of truth, not to generate synthetic knowledge.⁵⁸⁴ For example, appended to the schematic interrogation post shown in figure 6.1 is the peremptory question: ‘Are the commanders getting their money’s worth from HUMINT resources?’ Beneath it, the following admonition from Army intelligence:

In support of evaluation requirements, we must remember that every agent must start as an “F” (reliability cannot be judged) source and only through user evaluation will he ever be upgraded. Evaluation by the collector only relates to the *apparent efficiency of a given human being*. Any attempt by the collector to go beyond this step and evaluate the validity of the information would indeed be a serious mistake. Collectors must abide by strict rules in upgrading sources and depend solely on evaluation feedback from G-2/S-2s [intelligence branches].⁵⁸⁵

User, collector, efficiency, upgrade, evaluation. In managerial technowar, interrogators were not to scrutinise knowledge but to perform a sense of economic efficiency. For this reason, during field interrogations, intelligence officers were primarily responsible for grading new sources, so that agencies and facilities elsewhere in the military apparatus could determine whether they would request their transfer for further questioning. As such, during these evaluations, interrogators were to evaluate not the veracity of the information provided, but an interrogatee’s likelihood to produce further intelligence outputs in a resource effective manner, the ‘efficiency of a given human being’.

Directives from MACV also set out standardised screening and interrogation procedures and uniform designs for brigade interrogation centres and temporary Collecting Points. These would form the bottom-rung of a national interrogation collection infrastructure and become critical to the intelligence function of search-and-destroy patrols in the countryside.⁵⁸⁶ They might be semi-permanent interrogation posts adjacent to battalion headquarters, unrefined

⁵⁸⁴ See also Mark S. Partridge, *Asking Questions: Will Army Tactical Interrogation Be Ready for War?* (Fort Leavenworth, KS: US Army, 1986), 10, <https://apps.dtic.mil/dtic/tr/fulltext/u2/a179420.pdf>.

⁵⁸⁵ "Combat Intelligence Lessons," July 1, 1969, Headquarters United States Army, Vietnam, Folder 2, Box 323, RG 472, NARA II, 6.

⁵⁸⁶ Greiner, *War without Fronts*, 56; *Field Manual 31-73, Advisor Handbook for Counterinsurgency*, April 1965, Department of the Army, Washington, DC, Item Number 13530114002, Folder 14, Box 1, Peter Swartz Collection, VCA-TTU, 33, 67, https://vva.vietnam.ttu.edu/repositories/2/digital_objects/495142.

assemblages of timber and mesh wire (such as illustrated in figure 6.2). Or they could be improvised on patrols, even just a 'ring of concertina wire'.⁵⁸⁷ Either way, as illustrated by the maps dominating the attention of the interrogators and interrogatee in figure 6.2, they were acutely cartographic spaces, frontline sites in the accumulation of geographical information and the screening of population for the ground war. One interrogator remembered that in an unfamiliar village during Operation Cedar Falls his team 'needed a tourist guide to Ben Suc'. 'To formulate one', he continued, 'we extracted it from our first sources' by directing farmers to a schoolhouse-cum-Collecting Point.⁵⁸⁸ It was like a rolling business. Soon, he said, 'we had our first customers'. Days later the village was put under bulldozers, its residents killed or forcibly resettled, the surrounding countryside levelled.⁵⁸⁹

⁵⁸⁷ Tourison, *Talking with Victor Charlie*, 52.

⁵⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, 203.

⁵⁸⁹ Schell, "The Village of Ben Suc."

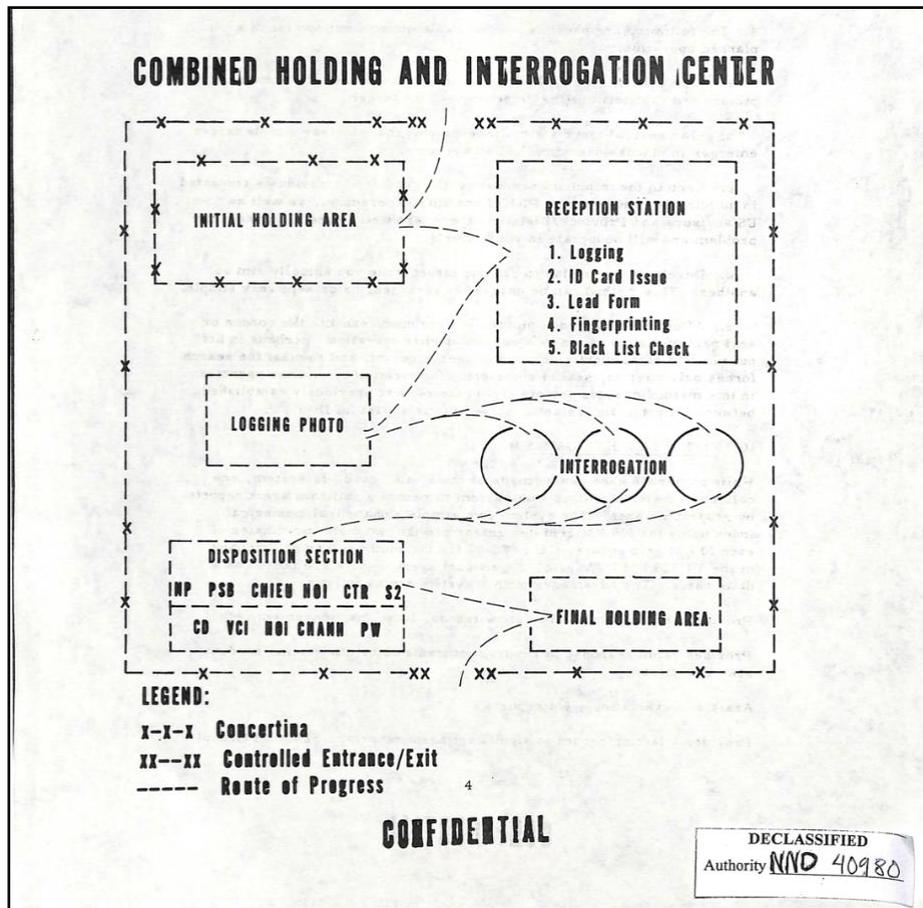


Figure 6.1 Standardised designs for temporary interrogation posts, MACV encouraged their use during search and cordoning operations in villages, July 1969.⁵⁹⁰

By so delimiting field interrogations, officers were encouraged to consider their tasks in mechanical terms, with the conservation of energy, time, and materials crucial. However, a further instrument effect was to compartmentalise the intelligence ‘collection’ process. As in earlier iterations of mass interrogation, the psychological and physical division of labour ensured that intelligence products would be produced and circulated as if they were commodity forms, bearing no trace of their origins. After all, as McCann argues, war managerialism is not just a top down implementation by figures such as Robert McNamara. It also recasts later modern warfare throughout, rendering it procedural, diverting attention away from the ethical, socio-political, or psychological consequences of the ‘business’ of war. This may explain why one Army major in

⁵⁹⁰ "Combat Intelligence Lessons," 1 July 1969, Headquarters United States Army, Vietnam, Folder 2, Box 323, RG 472, NARA II, 4.

Vietnam, a medical doctor, testified that his requests to evaluate wounded prisoners were constantly rebuffed. In one case

[Colonel] Patton's reply was a flat statement, which I remember very well, that my job was just to keep the man alive for a few moments so he could be questioned, and after that he could die, it didn't matter to him.⁵⁹¹

The medic could recall just one instance where a superior officer stopped electrical torture, a practice widely used in his unit. 'It is significant', he believed, that the cessation happened only 'on the basis that it was an *unproductive* method ... rather than with any sense of it being immoral' or illegal.⁵⁹²

By formally deputising US military intelligence officers to determine prisoners' legal statuses from 1965, MACV command laid down formal procedures for safeguarding arrestees under the laws of war. However, this phase of the war was simultaneously utilised to further the 'exploitation' of detainees for their intelligence potential. The result was the construction of a juridico-legal space of legitimacy and disciplinary technique within which mass interrogation could take hold. The discretionary authority to categorise detainees gave US soldiers significant powers to push subjects for responses to questions, ensuring that field interrogations were open-ended.

⁵⁹¹ *Dellums Committee Hearings on War Crimes in Vietnam*, 27.

⁵⁹² *Ibid.*, 33, emphasis added.



Figure 6.2 An NLF prisoner is drawn into the 1st Military Intelligence’s interrogation site at Di An, October 1967.⁵⁹³

Tempting targets

The search-and-destroy strategy might have thrown US soldiers into a ‘meat grinder’, but its victims were much more likely to be Vietnamese. For McNamara, the approach relied on delivering vast quantities of high-technology firepower and economising on American lives: ‘the thing we value most deeply is not money, but men. We have multiplied the capability of our men [with firepower]. *It’s expensive in dollars, but cheap in life.*’ This meant that US ground troops’ duties primarily centred on reconnaissance, with one colonel, Sidney Berry, writing in 1967 that his ideal officer ‘*spends firepower as if he is a millionaire and husbands lives as if he is a pauper ... during search and destroy operations, commanders should look upon infantry as the principal combat reconnaissance force and supporting fires as the principal destructive force.*’⁵⁹⁴ As Tim

⁵⁹³ Contact prints 43814--43817, Box 85, Records of the Office of the Chief Signal Officer, RG 111-C, NARA II.

⁵⁹⁴ Both McNamara and Berry quoted in Gibson, *The Perfect War*, 103, emphasis in original.

Holmes' account makes clear, on patrol missions, the purpose of interrogation was often to facilitate this destructive process. 'Making money' meant mapping local terrain and enemy locations so that artillery and air strikes could be directed against them. In this way, subjects interrogated by US field forces in the Republic became embroiled in the ground war's bombing circuitry.

As US personnel gained the power to question apprehended persons, the arc of interrogation-intelligence-targeting could initiate in any number of encounters. It might begin with the arrest of a resident during a village sweep, the questioning of a suspected NLF sympathiser on a search-and-destroy operation, on a patrol around brigade headquarters, or through 'body-snatch operations'. The latter involved helicopter squads descending on unsuspecting inhabitants (referred to as picking up 'packages'). One Army officer remembered that, 'executed as a quick reaction technique, body snatch operations provide[ed] the commander with a rapid means of gaining new intelligence.'⁵⁹⁵

However field interrogations began, the material gained from detainees was often used immediately in the direction of air and artillery strikes. If capturing units followed standard operating procedure, this began by searching detainees' bodies, setting them down in isolation, and asking for their name, rank, unit, and 'other information pertinent' to the tactical situation (see figure 6.3). If the organic intelligence detachment lacked linguists or ARVN translators, soldiers might bark out a few memorised phrases and questions in Vietnamese.⁵⁹⁶ Responses were recorded on a paper tag and strung to the prisoner's body (see figure 6.4). It was a kind of supertext announcing a new subject—a human object with possible intelligence value—and pinpointing the location of capture with six-digit coordinates. Much like an inventory label, it was crucial to prisoners' 'routing'.

⁵⁹⁵ John H. Hay, *Vietnam Studies: Tactical and Materiel Innovations* (Washington, D.C.: Department of the Army, 1974), 17–18.

⁵⁹⁶ Prisoner handling procedures laid out in "CDEC Doc Log No. 12-0534-70," Folder: History of CMIC, Box 1, Entry 30021, RG 472, NARA II, 4; Tourison, *Talking with Victor Charlie*, 52.



Figure 6.3 A suspected NLF member is interrogated by a *Chieu Hoi* returnee embedded with the ARVN's 16th Regimental Reconnaissance Company during Operation Phu Dong 24, in Tan Binh District, Vinh Long Province, 22 June 1967.⁵⁹⁷

⁵⁹⁷ Contact print 641737, Box 1533, RG 111-SC, NARA II.



Figure 6.4 ‘Viet Cong suspects’ are questioned and tagged by US soldiers from the 1st Cavalry Division before evacuation to a rear area during Operation Masher, north of Phu Che, 25 January 1966.⁵⁹⁸

Many prisoners could expect to be held in custody by patrols or routed to a brigade Collecting Point for classification and further questioning. Either way, once screened, hasty interrogations would be undertaken, with most geared towards the recording of geographical data for immediate use in locating and destroying insurgents nearby. The 1967 handbook guiding Army interrogations, *Field Manual 30-15, Intelligence Interrogation*, devoted extensive space to clarifying procedures for the spatialisation of this information as geographic intelligence and for its immediate reporting for tactical use. A military map, the manual declared, ‘is a prerequisite to thorough interrogation’, and the ‘experienced interrogator is an expert map reader’ and maker.⁵⁹⁹ Large-scale maps were best, so that interrogatees could be encouraged to ‘point out enemy

⁵⁹⁸ Contact print 627322, Box 1481, RG 111-SC, NARA II.

⁵⁹⁹ Department of the Army, Headquarters, *Field Manual 30-15, Intelligence Interrogation*, March 1969, Item Number 1070317001, Folder 17, Box 3, Glenn Helm Collection, VCA-TTU, §2-2, https://vva.vietnam.ttu.edu/repositories/2/digital_objects/74304.

positions, gun emplacements, troop concentrations, and enemy objectives of a tactical or strategic nature'.⁶⁰⁰

Intelligence officers' accounts underscore the importance of military cartography to the interrogation process. Recall that when Army interrogator, Sedgwick Tourison, was faced with a delivery of a batch of new interrogatees at a forward operating post, he and his fellow intelligence officer 'assembled the tools of our trade: the maps, pencils, papers, interrogation report blank forms, and prisoner logs'. All of this equipment, he said, was to be used in the 'simple and efficient' process of 'listing targets of immediate intelligence interest'.⁶⁰¹ For this reason, he remembered that 'being out of maps when the prisoners had something interesting to say was most embarrassing'.⁶⁰² Without them, an interrogators' function in the assembly line of intelligence and target production broke down.

As Holmes' account in the introduction suggests, one technique critical to 'making money' in the interrogation-cartography-bombing apparatus was map tracking. It animated the entire interrogation encounter, especially when it involved presenting sources with the familiarity of captured enemy maps. As *FM 30-15* explains, map tracking involved pressuring detainees backwards and forwards over the map as to the route by which they had arrived at their point of capture:

The technique employed is to begin at the common point of departure and to describe progressively all possible terrain features—roads, manmade objects, natural terrain features, and so forth, gradually leading the Subject from departure point to capture point. Continual references to the map should be made by the interrogator as he painstakingly leads the Subject from area to area and, in doing so, leaves nothing to chance. Every possibility is exhausted by asking the Subject questions as to what he heard; what he saw; what was to his left, right, front, and rear; while making continual progress through the route until the PW has been "tracked" to his point of capture.⁶⁰³

⁶⁰⁰ Department of the Army, Headquarters, *Field Manual 30-15, Intelligence Interrogation*, §2-3.

⁶⁰¹ Tourison, *Talking with Victor Charlie*, 97.

⁶⁰² *Ibid.*, 200.

⁶⁰³ Department of the Army, Headquarters, *Field Manual 30-15, Intelligence Interrogation*, §2-16.

However, soldiers did not just utilise existing maps during interrogations in the field and at collecting points, but fashioned new ones as well. Figure 6.5 is one of millions of maps made by MACV-ARVN intelligence teams interrogating prisoners about their routes of infiltration into the Republic. In this example, NLF infiltrator Nguyen Van Dung has been questioned about his unit's progress from Laos to Hà Tĩnh province. Of course, these artefacts were only useful upon rapid circulation. *Field Manual 30-15* explains, the 'most critical information which the interrogator may obtain is of no value unless it is reported to the appropriate person or agency in a timely manner and in usable form'.⁶⁰⁴

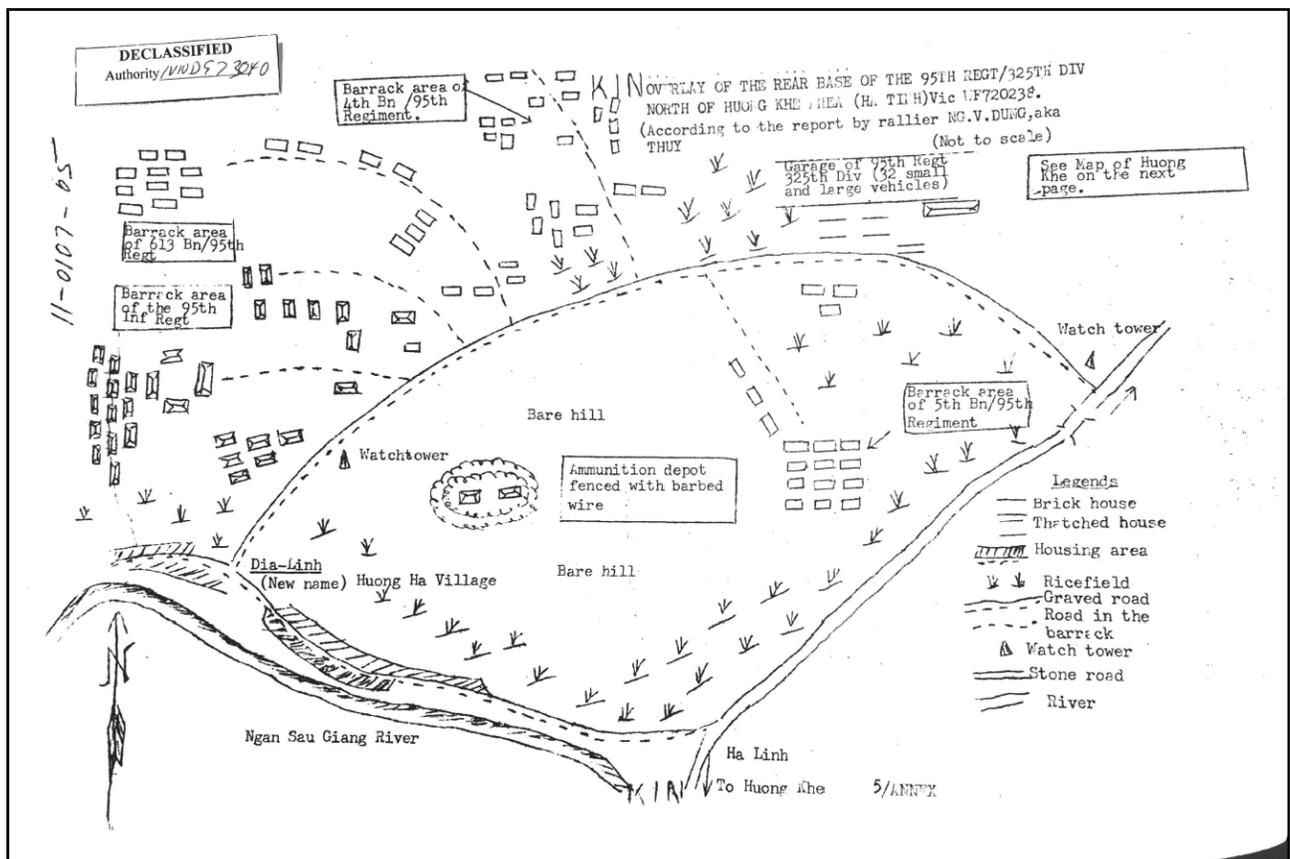


Figure 6.5 NLF 95th Regiment/325th Division's rear base at Huong Khê, as interpreted from the interrogation of Nguyen Van Dung, August 1965.⁶⁰⁵

⁶⁰⁴ Ibid., §5-1.

⁶⁰⁵ "Rallier's Interrogation Report," CDEC Log No. 11-0107-65, Folder: 0740, Dung, Nguyen Van, Box 4, CMIC Interrogation Dossiers, RG472, NARA II, Annex 5.

These inscriptions entered the communicational and command circuits of aerial and artillery bombardment. Such as the pressure to deliver new information quickly, Tourison recalled the chaos, excitement, and calculative procedures that ensued when helicopters began to dump villagers at a Collecting Point he was stationed at in Lai Khe:

the POW point started to get crazy. Villagers soon swamped the facilities and tried everyone's patience as each [General Purpose] medium tent was crammed with about 125 villagers...

[One] prisoner looked very unhappy as he squatted on the dirt floor, clearing his throat nervously over and over as he fidgeted. [An ARVN counterpart said,] "He's a liar about his background, but he's providing a lot of information about quartermaster caches, arms caches, VC hospitals, you know, lots of very tempting targets ... I do think he's giving us the straight information on the caches and other VC facilities. I've map-tracked him over the area, and there is no doubt he knows it very well."

He took me over to his map and started listing the target coordinates and target description of what he'd obtained so far, and *it looked like a shopping list of everything imaginable*. I took the list of targets to Lieutenant Wilsey who got on the phone to the [Tactical operations centre]; I translated the target description, and Wilsey reads the coordinates.

...[he] read targets to the S-2 as I translated the target description: "B113 Hospital, vicinity XT 530752; B112 Hospital, vicinity..." A total of over twenty targets, from training areas to an ordnance plant to food production areas. As targets were called in to the S-2, I posted them on a separate map acetate, adding the location of the village the large group of prisoners had come from as well as the point of capture of our instant rallier. *When completed it provided what seemed a comprehensive picture*. From one prisoner we seemed to have learned the location of every major facility in the Long Nguyen Secret Zone.

As part of the attrition war, 'simple and efficient' interrogation dossier templates were used to catalogue new targets. As with Holmes, who found his work gratifying when it 'made money', immediate strikes on targets gave Tourison a visceral sense of professional validation. Even in the larger machinery of technowar, the fruits of labour were at times palpable:

[T]he young American interrogators with only three or four months experience were full of fire, actually seeing *how their insignificant pieces helped make up the big picture*, and they finally started to understand the

importance of tactical intelligence and why preparation from the outset was what made the difference. It was wonderful when you actually saw someone go after a bunker you have located after interrogating a VC guerrilla. It's quite different from just putting out a "file-and-forget" blurb from Saigon on an after-action report about a B-52 strike which took place six months earlier.⁶⁰⁶

'Going after' here meant redirecting a ground patrol. But interrogation intelligence could also help put together the big picture necessary to plan those large-scale B-52 strikes, as Holmes showed. In this way, human intelligence collected out in the field could find its way into the performance of the attrition war's most extensive circuits, even supporting the air war. One officer, W.R. Baker was stationed at an Army Military Intelligence Detachment in Da Nang in 1971. He described a job that involved mapping target data and filing reports sourced from interrogatees' responses:

I began creating topical files on enemy units and equipment while obtaining 1:50,000 scale UTM maps, which took up considerable wall space ... The maps were an immediate "hit" with our unit, as we and any visitors would be able to view and comment on where enemy units were positioned and other loci made while using the maps. The maps were obviously a tremendous asset during the Easter Offensive, especially since they were manually and accurately updated...⁶⁰⁷

Collating information despatched from across I Corps, he would draw up potential targets and communicate them to the office responsible for nominating new targets for Operation Arc Light and its fleet of long-range bombers. Ventures like Arc Light delivered air support to ground operations in the form of extraordinary payloads delivered by SAC's B-52 Stratofortress aircraft, the planes that previously might have been directed over the Soviet Union, to targets nominated as part of Project Wringer. Such vast USAF firepower meant that technowar went beyond Army operations in South Vietnam. The air war was high-technology and indiscriminate, most productive when enemies and performance outputs were reduced to the kind of 'quantifiable abstractions' that distanced the 'designers and the victims of destruction'.⁶⁰⁸ The

⁶⁰⁶ Tourison, *Talking with Victor Charlie*, 205.

⁶⁰⁷ W.R. Baker, "HUMINT: A Continuing Crisis?," *Small Wars Journal*, no date, <https://smallwarsjournal.com/jrnl/art/humint-a-continuing-crisis>.

⁶⁰⁸ Chwastiak, "Rationality, Performance Measures and Representations of Reality," 34.

same could be said for the labourers inside the human intelligence apparatus. Baker felt that, while supplying Arc Light with coordinates in Da Nang, he felt ‘very fortunate to work for an organization that didn’t inhibit new ideas’.

Willingness to pay

In managerial technowar, detained Vietnamese bodies were valued as far as they fuelled the assembly lines that made up mobile ground operations or improved the efficiency of bombing runs by supplying fresh intelligence. In this way, interrogation emerged as a consideration for units when they were weighing up how they could improve their body count ratios. Lieutenant Colonel Anthony Herbert stressed its function to the MACV’s attrition war: ‘Kill them or capture them, but emphasize prisoners because they give information that leads to more prisoners.’⁶⁰⁹ Herbert insisted that the 173rd Airborne Brigade end the standard practice of killing prisoners, translating his orders into the currency his men would understand:

I also stressed that we were changing the body count policy. There would be no more in-country R and Rs for “dead dinks.” From now on, I said, the R and Rs would be for live prisoners and only for live prisoners. We needed intelligence badly, and you could only get intelligence from live people. The trooper would get five days for a legitimate POW, with one day subtracted for each cut, bruise, or contusion on the prisoner. The better the condition of the merchandise, *the more we were willing to pay for it.*⁶¹⁰

With the production model of warfare operating—and apparatuses of cultural distancing in effect—American soldiers often utilised extreme violence when seeking information from Vietnamese detainees. The violence of interrogation spanned moments of intimate brutality and the more remote work of bombing. These connections were repeatedly described over four days in April 1971, when a series of *ad hoc* war crimes hearings took place in modest office space in Washington, D.C. Run by a handful of rebellious congresspersons, but denied official committee status, the ‘Dellums Hearings’ were a means of airing unvarnished testimony from US servicemen returned from Vietnam.⁶¹¹ The second day’s proceedings addressed prisoner of war

⁶⁰⁹ Anthony B. Herbert, with James T. Wooten, *Soldier* (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1973), 200.

⁶¹⁰ Herbert, with Wooten, *Soldier*, 230.

⁶¹¹ *Dellums Committee Hearings on War Crimes in Vietnam*, 81--156.

interrogation and taking the stand was First Lieutenant Michael Uhl, a Counter Intelligence Officer in the American Division. In Quảng Ngãi province two years earlier he had been chief of the 11th Brigade's First Intelligence Team and so responsible for interrogating prisoners of war and suspected NLF members in country surrounding his brigade's camp.⁶¹² Uhl testified that in the course of his duties almost every interrogation he witnessed involved brutal methods. Later that day, Peter Martinsen, who had specialised in logging interrogation reports with the 11th Cavalry, claimed that 'some form of force, stress or harassment was used' in *all* of the six hundred interrogations and countless more preliminary screenings he participated in, including against women and children.⁶¹³

Rather than a result of ill-discipline among the ranks, however, Uhl, Martinsen, and other ex-interrogators concurred at the Dellums Hearings that torture was programmatic. Though unofficial, it was 'a policy that existed when I got there, continued after I left', Uhl said.⁶¹⁴ This was because abuse was not just widespread, but functional and circulatory, employed throughout both the US and ARVN interrogation-detention apparatuses. Uhl recalled that it followed recognisable institutional and technical patterns:

The Vietnamese civilians who were obtained by infantry units were subjected to, in my experience, *a cycle of torture*. They were first, when detained by infantry foot soldiers, brutalized, and tortured. If they were turned over to a battalion, they were tortured again. If they were detained further, brought to the brigade interrogation center, they were tortured again and brutalized probably by electrical torture at that time.

If we couldn't determine if they were prisoners of war or civil defendants, in other words, that they had broken the laws of their country, they were draft dodgers or something else, then we would turn them over to MACV personnel who were right outside of the gate.

They would torture them again.⁶¹⁵

It is impossible to know what proportion of prisoners detained by US personnel were tortured in South Vietnam. This is because, Martinsen said, the practice was never tracked in the official

⁶¹² Uhl's account can be found in *Dellums Committee Hearings on War Crimes in Vietnam*, 91--105.

⁶¹³ Statement of Peter Martinsen, SP 5 POW Interrogator, 541 M.I.D., 11th Cavalry Regiment, in *Dellums Committee Hearings on War Crimes in Vietnam*, 145.

⁶¹⁴ *Dellums Committee Hearings on War Crimes in Vietnam*, 91.

⁶¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 95.

ledger books of technowar, but ‘naturally evolved’ to service it. As occupiers facing popular opposition and unable to distinguish between combatants and non-combatants, counterinsurgents were instructed to be suspicious of everyone and to employ spectacular violence, with ‘tremendous pressure’ ramifying down the command structure to maximise arrests and to raise the numbers of reports—‘products’—that flowed from interrogations to ‘consumers’. This meant that brigades found themselves ‘in competition over the number of prisoners they captured’, an interrogator said, in ‘competition over the quality of intelligence’. Those who insisted on following ‘the book’, by refusing to apply electrical currents to prisoners’ bodies, for example, were relieved of their positions.⁶¹⁶

In this context, the interrogation intelligence report became fetishised, a commodity with its own powers of mobility and objective force. At the Dellums Hearings Martinsen said that reports were always ‘passed up’ such that they connoted information ‘but not the process that was used’ in its obtaining.⁶¹⁷ This despite the unreliable nature of the intelligence flowing from brigade posts and produced by patrols. In early 1966 the Army had ended the requirement that interrogators learn Vietnamese and the 11th’s interrogation teams lacked translators and general culturally literacy.⁶¹⁸ By necessity, then, most of the informational products they hastily assembled were branded ‘unverified’. Nevertheless, interrogations reports were

continuously used as input into air strikes and artillery strikes. At the end of the day, any information we could not react to on an immediate basis we would send to the S-2 [chief intelligence officer], or to the artillery liaison officer. That night the coordinates that we provided through our ... reports would be used, would be fired on and often these coordinates overlapped civilian populated areas.⁶¹⁹

Martinsen recalled that geographical and other intelligence was thus whisked into the Brigade’s reporting-bombing apparatus even when apprehended subjects were interrogated about places they had not visited for days. Recall that, as a labourer in managerial technowar, the intelligence officer’s role was not to analyse the knowledge they created as much as to evaluate the ‘efficiency the human being’ under their control and to convey datapoints as soon as they

⁶¹⁶ Ibid., 101.

⁶¹⁷ Ibid., 153.

⁶¹⁸ Tourison, *Talking with Victor Charlie*, 32.

⁶¹⁹ *Dellums Committee Hearings on War Crimes in Vietnam*, 96.

were collected, for direct use in the further production of warfare. Even outdated information, Martinsen admitted, would still ‘go over to the S-2, be plotted on the S-2 map and serve as input to air strikes, if they had air power that day, or artillery strikes, which they always had.’

Mobile field interrogations out ‘in the bush’, at Collecting Points, during patrols, and on village sweeps were crucial means by which American forces performed the attrition war in South Vietnam. The coordinates and other geographic intelligence gathered could be arrayed and communicated as targeting information for aerial attacks, used to plot infiltration routes, identify enemy positions, and innumerable other calculative operations. Even when mass interrogation did not animate violence at the intimate scale, it nonetheless actuated extended geographies of violence. Given the outputs orientation of the attrition regime, however, brutality was all too often were directed at interrogatees bodies directly too.

Nickels and dimes: Strategic interrogation

In America’s war in Vietnam, the production model of warfare extended to counterinsurgency’s other primary form of mass interrogation, ‘high-level’ or strategic interrogations carried out in purpose-built carceral facilities. These were also conducted according to the imperatives of managerial technowar and the figure who had the greatest influence on their expansion and systematisation was Army Brigadier General Joseph McChristian. He became head of MACV’s intelligence branch (known as ‘J2’) in July 1965, just as hundreds of thousands more US soldiers were arriving as part of a hugely expanded ground war. Westmoreland’s attrition strategy was becoming institutionalised and over the next several years McChristian would oversee the construction of a new national system of carceral-interrogation facilities for special sources in order to service it. The network’s preminent prison would be the Combined Military Interrogation Centre (CMIC) in Saigon. Opened in 1967, it would become one of the most productive strategic intelligence sites for the US and ARVN intelligence infrastructure. However, McChristian keenly understood that, in order to demonstrate success to Westmoreland and McNamara, mass interrogation needed to involve more than just detention centres and map rooms. It required information systems with sophisticated technologies producing ceaseless measurable outputs.

Shopping list

Joseph McChristian was rough-hewn, with a record of senior service extending back to the Second World War, when he had been George S. Patton's head of intelligence in Europe. However, his recent ascendance through the ranks ensured that he was also an enthusiastic convert to the *demier cris* of scientific management. As a very senior intelligence officer, he understood that his primary responsibility was the adjudication of funding requests, the monitoring of production processes, and the coordination of forces within a high-technology bureaucratic hierarchy. In this way McChristian aped Westmoreland and McNamara's penchant for technical solutions and budget focus, replicating their demands for programmes to be deconstructed into their component missions, so that each could be measured over time for their quantifiable, incremental results. This mission structure would take precedence over all others, even if it meant translating moral and political quandaries into matters of procedure and productivity. By the time his service as head of J2 ended in 1967, US military intelligence operations across the Republic of Vietnam would thus conform to the precepts of managerial technowar, representing another assembly line of production in the corporate model of warfare.

Rather than dead, injured, or detained bodies, however, intelligence managers such as McChristian demanded the ceaseless churning of informational products. Of course, in this subsidiary market, outputs were ever concrete, with reports, imagery, and geospatial datapoints the key units of currency. And, with McChristian at the helm, J2 worked with senior intelligence figures in ARVN's leadership cadre, the Joint General Staff (JGS), to expand a huge range of organisational and technological means for improving the production of the informational outputs required to fight the attrition war. These included new mechanisms for intercepting signals, performing aerial reconnaissance photography, and computerising data processing. Both McChristian and JGS were acutely aware that conducting a 'population-centric' war in a canopy-covered 'jungle environment' attenuated some of the grander technologies of military geography. For this reason, the systematic production of human intelligence was again called upon.⁶²⁰

Only hours into his job in Saigon, McChristian unexpectedly found himself briefing McNamara. The Johnson Administration was vastly ramping up the American ground war, and

⁶²⁰ McChristian, *The Role of Military Intelligence, 1965--1967*, 157--158; Colonel Hoang Ngoc Lung, *Intelligence, Indochina Monograph series* (Washington, D.C.: US Army Center of Military History, 1982), 112--118, <https://apps.dtic.mil/dtic/tr/fulltext/u2/a132112.pdf>.

the Defense Secretary was visiting MACV in order to take the measure of events on the ground. McChristian was informed that he was no longer an ‘advisor’, but now officially mobilised, a soldier at war. As he delivered a hurriedly prepared situation report in the MACV offices, he was interrupted by McNamara. The Defense Secretary cut to the chase, demanding a boiled down and budgeted ‘shopping list’ for a new, US-designed ‘combat intelligence system’ for the Republic that could be run in partnership with ARVN’s own intelligence branch.⁶²¹

McChristian believed that a counterinsurgency planner’s driving question was geographical—flying to Saigon he had scrawled in his notebook, ‘Where can I normally expect to find the enemy?’ Now, faced with McNamara’s provocation, he jumped to the same conclusion as counterinsurgents had in Algeria and Malaya, believing answers to his notebook’s question could be discovered by ‘gaining access to enemy military personnel’. Accordingly, at the top of the shopping list he forwarded to McNamara was a request for a new, national interrogation apparatus in the Republic.⁶²²

McChristian’s plan involved taking advantage of the enormous numbers of arrestees falling into ARVN and US custody. Some of the most promising would be directed to an archipelago of carceral sites ideally spread across South Vietnam and staffed with expert interrogators. In the words of one of them, Sedwick Tourison, together these sites would allow J2 to tap ‘a great reservoir of information’ and that ‘McChristian wanted it all’.⁶²³ Once built, all captured or surrendered subjects were to be evacuated into frontline centres and then cycled up and down the screening and interrogation hierarchy, depending on their ‘value’ (see figure 6.6). McNamara was supportive, immediately approving a budget of \$3.7 million to construct the system, with further funding promised. Of course, that was contingent upon further analyses of

⁶²¹ McChristian, *The Role of Military Intelligence, 1965--1967*, 4.

⁶²² *Ibid.*, 3--5.

⁶²³ Tourison, *Talking with Victor Charlie*, 174. It is not clear how many war prisoners were held in the Republic in mid-1965 and available for McChristian’s intelligence officers, though the number was certainly rising. Total military prison camp capacity rose from 3 000 to 13 000 in 1967 and 21 000 in 1968, but overcrowding was rife, see Prugh, *Law at War: Vietnam, 1964--1973*. The number of interrogation subjects available to J2’s new interrogation apparatus might have been even higher given that the local access agreements permitted US interrogators to liaise with sector police. However, McChristian regretted that these interrogation resources were often very frustrating to utilise. Nonetheless, the number of political prisoners in the Republic’s civil jail system was enormous, possibly over 200 000 and captives in this system were commonly cycled into police interrogation facilities, in which American advisers could be posted, see McChristian, *The Role of Military Intelligence, 1965--1967*, 39; Casella, "The Politics of Prisoners of War"; and, Luce and Thanh, "In South Vietnamese Jails."

programme performance, especially in terms of the production of concrete intelligence on the whereabouts of the enemy.⁶²⁴

Under the national interrogation centre plan, every military division would have its own facility at headquarters for interrogating captives.⁶²⁵ As well, four large new ‘combined’ interrogation centres would be located in Đà Nẵng, Pleiku, Biên Hòa, and Cần Thơ, one for each of the four tactical zones (‘corps’) by which MACV and ARVN planners’ maps sliced up the Republic. These would be jointly operated with ARVN intelligence personnel through a broader apparatus of ‘combined’ intelligence management, a pivotal system discussed further below. As well, US military intelligence officers would now have much more direct access to the Republic’s network of *Chieu Hoi* detention sites, a network of cages holding tens of thousands of men and women who had surrendered or defected.⁶²⁶ However, the ‘focal point’ of McChristian’s national interrogation apparatus would be the CMIC (commonly called ‘the Mick’) in Saigon (see figure 6.7).⁶²⁷ As explained below, it would operate as the structure’s

⁶²⁴ McChristian, *The Role of Military Intelligence, 1965--1967*, 86.

⁶²⁵ MACV Directive 381-11, Folder: Interrogation and Intelligence, Box 1, Entry A1 567, RG 472, NARA II, Annex A.

⁶²⁶ In addition to enemy prisoners, many of the subjects detained in the Republic’s and US’s detention systems were those seeking safe passage through the *Chieu Hoi* (‘Open Arms’) amnesty and defection programme. To a significant extent the initiative had evolved out of early-1960s advisory campaigns led by Robert Thompson, in his capacity as head of the British Advisory Mission in Saigon, and US counterinsurgents such as Edward Lansdale, building on experiences gained during the anti-Hukbhalahap campaign in the Philippines. Between 1963 and 1971, safe passage cards distributed by aircraft had ‘literally blanketed South Vietnam’ (almost one billion were being dropped per month in 1969). In official parlance the programme’s internees were referred to as ‘ralliers’, ‘returnees’, or *Hoi Chanh* and during this period almost 200 000 were detained and brought to hundreds of district or regional *Chieu Hoi* sites, or the national *Chieu Hoi* Center in Saigon. The programme extends beyond the scope of this analysis but it is worth noting that in these facilities subjects were extensively interrogated, with reports channelled to the Central Intelligence Center Vietnam across the city, or the Defense Department, including by behavioural science interviewers contracted by RAND Corporation. Eventually the programme’s ‘intelligence value’ threatened to overwhelm its sanctuary function. The US chief of MACV’s *Chieu Hoi* Division reported in 1968 that ‘whereas returnees were once neglected’, now ‘the pendulum has swung the other way and they tend to become pawns and laboratory animals, picked up and picked over by any level of the intelligence community that happens to come along’. Here the logic of value re-emerges, the review warning that ‘if the intelligence community is to continue to profit from the golden eggs laid by the *Chieu Hoi* goose, it must remember to respect the goose’. See “*Chieu Hoi* Division Sector Analysis, 1969,” Folder: Plans and Programs, Box 1, Entry No. A1 567, RG 472, NARA II, 12; J.A. Koch, *The Chieu Hoi Program in South Vietnam, 1963--1972*. R-1172-ARPA, January 1973 (Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation), iv, 66, <https://www.rand.org/content/dam/rand/pubs/reports/2006/R1172.pdf>.

⁶²⁷ McChristian, *The Role of Military Intelligence, 1965--1967*, 16; Joseph Carrier and Ralph Strauch, interview by author, Los Angeles, 30 October 2017.

preeminent 'national-level' facility where 'important sources' would be submitted to 'strategic interrogations'.⁶²⁸

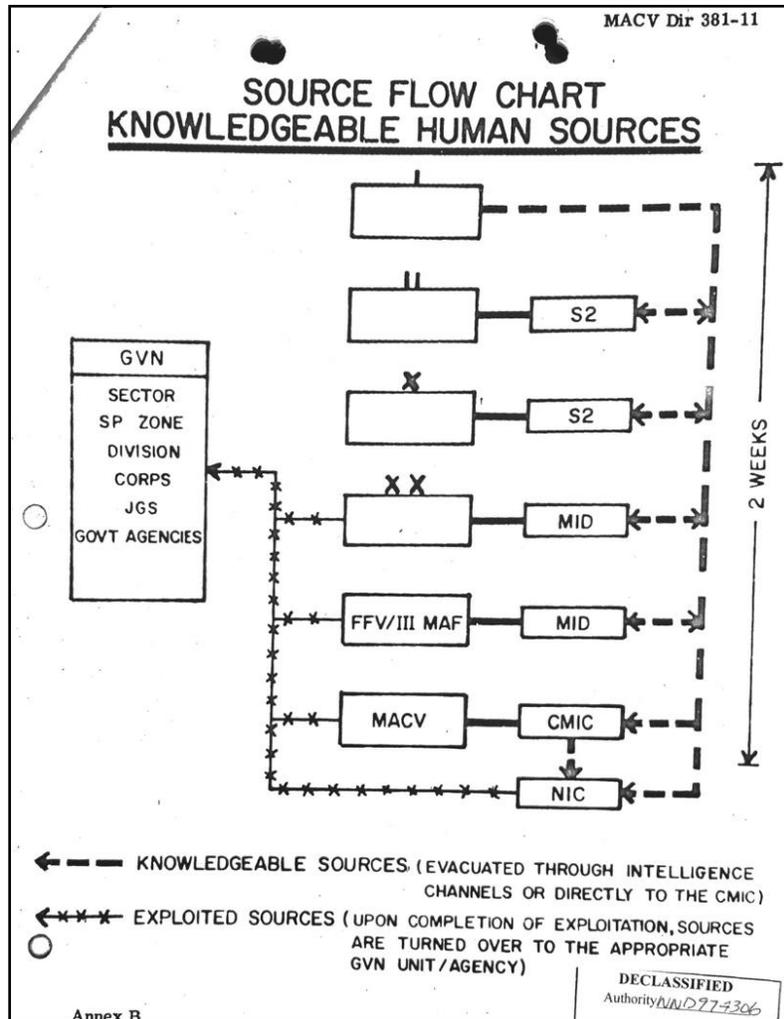


Figure 6.6 Schematic plan showing the flow of 'human sources' through the US-ARVN interrogation national system, ca. 1968.⁶²⁹

⁶²⁸ "525 MI Cp Ltr, Subject: Meritorious Unit Commendation Letter of Recommendation," Folder: History of CMIC, Box 1, CMIC General Records, Entry 30021, RG472, NARA II.

⁶²⁹ Extract from "MACV Directive 381-11," updated 5 August 1968, Folder: Interrogation and Intelligence, Box 1, Entry A1 567, RG 472, NARA II, Annex B.

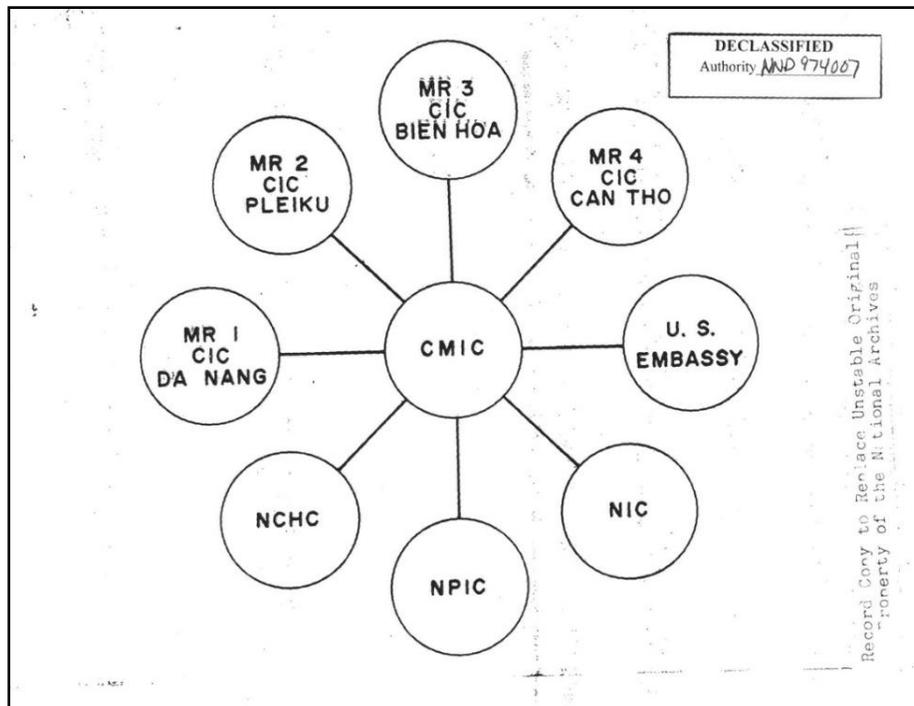


Figure 6.7 CMIC nominally at the centre of US strategic interrogation in Vietnam, 1967.⁶³⁰

Combining intelligence

After sketching out his plan for a national interrogation system with McNamara, McChristian instantly set about planning a much larger apparatus of intelligence production into which it could be integrated. One of his most important contributions would be the ‘Combined Concept’. It was to be a bilateral arrangement for integrating some of J2’s new intelligence infrastructure with that of the ARVN’s. In September 1965, Westmoreland and the head of JGS, Brigadier General Nguyễn Hữu Cồ, formally agreed to pool some of their operations. The Combined

⁶³⁰ Extract from presentation "Strategic Interrogations," Folder: Strategic Interrogations, Box 1, Entry 30021, RG 472, NARA II. ‘NCHC’ denotes the *National Chieu Hoi Center*. ‘Nominally’ refers to the fact that the CIA’s own Saigon interrogation facility, the National Interrogation Center (‘NIC’ in this diagram) was intensely protective of its operations and detainees. The archives of US mass interrogation in Vietnam regularly note that at times other agencies found it virtually impossible to access the NIC’s records and detainees. As well, McChristian himself notes that while information was funnelled from the NIC to the Combined Intelligence Center, Vietnam (‘co-operation was generally excellent’), the Embassy’s ‘Office of Special Assistant’ (the CIA’s cover label) wielded outsized power over local and national police interrogation facilities (the ‘NPIC’ in the diagram), McChristian, *The Role of Military Intelligence, 1965--1967*, 29, 39; see also Valentine, *The Phoenix Program: America’s Use of Terror in Vietnam*, epub e-book, chap. 5 and passim.

Concept joint forces agreement laid down protocols for sharing, circulating, and prioritising access to captured prisoners and documents, technological equipment, and both agencies' rapidly growing databanks.⁶³¹ It was a fundamentally important advance in developing a US mass interrogation system in the Republic because it meant that while US forces still had to forward prisoners to ARVN's confinement apparatus, J2 was now permitted to insert its own intelligence teams at every stage of the prisoner evacuation cycle, including at ARVN facilities. With access to the Republic's detainment apparatus, J2 radically widened its net for undertaking static interrogations in the country.⁶³²

But the Combined Concept's most important measure provided for the construction of four huge new intelligence fusion centres in Saigon, staffed by a legion of thousands of Vietnamese and American intelligence analysts, translators, secretarial staff, interrogators, and computer operators.⁶³³ Each was a capstone facility at the head of particular assembly line within a multidivisional corporation of intelligence production. Together they made up a national technological hub and spoke system of information processing, flow control, storage, and calculation.

In addition to the Combined Military Interrogation Center, examined in detail below, the system's original nodes included the giant Combined Document Exploitation Centre (CDEC), dedicated to processing, translating, coding, and storing the millions of captured enemy documents that were flowing into ARVN and US headquarters from field operations.

⁶³¹ General Westmoreland to General Co, 17 September 1965, Item Number 2860806002, Sedgwick Tourison Collection, VCA-TTU; McChristian, *The Role of Military Intelligence, 1965—1967*, 4, 14. In his Vietnam service memoir, McChristian notes his participation in 'combined' systems before. Notably, he cites his formative experience in 'international co-operation in intelligence operations as General George S. Patton's chief of intelligence in Germany after World War II when thousands of refugees had to be screened', hinting at a potentially intriguing link between US mass interrogation and screening in post-War Europe and Vietnam.

⁶³² Jeffrey J. Clark, *Advice and Support: The Final Years, 1965--1973* (Washington, DC: United States Army Center of Military, 1988), 169; see also "MACV Dir 20-5 – Inspections and Investigations, Prisoners of War – Determination of Eligibility," US Military Assistance Command, Vietnam, in "Report of the Department of the Army Review of the Preliminary Investigations into the My Lai Incident, Volume III, Exhibits, Book I – Directives," 14 March 1970, Annex F, https://www.loc.gov/rr/frd/Military_Law/pdf/RDAR-Vol-IIIBook1.pdf.

⁶³³ Lori Tagg, "Intelligence Force Had Role in Vietnam Conflict," *US Army*, 6 March 2015, https://www.army.mil/article/143996/intelligence_force_had_role_in_vietnam_conflict.

McChristian soon claimed that it was home to the largest group of language specialists in the country, hundreds of local civilians trained to decipher NLF cover names and jargon. Interrogation reports were directed there as well, part of the mountain of paper trucked in every day for indexing and storage in an automated microfilm system called 'FileSearch' or, by its users, as MACV's 'Answer Machine'.⁶³⁴ The platform used machine methods to quickly scan and recall documents. While in 1966 around one hundred pounds of reports were being printed on a 'big day', by early 1967 this had risen to 1400 pounds per day, 'with every indication of greater volume in the future'.⁶³⁵ McChristian was immensely proud of this key node in his 'manufacturing sector', as well the geometrical growth in its production.⁶³⁶ The smallest site in the network, the Combined Materiel Exploitation Center performed a similar function but was tasked with developing 'technical intelligence' from captured equipment and technology.⁶³⁷

Much larger was the apparatus's nerve centre, the Combined Intelligence Center Vietnam (CICV). On opening in January 1967, McChristian beamed, it was the 'largest air-conditioned single-story structure in southeast Asia', a mammoth 50 000 square foot windowless white stucco prism.⁶³⁸ Inside, five hundred intelligence specialists sifted, analysed, and mapped intelligence data torrenting in from across the country. One reporter described it as a secretive 'fact plant', wherein 'a family of blinking, whirring computers devours, digests and spews out a Gargantuan diet of information about the enemy'.⁶³⁹

⁶³⁴ Michael E. Unsworth, "A lesson Not Learned: The MACV 'Answer Machine'," paper presented at the 1996 Vietnam Symposium, Center for the Study of the Vietnam Conflict, Texas Tech University, Lubbock, TX, April 17-20, courtesy of the author.

⁶³⁵ McChristian, *The Role of Military Intelligence, 1965--1967*, 22. By the end of the war CDEC's database of imaged files ran to over three million pages, just ten percent of the documents sent to the Center. The apparatus was returned to the US in such a state of disassembly, customisation, and obsolescence that full searchability has never been restored to the database. Though researchers today can access digitised versions of the files, the collection is arranged in the random order in which they were entered into the system, see Michael E. Unsworth, "Initially a State-of-the-Art Computerized Intelligence Tool, Today the FileSearch System is a Study in Obsolescence," *Vietnam* 14, no. 5 (2002): 14--16.

⁶³⁶ Gibson, *The Perfect War*, 153.

⁶³⁷ McChristian, *The Role of Military Intelligence, 1965--1967*, 11.

⁶³⁸ McChristian, *The Role of Military Intelligence, 1965--1967*, 27; "History of the Combined Intelligence Center," Item Number F015800180833, Sam Johnson Vietnam Archive Collection, VCA-TTU, no page.

⁶³⁹ Joseph B. Treaster, "Behind the Intelligence Curtain," *The New York Times*, 1 October 1969, 2.

As with intelligence produced in brigade headquarters and on patrol, much of that diet was geographical information. The centre was the successor to MACV's Target Research and Analysis Center, and CICV largely extended this function while adapting more powerful tools for synthesising data. By incorporating IBM 1401 and 1130 card computers, and an IBM device for interfacing with CDEC's collections, staff could catalyse disparate 'raw intelligence' into new formats such as the area analyses used on search-and-destroy missions, infiltration routes, and order of battle estimates. In this sense, CICV was a high-technology geospatial agency, with branches dedicated to photo interpretation, cartography, and target mapping. Its major concern continued to be the development of artillery and aerial targets. For example, staff in the Targets Division were responsible for supplying targets to Operation Arc Light (where the real 'money' lay for Tim Holmes).⁶⁴⁰ According to McChristian, its most important development was a proto-Geographical Information Systems technique called 'pattern analysis'. This involved drawing select data from the IBM databanks, printing it on polymer overlays, and stacking them simultaneously over maps in order to ascertain if they bore any relation. For example, superimposed overlays may bring out a connection between the locations of B-52 strikes and enemy sightings.⁶⁴¹ The computerisation of the combined concept's records meant that interrogation dossiers rigidly adhered to a standardised structure.

Managers at J2 would claim that with these cutting-edge tools the Combined Centres were processing 'a volume of intelligence data far exceeding that of any conflict in history'.⁶⁴² However, while the apparatus's technical capacity to process data at speed was exceptional, even more crucial for present purposes was the way in which it formatted mass interrogation and the war around it.

The system was deeply shaped by MACV's commitment to managerial technowar and its associated tendencies to rationalise, scale up, and centralise information production. For

⁶⁴⁰ "History of the Combined Intelligence Center," Item Number F015800180833, Sam Johnson Vietnam Archive Collection, VCA-TTU, no page.

⁶⁴¹ McChristian, *The Role of Military Intelligence, 1965--1967*, 34--35.

⁶⁴² "Proposed Citation: Meritorious Unit Commendation," Folder: History of the CMIC, Box 1, Entry No. 30021, RG 472, NARA II.

McChristian in particular, the Combined Concept was a means of extending a model of scientific management to the design and administration of military intelligence across the country. Like his superiors at MACV and Washington, DC, he believed his role was as an overseer of industrial production, his chief responsibilities being to allocate resources rationally, break down processes into procedures, measure progress through quantitative assessments, and ferry products to commanders. Accordingly, the Combined Concept became both a network of concrete production facilities and an administrative platform for bringing intelligence operations under expert managerial control. For MACV, the combined approach was not only about gaining access to the Republic's archives, facilities, and Vietnamese speakers, or even introducing powerful computerisation and file storage technologies, though these were all essential. It was also about introducing corporate order to an intelligence war. Reflecting the broader managerial zeitgeist, McChristian set about building an aspiringly large organisation equipped to handle a deluge of information and use it to rationally deduce strategic decisions. Winning McNamara's approval to expand J2 substantially, McChristian ordered his staff to 'think big'—war 'was no time to grow piecemeal'. High technology, high management, and counterinsurgency intelligence went together, he said:

People who have not worked in intelligence normally have no conception of the number of people it takes to perform necessary activities. Without an extensive data base that can be manipulated rapidly, it is very difficult to evaluate information and to identify and ferret out guerrillas and members of the Vietnamese Communist political-military infrastructure.⁶⁴³

At MACV's Combined Centers, even more than out 'in the field', intelligence (and interrogation information) was constructed as something like an industrial enterprise directed towards the endless production of standardised reports and recombinable datapoints. In fact, for McChristian, reports were J2's key commodity, their sweeping absorption into a central database marking a dynamic operation, and their continual fabrication the best means of demonstrating productivity.

⁶⁴³ McChristian, *The Role of Military Intelligence, 1965--1967*, 8.

Once again, to be valorised, data reports had to be inserted into a gyre of calculative command that approximated a market economy. As McChristian intoned,

every scrap of information, every written report, is to the intelligence officer *as nickels and dimes are to a banker*. It takes a lot of them to make the business profitable. Every piece of information must be accounted for like money and confirmed or refuted as genuine or counterfeit. When an intelligence analyst receives an unconfirmed report, he cannot let it go. He must confirm it or refute it.⁶⁴⁴

Under McChristian's control, the Combined Centres were imagined as manufacturers of products servicing market demands, their operations modelled along the lines of a complex modern enterprise.⁶⁴⁵ This was apparent even at the level of day-to-day language. For example, J2 managed 'production centers' (interrogation sites, computer mainframes, aerial photography interpretation teams, actuarial desks, and much more), while intelligence recipients were 'consumers' (from commanders at corps headquarters to the White House) (see figure 6.8). But managerialism shaped this cycle in deeper ways. McChristian drew explicitly from the principles and techniques of scientific management in order to integrate rationalised data production into the administration of counterinsurgency on an unprecedented scale. This process took two main forms.

⁶⁴⁴ Ibid., 9.

⁶⁴⁵ Gibson, *The Perfect War*, 153.

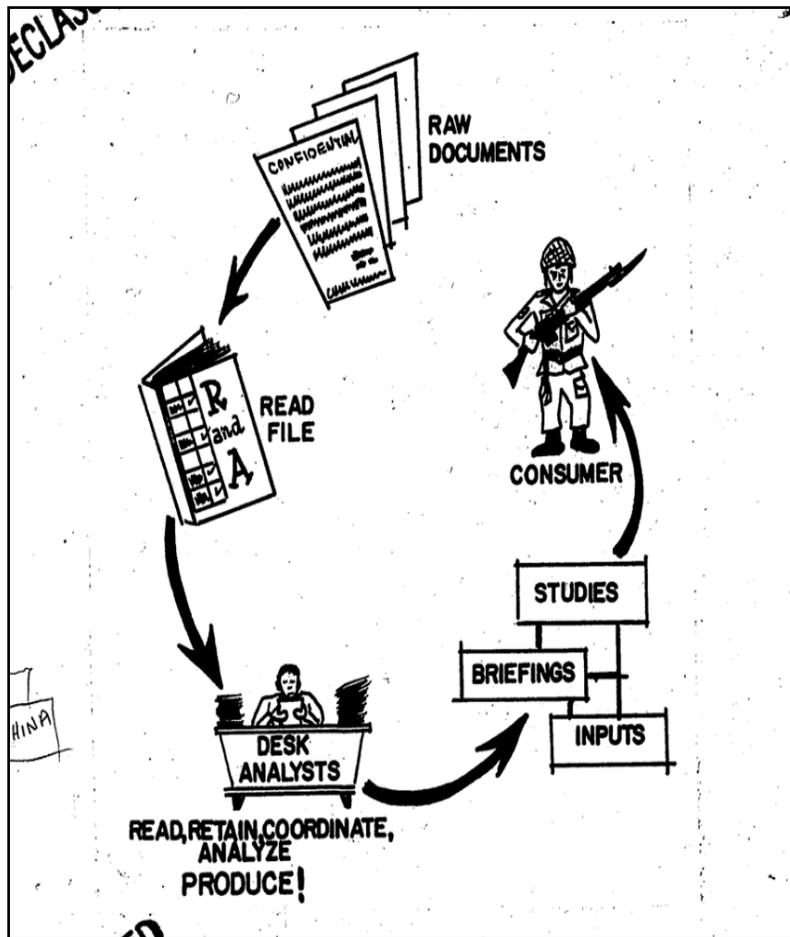


Figure 6.8 Intelligence processing, production, and consumption as an entrepreneurial cycle at CICV, ca. 1966.⁶⁴⁶

The first relates to the centralisation of calculative responsibility. McChristian, McNamara, and Westmoreland were all committed to the modernist managerial precept that decision-making was an ‘executive function’, and that the power to plan large organisations should gravitate to a clique of trained experts specialised in the generic skills of delegating tasks and overseeing the distribution of resources. For McChristian and Westmoreland, this meant funnelling information—much of it statistical—and responsibility to central management (the ‘bankers’). Both had witnessed with revulsion the periodic reduction and civilianisation of Army

⁶⁴⁶ Extract from "History of the Combined Intelligence Center," Item Number F015800180833, Sam Johnson Vietnam Archive Collection, VCA-TTU, no page.

intelligence resources during the 1950s and believed that fluid counterinsurgencies required commanders on the ground to control the production of warfare. Indeed, early on in his tenure, Westmoreland had accompanied Robert Thompson on a study trip to Malaya, returning to Saigon with the understanding that his task there concerned political centralisation as much as military control. He now believed that the insurgency was a problem of population management and needed to be solved by expertly reconstructing an ‘economically and politically viable society’ in Vietnam. The trip brought home, in his words, ‘the importance of centralized control from top to bottom’.⁶⁴⁷

Similarly, for McChristian, memories of intelligence defunding undergirded his desire to build a monolithic, centralised intelligence machine—a deliberately ‘large and sophisticated organisation’ whose role was servicing commanders’ knowledge requirements with a cutting-edge master databank that constantly churned out new products.⁶⁴⁸ He took a leaf out of Robert McNamara’s strategy of institutional control through budgetary oversight:

I knew that the most effective means to control intelligence operations was to control the purse strings ... The advantages of this centralized control were readily apparent: all intelligence operations required J-2 staff approval before funding support could be provided. In addition, funds were now immediately available to me for the fullest exploitation of targets of opportunity.⁶⁴⁹

Across the Combined apparatus, including at the CMIC, the managerial centralisation of institutional responsibility inspired a need for reporting formats and production processes to become standardised, and for tasks to be made procedural, including interrogations.

The second main effect of McChristian’s managerialist logic was to convey the sense that J2 and the combined centres should be strung together as an integrated, corporate service that constantly improved its productivity and cost-effectiveness. In August 1965 he created an entire management division at J2, ordering it to introduce a range of generic innovations familiar to the

⁶⁴⁷ Westmoreland, *A Soldier Reports*, 69; see also Kinnard, *The War Managers*, 63.

⁶⁴⁸ McChristian, *The Role of Military Intelligence, 1965--1967*, 6.

⁶⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, 84.

world of managerial practice. These included conducting a ‘management survey’ aimed at introducing ‘repetitive measures’ and for reducing ‘the incidence of duplication of effort’ among J2’s various branches. Much of this related to the need for uniform and speedy report writing. In McChristian’s experience, the most ‘perplexing’ and important managerial challenge was ensuring the ‘timeliness of reports’ and the automation of their storage, processing, and dissemination.⁶⁵⁰ Likewise, in the Combined Centers, efficiency measures were introduced. At CICV, its operators reported that after its first weeks of operation in 1966, ‘operating procedures were established and refined. Of primary concern at this time was the determination of standard study and report formats and the dissemination of these to the producing branches’.⁶⁵¹ Other J2 managerial innovations included the introduction of a ‘Comprehensive Intelligence Program’ that demanded staff in the Combined Centers judiciously record their every action so that it could be plotted on ‘review and analysis charts’, used to construe data trends and in monthly assessments of productivity.

All of these techniques were borrowed from the world of scientific managerialism and were directed at the proceduralisation of intelligence as if it were a production process taking place in an outputs-oriented, capital-intensive firm. The introduction of centralised managerial oversight, the breaking down and rationalisation of combined centre operations, and focus on raising the production of informational outputs significantly shaped how ‘strategic-level’ interrogations were carried out at CMIC.

The Combined Military Interrogation Centre (CMIC)

As a Combined Centre, the CMIC housed cooperating ARVN and US interrogation ‘Elements’. This was not the first time that interrogations of high-level prisoners had been undertaken collaboratively by the two intelligence branches. From 1962, tiny US teams had been posted to the most rudimentary of interrogation centres, a cluster of tents set aside by the JGS for interrogations in the Saigon suburb of Cholon. But even by mid-1965, that operation was

⁶⁵⁰ McChristian, *The Role of Military Intelligence, 1965—1967*, 83--84.

⁶⁵¹ "History of the Combined Intelligence Center,' Item Number F015800180833, Sam Johnson Vietnam Archive Collection, VCA-TTU, no page.

modest, with only two American interrogators assigned to support ARVN intelligence officers there.⁶⁵² The CMIC represented a dramatically scaled up venture. Opening in late-1966, it soon became MACV's most important interrogation facility, constituting the primary assembly line supplying human intelligence to the databases at CICV.⁶⁵³ Joseph McChristian claimed it had been ground-breaking, a central hub that radiated data innovations to the other nodes in the national interrogation infrastructure while receiving valuable detainees in return.

In this sense, the CMIC operated over an extended space of intelligence, its activities breaking free of its physical boundaries. Ideally, ARVN and US interrogators would specialise in questioning 'high-level' prisoners at a considerable level of depth, and potentially over weeks or even months. But this work integrated with detainment and screening in the field. Between late-1966 and 1973, if a captive arrived at a brigade Collecting Point or division interrogation centre with a tag branding them as an officer or 'officer aspirant', a pilot, VCI cadre, or, if a screener had noted that a subject had firsthand experience working at an NLF or NVA headquarters, or had technical knowledge of infiltration, cryptological, engineering, or medical matters, then they would be categorised as an 'Important Communist Prisoner of War'. This information was to be immediately relayed to CMIC, preferably by radio or phone. Within minutes, officers from its 'Source Procurement' section could be in a helicopter, racing to take possession of a new captive and the 'perishable' intelligence inside their head.⁶⁵⁴ As David Galula had found in Algeria, and Edward Lansdale had recommended to Robert McNamara, the helicopter offered an important instrument of mobility not only during violent confrontations, but in its capacity to actuate the urban-rural cycles of capture, imprisonment, and intelligence collection that permitted counterinsurgents to illuminate and navigate the twilight zone in a 'war without fronts'.

Once back at Tan Son Nhut Air Base, high-level prisoners would be bundled to the CMIC next door. It was an imposing, penitentiary-style concrete building. While officially its existence was secret, its size and architecture made its function impossible to conceal (see

⁶⁵² Tourison, *Talking with Victor Charlie*, 117; "Mission and C + G, 1966--67," Folder: History of CMIC, Box 1, CMIC General Records, Entry 30021, RG472, NARA II, 1.

⁶⁵³ "History," Folder: History of CMIC', Box 1, CMIC General Records, Entry 30021, RG472, NARA II, 4--8.

⁶⁵⁴ Ibid.

figures 6.9 and 6.10). Residents nearby were under no illusions about the purposes it served.⁶⁵⁵ Nonetheless, the Center's inner workings was closely guarded, both for purposes of secrecy and reputational risk, as conditions were poor.

Once inside, captives were escorted across a poorly drained dirt courtyard plagued with mosquitoes and the Administrator's free-ranging chickens. Arriving at the prison's registration rooms, ARVN security officers would strip new interogatees and catalogue them. The Centre's photographer was called in. Captives' hair was cut, biographical details were logged, and fingerprints taken.⁶⁵⁶ With ink still on their fingers, prisoners were then interred in an isolation chamber, of which the CMIC had sixty-three, each measuring just six-by-nine feet (see figure 6.11). Prison cells were bare except for a rice straw mat and a squat toilet, which was also to be used for bathing when the water tap was supplied for fifteen minutes, three times per day. Centre records note that slits in walls and iron doors were eventually cut out 'for breathing' and light, though darkness during the day was followed by the bright illumination of cells throughout the night.⁶⁵⁷ The grim confinement quarters meant that CMIC became the subject of concern for non-military authorities almost as soon as it opened. In 1967, rumour spread to the Secretary of State that prisoners were exposed to degrading standards of imprisonment, even brutalisation. United States Embassy staff in Saigon responded that upon a limited inspection conditions were rough, but 'not out of line with general practice in Viet-Nam'.⁶⁵⁸

⁶⁵⁵ "CMIC Welcome Aboard Brochure", Folder: CMIC Tenant Host Agencies, Box 1, Entry No. 30021, RG 472, NARA II, 2.

⁶⁵⁶ "History," Folder: History of CMIC', Box 1, CMIC General Records, Entry 30021, RG472, NARA II, 13.

⁶⁵⁷ "The CMIC Exploitation Cycle," Folder: Tenant Host Agencies, Box 1, CMIC General Records, Entry 30021, RG472, NARA II; "Prisoner management procedure at CMIC," 22 May 1971, Folder: Tenant Host Agencies, Box 1, CMIC General Records, Entry No. 30021, RG 472, NARA II.; Letter to Colonel Lung, "Captive Management Procedure at CMIC", 22 May 1972, Folder: Complaints from PW and HC, Box 7, Entry No. 30055, RG 472, NARA II, 5.

⁶⁵⁸ "Evaluation of Combined Military Interrogation Center," ca. October 1967, Folder: Tenant Host Agencies, Box 1, CMIC General Records, Entry 30021, RG472, NARA II, 1; "Treatment of PWs in Combined Military Interrogation Center," Telegram from US Embassy, Saigon to Secretary of State, 29 January 1968, Item Number 2861301001, Sedgwick Tourison Collection, VCA-TTU, 2.



Figure 6.9 CMIC, recently constructed, ca. 1966.⁶⁵⁹

During the first fifteen days of confinement, however prisoners spent almost as much time in the Centre’s interrogation rooms as anywhere else. This was because new interrogatees were subjected to an intensive ‘exploitation’ cycle, subjected to almost unending interrogation sessions, with isolation considered essential. In early 1971, Don Luce—the world Council of Churches correspondent who had previously brought to global attention the Republic’s abhorrent ‘Tiger Cages’ on the prison island of Côn Sơn—managed to glimpse inside the facility by accompanying an inspecting US congressman. He was told by a US officer that prisoners were often kept in isolation for weeks at a time, with the effect that some even looked forward to their

⁶⁵⁹ Loose in folder: CMIC Tenant Host Agencies’, Box 1, Entry No. 30021, RG 472, NARA II.

interrogations. This was not a new development. Three years earlier, the Embassy inspectors addressed this same concern, but they were again reassured:

It is necessary to keep the prisoner isolated from other prisoners. To do otherwise would negate the effectiveness of interrogation. Commingling during this period leads to prisoner intimidation, collusion, and one or a group influencing others. Such permissiveness is detrimental to the interrogation and exploitation process. For these reasons you will not find athletic periods and dormitory living at the CMIC ... [However] prisoners have a daily routine of eating, cleaning their quarters and being interrogated that occupies most of their time, and do not spend much time in solitude except at night.⁶⁶⁰

However, while Embassy staff determined that the Geneva Conventions' provisions were probably not contravened, they injected an important rider: 'We do not believe the conditions of the Center can be considered inhumane—certainly not by Asian standards, which are the standards which should be applied'.⁶⁶¹

⁶⁶⁰ "Treatment of PW's in Combined Military Interrogation Center," Telegram from US Embassy, Saigon to Secretary of State, 29 January 1968, VCA-TTU, 3.

⁶⁶¹ Ibid.



Figure 6.10 CMIC buildings and courtyard, ca. 1971.⁶⁶²

⁶⁶² Loose in Folder: Complaints from PW and HC, Box 7, Entry No. 30055, RG 472, NARA II.

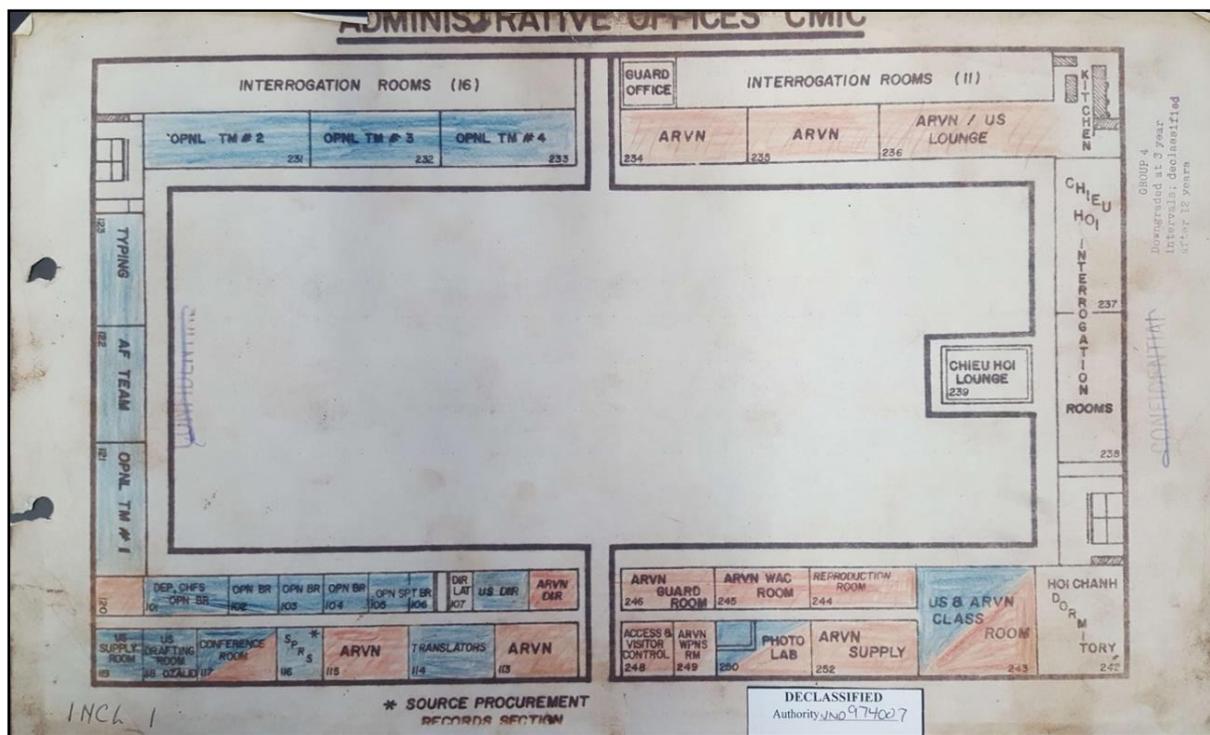


Figure 6.11 Schematic plan for the CMIC. The US Element is marked in blue, the ARVN Element in red.⁶⁶³

When ARVN officers were satisfied that their interrogations had been ‘exhaustive’, US Element would take control of captives. Their details and the progress of interrogations were recorded in a series of cashbooks, becoming McChristian’s ‘nickels and dimes’ (see figure 6.12). Interrogators from Operations Branch would submit them to a graduated series of screenings and deeper interrogations. The first stage involved tabularising the biographical details and recent history of internees by moving through a list of standardised questions.⁶⁶⁴ This preliminary screening resulted in a ‘Knowledgeability Brief’ (KB), a schematised prisoner synopsis that was designed to identify links between individual interrogatees and topics of interest for agencies elsewhere in the US intelligence system. The KB would be disseminated to these agencies, known as ‘consumers’ who had applied to be included in the CMIC’s growing mailing list. By

⁶⁶³ Schematic plans available in Folder: Tenant Host Agencies, Box 1, CMIC General Records, Entry 30021, RG472, NARA II.

⁶⁶⁴ "Current organization of CMIC," Folder: Tenant Host Agencies, Box 1, CMIC General Records, Entry 30021, RG472, NARA II, Annex E.

disseminating these briefs not just to MACV but directly to field commanders across the Republic and even through the US national security state—the mailing list extended far beyond South Vietnam—CMIC screeners performed an important connective function in establishing mass interrogation as a large-scale technopolitical apparatus, a means for constructing a state intelligence archive. Knowledgeability Briefs communicated to consumers the general areas they could request CMIC interrogators to focus on in further interrogations. Intelligence managers could then levy ‘Specific Intelligence Collection Requirements’ with CMIC’s administrators, who would direct interrogators to focus on topics of special value in their production of new dossier outputs.⁶⁶⁵

Following a KB screening, ‘complete’ processing of interrogatees could then occur. This was a much more protracted process. The pressure to continually supply consumers with new informational products meant that interrogators would often repeatedly draw prisoners back into the US Element’s interrogation rooms for weeks, or even months. Of course, the results of exhaustive questioning in a prisoner’s Interrogation phase were always communicated to J2 in the form of crisp reports that seemingly revealed objective information about the war. These materials conveyed new maps of Viet Cong locations, described the infiltration movements of NVA units, or profiled an enemy’s new system of coded terminology. They rarely conveyed the chaotic and makeshift quality of the interrogations behind their production. After all, US interrogators at CMIC were not highly trained, or even especially familiar with the matters about which they were investigating and reporting. In fact, throughout its operation, the Centre’s US Element only counted around a dozen trained linguists.⁶⁶⁶ In mid-1967 there were just five, most of whom were graduates of a brief training course at the Defense Language Institute in Monterey, California. The majority of interrogations were therefore meandering and required the

⁶⁶⁵ "Evaluation of Combined Military Interrogation Center," ca. October 1967, 1, and "The CMIC Exploitation Cycle," both in Folder: Tenant Host Agencies, Box 1, CMIC General Records, Entry 30021, RG472, NARA II.

⁶⁶⁶ "Evaluation of Combined Military Interrogation Center," ca. October 1967, Folder: Tenant Host Agencies, Box 1, CMIC General Records, Entry 30021, RG472, NARA II, 1. In another link to post-War Europe, and possibly Project Wringer, Tourison explains that the first contingent of interrogators were mostly from Eastern Europe, ‘professionals fresh from experiences with European refugees, border crossers, agents, and double agents’, see *Talking with Victor Charlie*, 174.

presence of interpreters, who were generally members of the ARVN's Women Auxiliary Corps.⁶⁶⁷ But even the help of translators could not make up for interrogators' lack of experience. In 1965, when Sedgwick Tourison arrived at the Center as a translator, he was commissioned into an interrogator role after just one week, a role for which he was untrained. With so few Americans speaking even rudimentary Vietnamese, when the centre opened almost any linguistic skill guaranteed an officer would be considered for an interrogation role, with Tourison recalling that one colleague

had been assigned as a helicopter door gunner in Vietnam and had learned Vietnamese on his own. His Vietnamese wasn't the best, but at the point we needed interrogators who could speak the language and who were aggressive ... We needed people who were willing to get their hands dirty and work.⁶⁶⁸

Despite his use of muscular language in this instance, Tourison reveals little about the brutal tactics adopted at CMIC. Clearly US personnel were expected to 'get their hands dirty' during interrogations, with intergratees often forced to adopt painful 'leaning rest positions'.⁶⁶⁹

⁶⁶⁷ The official records of CMIC disclose little about the role played by women there. Tourison does note that members of the ARVN WAC began to be used more frequently as interpreters in the interrogation room from the spring of 1966. He also observed problematic 'cultural differences' between them and the US interrogators from Europe, with their 'thick Eastern European accents and rigid temperaments and backgrounds' but says little more on the subject (*Talking with Victor Charlie*, 173--174). Women were also employed as translators in the RAND Corporation's large 'Motivation and Morale' interrogation programme in Vietnam (Ralph Strauch, interview with the author, 30 October 2017, Los Angeles; see also, Elliott, *RAND in Southeast Asia*, 2010, 45--90). The roles played by women in US-led interrogation programmes in Vietnam is a worthy subject for further research.

⁶⁶⁸ Tourison, *Talking with Victor Charlie*, 116.

⁶⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, 229. It is difficult to know whether outright torture occurred in CMIC, as it did during field interrogations on search-and-destroy missions, but brutalisation of some form seems to have been common, either in the US or ARVN Elements. While his access to the Center's inner workings was barred, Luce later wrote to friends that his American informer admitted the site's ARVN section regularly tortured captives during interrogations and that the US Element's interrogators frequently threatened unsatisfactory sources with being sent to the more abusive wing across the courtyard. At J2, Joseph McChristian knew detainees were being mistreated. Later, however, he exculpated his own men, blaming the cultural inertia of ARVN personnel: 'the French and mandarin [sic] heritage of brutality died hard, especially in the field, despite the efforts of more enlightened American and Vietnamese officers', see Luce's "Farewell Letter of a Friendly American to Viet Nam in War," Folder: Complaints from PW and HC, Box 7, Entry No. 30055, RG 472, NARA II, 4; McChristian, *The Role of Military Intelligence, 1965--1967*, 18.

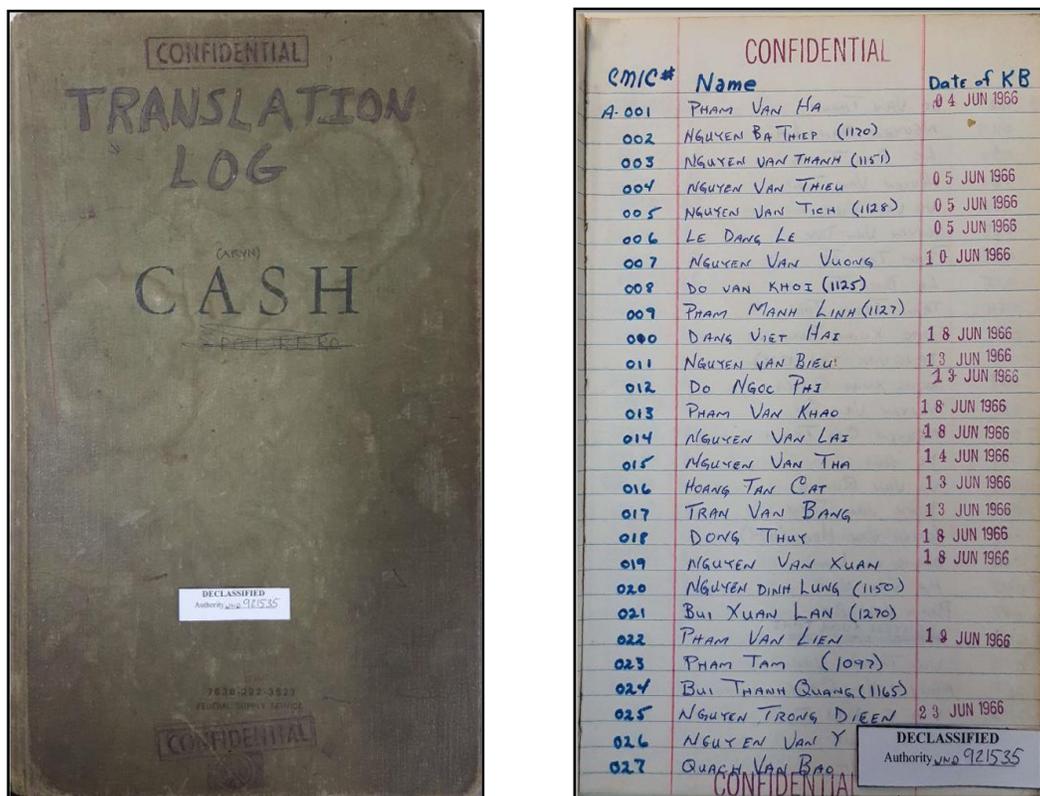


Figure 6.12 Cashbooks used to record US Element interrogations and report production at CMIC, 1966.⁶⁷⁰

Once prisoners had been through the ‘complete’ Interrogation phase of their confinement, most were either returned to the corps prisons from which they were originally obtained or sent on to the GVN’s enormous island detention facility on Phu Quoc.⁶⁷¹ Regulations implored interrogators to be speedy, with prisoners ideally pushed through the facility in a few weeks, though in ‘exceptional cases’ some captives could be there for four months before administrators needed to seek extension approvals.⁶⁷² However, ultimately, the Center’s ARVN administrator held significant authority to determine detainees fates, with State Department records showing

⁶⁷⁰ CMIC ARVN Interrogation Translation Logs, Box 1, Entry No. MACV J2, CMIC Logs, RG 472, NARA II.

⁶⁷¹ "The CMIC Exploitation Cycle," Folder: Tenant Host Agencies, Box 1, CMIC General Records, Entry 30021, RG472, NARA II.

⁶⁷² "MACV Directive 381-11," updated 5 August 1968, Folder: Interrogation and Intelligence, Box 1, Entry A1 567, RG 472, NARA II, 3.

that he sometimes authorised their retention for up to a year if they were considered particularly rich sources of intelligence.⁶⁷³

Balancing the books

Despite these brief glimpses, the CMIC's internal records convey remarkably little about what went on in the interrogation booths themselves. Much may have been expunged from the archives, of course. But even during its operation, Center managers generally did not comment on the workings of interrogation per se, or expend administrative effort examining the specific techniques adopted by interrogation officers. Instead, managerial focus was generally dedicated to constructing statistical logs, filling out ledger books, and relaying organisational updates filled with tables and graphs that evidenced the ongoing returns J2 was getting on its investments in terms of personnel, materials, and finance. This may be because, at least for McChristian, the CMIC was a not just a prison with interrogation rooms attached, but a 'system ... that promoted maximum utilization of available resources'.⁶⁷⁴ Strategic interrogations were part of the daily performance of managerial technowar, meaning its production processes had to be brought under central coordination, rationalised, and made cost-effective.

In 1965, McChristian and his managers at J2 oversaw the planning of a future CMIC's physical plant and delineated its internal organisational design. In line with the principles of scientific management that had infiltrated Defense thinking, its internal dynamics were mapped onto that of an ideal entrepreneurial firm engaged in a capital-intensive industry. As noted above, McChristian believed that all his Combined Centres should be arranged like modern factories, with operations separated into divisions so that the elements of each production phase was broken down into constitutive inputs and outputs. And so, once the CMIC opened, he encouraged its managers to improve the facility's productivity by paying special attention to raising efficiency. The interrogation process should be separated 'along functional lines,

⁶⁷³ "Evaluation of Combined Military Interrogation Center," ca. October 1967, Folder: Tenant Host Agencies, Box 1, CMIC General Records, Entry 30021, RG472, NARA II, 1; "Treatment of PW's in Combined Military Interrogation Center," Telegram from US Embassy, Saigon to Secretary of State, 29 January 1968, Item No. 2861301001, Sedgwick Tourison Collection, VCA-TTU, 2--3.

⁶⁷⁴ McChristian, *The Role of Military Intelligence*, 16.

simplifying the definition of responsibilities and expediting processing of captives and detainees'. Tasks were broken down, made definite, and compartmentalised.

One effect of the production model of war is to delimit tightly the scope of individual responsibility. After it opened, J2 ordered the Center's 'management procedures' improved by breaking down the phases of mass interrogation in a more determinate order. Mechanisms were developed, MACV ordered, for 'standardising the methods' for 'handling' prisoners, so that they would be moved through the system in a systematic, phased fashion.⁶⁷⁵ Figure 6.13 shows that in taking up a productivist view, military intelligence officers were encouraged to think of reports and prisoners as part of a single 'flow' of goods. By refocusing attention on intelligence outputs, rather than interrogation per se, 'productivity' grew substantially. A machinic space of production, whereby prisoners and reports were shuttled through various stages according to a standard procedure, meant that neither inputs (prisoners) nor outputs (paper intelligence) lingered at any phase, but were also less likely to require backtracking because they had been pushed through too quickly.

This mechanisation framework substantially narrowed the scope for decision-making by mass interrogation's workers on the ground. The decisions to initiate a prisoner's interrogation or declare the cycle complete (due to subjects' 'exhaustion') were 'executive' ones, made by supervising personnel in Requirements Section (which McChristian called the 'nerve center of combined interrogation'), not members of Interrogation Branch.⁶⁷⁶ As in field interrogations, those pronouncements would be based in part on perceptions of 'exhaustion', whether the time spent compelling subjects to answer questions was worth the paper 'outputs' that might result. In this way, interrogators at CMIC were encouraged to think of their labour as industrialised, bureaucratised work, always considered in the context of the war's broader productivist imperatives. Upon arriving at the Center, an orienting brochure was handed to new 'members' (intelligence officers) reminding them that 'no matter how routine or dull your job may seem,

⁶⁷⁵ "Directive re-establishing procedures for interrogation and PW handling," ca. 1970, Folder: History of CMIC, Box 1, CMIC General Records, Entry 30021, RG472, NARA II, 8.

⁶⁷⁶ McChristian, *The Role of Military Intelligence*, 17.

there is a definite need and reason for it; and you must *produce at a maximum level* if our mission is to be accomplished.⁶⁷⁷

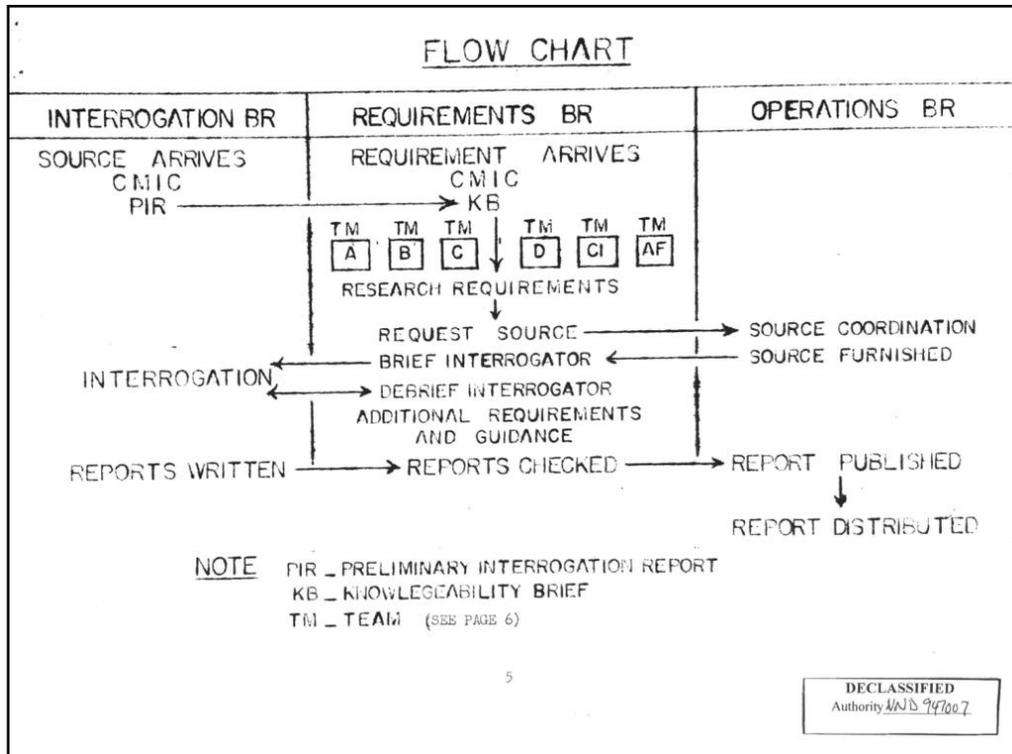


Figure 6.13 At CMIC prisoner movement and reporting were united as phases of a single, flowing production process.⁶⁷⁸

But in McChristian's 'Combined Concept' all personnel were assigned highly compartmentalised roles, not just workers at the coalface, such as interrogators. The overall ambition was not to limit the agency of workers per se, but to raise outputs and improve cost-effectiveness, and this meant that the pressure to ensure productivity and cost-effectiveness also was keenly felt in CMIC's management offices. Similarly to Project Wringer fifteen years prior, at this level of corporate activity, performance was measured not by overall contribution of

⁶⁷⁷ "CMIC Welcome Aboard Brochure," Folder: CMIC Tenant Host Agencies, Box 1, Entry No. 30021, RG 472, NARA II, 1.

⁶⁷⁸ "Combined Military Interrogation Center," Folder: CMIC, Box 1, Entry 30021, RG 472, NARA II.

strategic interrogation to the war effort or the efficiency of an individual interrogation, but by a more middle-range bureaucratic measure: the maximal production of reports.

As production expanded through the late-1960s, the walls of CMIC's administrative offices became plastered with the kinds of line graphs and statistical measures that would have been welcomed by Westmoreland during his daily briefings, or by McNamara in his strategic analysis offices at the Pentagon. Figure 6.14, for example, tracks the number of prisoners ('inputs') entering the facility month-by-month between 1968 and 1972. McChristian's strategic interrogation centre was thus a factory for producing the 'unremarkable forms in which writerly practices' of empire appear, as Ann Laura Stoler says. About the torrent of reports that emanated from colonial state commissions in the Dutch East Indies, she writes that

as genres of documentation, they tended to employ certain writerly conventions, techniques of persuasion, and forms of evidence that combined a passion for numbers with the numbing bulk of repetition and the pathos of vignette.⁶⁷⁹

The same could be said of CMIC's interrogation reports. They too were texts in a genre of documentation centrally concerned with persuading other state agents in a hierarchical bureaucracy. The thousands of interrogation dossiers that emanated from the facility during this period document an abundance of information about prisoner's war experiences and political lives. However, as with Project Wringer and other performances of US mass interrogation, rather than integral expository accounts, the textual evidence presented in them was ever disarticulated, assiduously broken down into the 'bits of truth', corpuscles of data, for use elsewhere in the war planning apparatus.

⁶⁷⁹ Stoler, *Along the Archival Grain*, 22, 142.

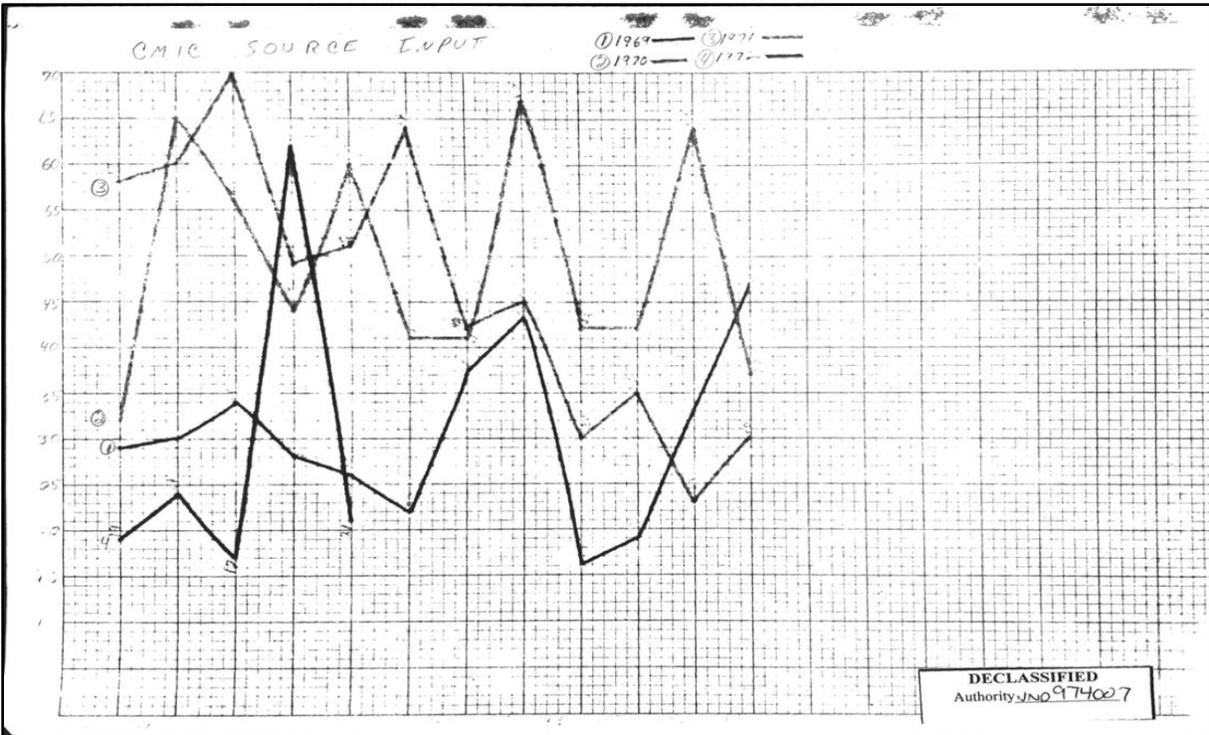


Figure 6.14 Graph tracking monthly ‘Source Input’ at CMIC. Between 1969 and mid-1972, around fifty to seventy ‘high-level’ interrogatees would enter the facility in a productive month.⁶⁸⁰

As with the rest of the combined intelligence system, the most important measurement of CMIC’s success was the production of discrete, quantifiable intelligence products. In this case, interrogation dossiers sent in response to consumers’ Specific Intelligence Collection Requirements were the prized ‘nickels and dimes’. It was how interrogators made their money (or, in this case, demonstrated that it was well-spent). The datapoints that interrogators derived from this process would be sent to the US ‘Reporting Section’, which undertook multiple rounds of ‘quality control checks’, editing and verifying that the reports concurred with procedure, before being typed up by Vietnamese civilians.⁶⁸¹ Sketches and sources’ descriptions of locations were then converted into map overlays by dedicated draftspersons (see figure 6.15). The final

⁶⁸⁰ Loose in folder, "History of CMIC," Box 1, CMIC General Records, Entry 30021, RG472, NARA II.

⁶⁸¹ "Evaluation of Combined Military Interrogation Center," ca. October 1967, Folder: Tenant Host Agencies, Box 1, CMIC General Records, Entry 30021, RG472, NARA II, 3.

CMIC Interrogation Reports were printed using lithograph machines that continuously churned out new material from the Center's printing rooms.

by his interrogators as 'sincere' but with 'very limited' knowledge due to his 'low social class'. The other soldier claimed to have been tricked into joining the resistance.⁶⁸²

With success tied to the maximal production of reports, even by late-1967 oversupply was an overwhelming challenge. By this time, McChristian's tour was concluded, but in Saigon he left a facility of extraordinary information bloat. The distribution list of 'consumers' who demanded a copy of every Interrogation Report now numbered ninety-seven, including war planning agencies in Washington, DC, Pacific Command in Hawaii, the CIA, and many more.⁶⁸³ With some users wanting multiple copies, the CMIC was forced to produce hundreds of versions of every report, a task that involved printing over 200,000 pages every month and assembling dossiers by hand (their collator often broke down).⁶⁸⁴ Despite these difficulties, CMIC managers came under significant pressure to raise the number of interrogations conducted and intelligence distributed yet further. The result could be the extensive repetition of interrogations, with dozens sometimes conducted on the same 'valuable' detainees. Center managers reported that in 1968 and 1969, for example, 1550 interogatees cycled through the facility. However, there were 13 215 separate interrogations, most involving hours of questioning, even days.⁶⁸⁵ From these encounters 17 850 reports were disseminated, the 'nickels and dimes' that McChristian wanted to accumulate in CDEC and CICV. By 1972, when US personnel began to leave the Center, over 20 000 'high-level' interrogations had been carried out.⁶⁸⁶

⁶⁸² Annex to "Interrogation Report #0683," Folder: Dat, Nguyen Van 1965, Box 03, CMIC Interrogation Dossiers, Entry 30021, RG472, NARA II.

⁶⁸³ "Evaluation of Combined Military Interrogation Center," ca. October 1967, Folder: Tenant Host Agencies, Box 1, CMIC General Records, Entry 30021, RG472, NARA II, 1.

⁶⁸⁴ Ibid., Annex F.

⁶⁸⁵ "525 MI Cp Ltr, Subject: Meritorious Unit Commendation Letter of Recommendation," Folder: History of CMIC, Box 1, CMIC General Records, Entry 30021, RG472, NARA II, 10.

⁶⁸⁶ Hand drawn tables of prisoners processed, and interrogations conducted at CMIC are available in Folder: History of CMIC, Box 1, CMIC General Records, Entry 30021, RG472, NARA II. Such informal records are obviously not definitive and should be read with caution. This is especially the case in relation to the category 'prisoners processed', the numbers of which vary substantially across CMIC's archives. Some record keepers appear to include the number of prisoners held across the entire 'combined' interrogation network (more than 40 000 by the end of 1972), while others were more restrictive in their calculations.

The unshakeable corporate focus on outputs meant that CMIC administrators' duties settled around the challenge of improving the efficiency and speed of report compilation, rather than evaluating the quality of the material collected. Even the building's physical arrangement, they noted, was improved in ways that 'expedited the conduct of interrogations, the processing of translations, and the production of intelligence reports'. To this end, staff in the US Element were saddled with increasingly, bureaucratic, and economised tasks. By 1967, more personnel were responsible for formatting and printing reports in the Report Reproduction Section than were assigned to interrogation duties.⁶⁸⁷

However, for McChristian, the manager ultimately responsible for MACV's intelligence productivity, the huge amount of labour expended printing and filing paper was not a fundamental problem. It was a sign of mission success. In his office at J2 he took receipt of daily reports monitoring the efficiency of all his Combined Centers, with the balance sheets arranged in terms of 'inputs' and 'outputs'. With production rising, and costs-per-interrogation and report therefore generally falling, he trumpeted to senior officers the generally increasing material productivity of CMIC. Even in his post-service memoir, his treatment of success in South Vietnam remained outputs-oriented, volumetric, beguiled by the paper produced by the machine spaces he designed:

During the first four months of 1967 the [CMIC] distributed 675 interrogation reports and 1,068 intelligence information reports. Each interrogation report was reproduced in 350 copies and sent to 92 different addresses worldwide ... Expeditious processing was stressed at all levels of command, and each echelon was encouraged to limit interrogations to information in satisfaction of local requirements.⁶⁸⁸

As a strategic interrogator, however, Tourison found that almost as soon as CMIC opened, the ratio of intelligence 'collectors' to 'the administrative tail' began to tilt drastically out of balance. Machine space means something very different to those charged with operating

⁶⁸⁷ "525 MI Cp Ltr, Subject: Meritorious Unit Commendation Letter of Recommendation," Folder: History of CMIC, Box 1, CMIC General Records, Entry 30021, RG472, NARA II, 5.

⁶⁸⁸ McChristian, *The Role of Military Intelligence*, 28.

its componentry. As one of the few interrogators, and one of the only one with language skills, Tourison bridled at the imposition of a large number of managerial staff who would attempt to raise efficiency and thereby ‘micromanage’ the interrogation process. Industrialised interrogation and the intelligence apparatus in general was ‘producing an information glut’, he said. The ‘art’ of careful interrogation was vitiated by the heedless pursuit of better efficiency rates for report production, and the standardisation of distribution schedules. Staggering amounts of time and energy were expended compiling information for dissemination to customers who seemed neither to need nor want it. For Tourison, a common thread of administrative frenzy prevailed through the production crises at CMIC, one inherent to managerial technowar and the production model of warfare more generally. The war in Vietnam, he noted, ‘seemed to exist merely to justify the bureaucracy, and the bureaucracy threatened to bury the war in the very paper the war created’.⁶⁸⁹

In Khalili’s words, counterinsurgency confinement apparatuses are ‘machines of many moving parts’.⁶⁹⁰ They work by moving ideas and bodies, joining weapons and techniques of later modern warfare to principles of scientific management. When this happens, the ‘enterprise form’ can be ‘generalised’ and joined to large-scale, bureaucratised systems for producing war. The same can be said for counterinsurgency mass interrogation apparatuses. In generalising the principles of industrial production and the enterprise form across his ‘Combined’ intelligence system, Joseph McChristian and his managers at J2 extended managerial technowar to strategic interrogation and human intelligence in South Vietnam. In doing so, duties were compartmentalised, and outputs maximised. At the same time, however, ethical reflection on the conditions of confinement, or even the utility of the intelligence products disseminated, was very often replaced with administration and procedure.

⁶⁸⁹ Tourison, *Talking with Victor Charlie*, 24.

⁶⁹⁰ Khalili, *Time in the Shadows*, 239.

Conclusion

From the early-1960s, military planners at the Defense Department and in MACV were forced to respond to a policy revolution that was rapidly upturning later modern American war, or at least one of its key modalities. Led by Robert McNamara—but made possible by an ascendant generation of war managers—the counterinsurgency in South Vietnam was remodelled according to the strictures of civilian rationalisation. Military budgets and programmes were centrally analysed, with strategic challenges reframed as a series of challenges of maximising the cost-effective production of high-technology, capital-intensive war. The imperatives of managerial technowar filtered out from Washington, DC, becoming an inescapable force in South Vietnam and, the more the logical frames, techniques, and ‘numbing glossolalia of technospeak’ of scientific management mediated its performance on the ground, the more war managers’ programmes there were recast as component solutions to the broader arithmetic problem of mechanically capturing and killing a maximal number of Vietnamese enemies.⁶⁹¹ In this chapter I have argued that, in addition to chalking up kills on search-and-destroy operations, the American war was performed by detaining and interrogating multitudes of suspected guerrillas and political sympathisers. Mass interrogation, trialled by European colonial armies in earlier counterinsurgencies, was also refitted around the precepts of managerial technowar. Arrests, detentions, and interrogations were put on productivist footings, intelligence officers made players in the numbers game.

The production model of war was instantiated in the two technopolitical apparatuses commonly constructed in the pursuit of counterinsurgency mass interrogation. First, out on patrol, US interrogators were firmly aware of their responsibility to ‘make money’. That required extracting information from detainees in the field, exhausting them of whatever they knew. But it also meant ‘getting a hit’, actuating the attrition war’s deadly circuit of reconnaissance, intelligence production, spatialisation and target location, and the direction of enormous firepower. As McNamara put it, search-and-destroy is ‘expensive in dollars, but cheap in lives’. At all times, of course, the human cost to be reduced was measured in *American* lives. As this

⁶⁹¹ McCann, “‘Killing is Our Business and Business is Good’”, 504.

chapter shows, mass interrogation on patrol was a means of utilising captured ‘suspects’ to facilitate destruction at a distance. However, the violence of remote interrogations in the field was not only conducted at long range. In a war being administered according to the logic of the ‘meat grinder’, the instrumentalisation of Vietnamese bodies as receptacles of information often supported the demonstration of spectacular and intimate brutality.

The demands of managerial technowar also mediated the performance of mass interrogation in Saigon. From 1965, under Joseph McChristian’s leadership, static strategic interrogations in specially built facilities were vastly scaled up, its production phases made mechanical and its labour processes rationalised. His centrepiece machine space, a ‘manufacturing’ plant for assembling human intelligence, the Combined Military Interrogation Centre, provides an archetypical example of the rationalisation and managerialisation of human intelligence assembly in later modern war. Inside it, economistic practices, languages, and logical schemas reigned. Proceduralisation deskilled those responsible for planning interrogation and carrying it out, radically narrowing the scope for individual discretion, while the political aims of detainment and interrogation were translated into technical objectives. The result was that in America’s war in Vietnam, the technopolitical apparatus of mass interrogation was governed by the demand to generate measurable outputs. Everywhere, the idea of ‘value’ extraction became more salient, and detainees were manipulated as physical inputs in the process of producing war. However, while McChristian might have believed that in his intelligence business success was defined by the accumulation of nickels and dimes, and that officers were like hoarding ‘bankers’, in reality most of mass interrogation’s political subjects—US interrogators, intelligence officers, and their supportive non-American service personnel—functioned more like labourers and managers. Both categories of intelligence worker were encouraged to fixate on the measurement of efficiency and productivity as never before. Both were attuned to the idea that the counterinsurgency demanded interrogations to be conducted on a volumetric, mechanical, and open-ended basis, and consequently, that data accumulation, report production, and imprisonment were ends in themselves

Chapter 7: Observer Effects

Mass interrogation, medicine, and torture during the 'war on terror'

[The Office of Medical Services'] experience is that medical officers' ... relationship with the interrogators has been one of close and mutual collaboration on all medical recommendations.⁶⁹²

CIA Counterterrorist Center Legal Group, May 2005

I look after your body only because we need you for information.⁶⁹³

Alleged statement by a medical officer to Hambali

Safety first

In December 2014, the United States Senate Select Committee on Intelligence (SSCI) released a summarised study of the CIA's 'war on terror' Detention and Interrogation Program. It is a searing indictment of state torture by means of legal and bureaucratic machination. Drawing on six million documents, the report reconstructs not just the programme's sordid operation between 2001 and 2008, but the precise moments when the Agency attempted to frustrate the Committee's oversight processes. On this point, an entire appendix is dedicated to correcting the prevaricating testimony provided by its director, USAF General Michael Hayden. In an account

⁶⁹² Faxed letter from Director of Counterintelligence Counterterrorist Center Legal Group counsel to Steve Bradbury, Acting Assistant Attorney General, Office of Legal Counsel, 4 May 2005, CIA FOIA document 6541714, 3. 13 June 2016, <https://www.cia.gov/library/readingroom/docs/0006541714.pdf>.

⁶⁹³ ICRC, *Report on the Treatment of Fourteen "High Value Detainees" in CIA Custody*, International Committee of the Red Cross, February 2007, <http://www.nybooks.com/media/doc/2010/04/22/icrc-report.pdf>.

gravid with mistruths, SSCI deemed his defence of medical officers' role in the torture apparatus especially 'incongruent with CIA records'.⁶⁹⁴

Fronting the SSCI in 2007, Hayden had gone to special lengths to refute the findings of a recent ICRC report. It had sent a team to the prison at Joint Task Force - Guantanamo (JTF-GTMO) and found evidence there that medical officers were complicit in the 'infliction of ill-treatment'.⁶⁹⁵ Detainees told inspectors that health personnel took part in interrogations, especially when 'enhanced' techniques were employed. They performed medical checks prior to and following every session, monitored victims throughout their torture, recorded their vital signs, and advised interrogators when to pause or adjust their methods. Detainees also believed that medical officers built their treatment and longer-term monitoring around the objective of restoring them to health so that violent interrogations could resume. Intervening to treat the oedema affecting Hambali's legs during a stretch of forced standing, one medical officer purportedly told him that 'I look after your body only because we need you for information'.⁶⁹⁶

The ICRC reporters acknowledged that there is a place for beneficent healthcare providers in prison and police settings. The problem wasn't outright medical neglect—detainees emphasised the 'exceptional lengths' the Agency took to supply very high standards of medical intervention. Rather, it lay in the fundamental medicalisation of a brutal interrogation programme. Their conclusion was unequivocal: any interrogation process requiring 'a health professional to either pronounce on the subject's fitness to withstand such a procedure, or which requires a health professional to monitor the actual procedure, must have inherent health risks'. At his Senate testimony, Hayden rejected that distinction:

⁶⁹⁴ US Congress, Senate, Select Committee on Intelligence, *Report of the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence Committee Study of the Central Intelligence Agency's Detention and Interrogation Program, together with Foreword by Chairman Feinstein and Additional and Minority Views*. 113th Cong. 2nd Sess., December 9, 2014. <https://www.intelligence.senate.gov/sites/default/files/publications/CRPT-113s rpt288.pdf>. [hereafter *SSCI Report*], 'Appendix 3: Example of Inaccurate CIA Testimony to the Committee', 113, n. 665; 462--499. In December 2012, the SSCI voted to approve the full study, but that 6,700-page document remains classified. The 2014 release is merely the study's 525-page redacted Executive Summary, which outlines key findings and provides the best available account of the Agency's interrogation programme.

⁶⁹⁵ ICRC, *Report on the Treatment of Fourteen "High Value Detainees"*, 27.

⁶⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, 21--23.

The medical section of the ICRC report concludes that the association of CIA medical officers with the interrogation program is ‘contrary to international standards of medical ethics.’ That is just wrong. The role of CIA medical officers in the detainee program is and always has been and always will be to *ensure the safety and the well-being of the detainee*. The placement of medical officers during the interrogation techniques represents an extra measure of caution. Our medical officers do not recommend the employment or continuation of any procedures or techniques ... Health care has always been administered based upon detainee needs.⁶⁹⁷

Safety, well-being, caution. For Hayden, physicians monitored interrogations as detached observers, they didn’t facilitate them. ‘It’s neither policy nor practice to link medical care to any other aspect of the detainee program’, he said.⁶⁹⁸ This chapter examines recently declassified Agency documents to show that, even on those terms, Hayden’s account of his medical officers’ duties was misleading. At Guantánamo and Agency black sites, they supplied the disciplinary knowledge and practical techniques necessary to ensure that victims’ bodies and minds were, in fact, profoundly damaged, just in ways that left no visible sequelae, or so they hoped. However, I argue that Hayden’s defence should be examined not just for the facts it concealed, but the conceptual and political work it has done, particularly with regards to the conduct and purposes of mass interrogation in later modern US warfare. The notion that medical officers offered ‘an extra measure of caution’ was, after all, exactly right. Except the precaution was, in the final instance, not medical, but legal. The safeguarded were not interrogatees, but CIA managers themselves. And the ‘measure’ put in place very often involved the *measurements* that could be provided by trained medical officers.

To analyse these convolutions, this chapter examines the contribution of medical officers to the CIA’s brutal counterterror mass interrogation apparatus. It provides the first in-depth study of the intricate role played by the Agency’s Office of Medical Services (OMS). That office supplied not just technical support, but the *political technology* of expert medical observation

⁶⁹⁷ *SSCI Report*, 490--491, emphasis added.

⁶⁹⁸ *Ibid.*

that was necessary, legally, to authorise the application of ‘enhanced’ interrogation techniques. Their ‘patient-centred’ interventions were at times unforthcoming or simply ignored. However, the mere presence of medical observers, and the promise that they could supply calculative biomedical means for measuring pain and suffering made them critical players in the performance of liberal torture. If that gruesome spectacle was the ‘least of all possible evils’ necessary to right the global order, as the managers of the ‘war on terror’ surmised, then physicians should act as monitors of state violence, ensuring its moderation in the interrogation chamber.

In some respects, the CIA’s 2000s programme was not a ‘mass’ interrogation apparatus, at least not as we have seen in previous chapters. It was thoroughly individualised, involving the relatively narrow targeting of certain racialised, criminalised, men of interest. But, as the next section shows, its vast institutional scale and its prosecution across a virtually limitless politico-legal and strategic space demonstrates how mass interrogation may be transforming as later modern war itself transforms. From September 2001, the US national security state embarked on an extraordinarily brutal crusade against non-state actors, a *global* ‘war on terror’. In this indeterminate conflict, America’s enemies were conceived as networked plotters attached to religious-ideological causes, rather than positions on the battlefield. That context seemed to herald an age in which human intelligence would, surprisingly perhaps, become more central to US warfare than ever. As well, a boundless war driven by the basic biopolitical imperative to defend civilised society meant that mass capture and interrogation had to be urgent and uncompromising, but also righteous, expert, and legal. Medical personnel became crucial to realising those seemingly divergent goals. As the third section explains, this development added a link to the long and multistrand genealogy that nurtures the modern torture doctor as an idea and a specialist subject. What was new and distinctive about the contributions of OMS officers though was the CIA’s folding together of the two primary roles that physicians have assumed in interrogational torture chambers in Europe and North America. First, doctors have historically acted as expert witnesses during juridical torture, able to adjudicate whether interrogatees can withstand ordeals and thereby deliver sound confessions. Second, and later, clinical and psychological specialists supplied their biomedical expertise to the advancement of scientific

torture. This included by directly and indirectly supporting the CIA's own twentieth-century programmes of psychological torture research.

The fourth section examines how, from late-2001, these two subject positions—juridical adjudicator and torture scientist—were collapsed together as the US national security state constructed its torture apparatus. To fight a liberal 'everywhere' war, legal armatures were developed through which captured political subjects could be converted into abject subjects, bodies available to brutal intervention and near-death injury. Contributing to this modality of later modern war, the CIA constructed a new kind of machine space, drawing together human scientific, psychological and medical expertise in the performance of 'enhanced' interrogation techniques. It also enrolled its own OMS medical officers in the process. Their powers of 'observation' and calculative techniques of measurement and recording helped to stage a medico-legal apparatus through which brutal treatment could be pronounced as 'safe' and proportionate, and therefore legal. More than merely a failure to live up to professional ethical principles, medical observers thus helped to constitute the CIA's mass interrogation programme as a series of spaces of clinical supervision. The final section unfurls precisely how this medico-legal apparatus worked. Three empirical examples are explored: Abu Zubaydah's repair and initial torture; Khalid Sheik Mohammed's waterboarding; and the contribution of OMS to dietary manipulation and forced feeding. Unlike previous chapters, this study does not analyse the power of mass interrogation to circulate and spatialise new political-geographical knowledge about the space of war—the redaction and suppression of documentary evidence vitiates close study of the micro-practices of CIA intelligence in action. Instead, the three empirical examples below show that contemporary human intelligence production sites may cultivate extreme pain and suffering not due to a lack of expert management, but through it. During the 'war on terror', mass interrogation again disclosed to its political subjects machine spaces within which human subjects were revealed as inputs, raw material to be expertly 'processed' as a phase in a larger apparatus of knowledge production. But, in this case, and perhaps into the future, the bits of truth sought out were not just tactical and strategic intelligence, but miniscule distinctions in law and fragments of biological data drawn from interrogatees' flesh.

Mass interrogation in the everywhere war

So far, this dissertation has examined mass interrogation apparatuses whose power was premised on their capacities to draw in very large numbers of human sources. From the Western Front, to Project Wringer, mid-century colonial insurgencies, and America's war in Vietnam, intelligence agencies sought to build knowledge of and enact control over the space of war through the interrogation of thousands or even hundreds of thousands of witnesses to it. In comparison, the CIA's Detention and Interrogation Program did not apprehend and 'process' so many bodies. In crucial ways, later modern war has become more 'individualised'. As Gabriella Blum has argued, the balance of wartime regulation—and in many cases the violence of war itself—has shifted away from a concern with collectives, those 'belonging to a "party to a conflict"', often by virtue of their nationality, and to individuals, those who were once considered 'enemy civilians'. One effect has been the recasting of war operations along the lines of a 'policing model', whereby coercive action is called upon to 'rehabilitate' a population and its deviant elements.⁶⁹⁹ Though the previous chapter shows that the military practice of policing a population and thus assigning 'goodness or badness' on an individual basis is nothing new, the dramatic concentration of US warfare around the targeting of 'high value individuals' is significant. In the twenty-first century, this mode of conceiving war has in certain ways entirely replaced 'conventional force engagement' as the structuring logic of doctrinal and technical innovation. One Army intelligence officer, Glenn Voelz, believes that individualised war is now the mode of state conflict that preoccupies the US national security apparatus more than any other. Within it, a strategy of tactics is adopted, involving the 'systematic disaggregation of threats down to the

⁶⁹⁹ Gabriella Blum, "The Individualization of War: From War to Policing in the Regulation of Armed Conflicts," in *Law and War*, eds. Austin Sarat, Lawrence Douglas, and Martha Merrill Umphrey (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2014), 48--83.

lowest possible level’, turning the ‘fusion of operations for the purpose of hunting high-value targets into a high art’.⁷⁰⁰ Or, as Brian Castner puts it, now we ‘kill our enemy by name’.⁷⁰¹

But as Voelz explains, through the use of population-wide biometric identification technologies, DNA sampling, hugely expanded information management and data analysis platforms, and widespread monitoring and tracking for killing and arrests, the individualisation of warfare does not signal the end of large-scale war per se. And in vital ways the CIA’s ‘war on terror’ programme was both a deeply individualised and simultaneously *mass* interrogation apparatus. Several of them illuminate how the spatialities and technopolitics of political violence were changing in the twenty-first century while established modalities of modern and later modern war were being recast. Indeed, as with US mass interrogation’s earlier technopolitical apparatuses, the CIA’s programme was volumetric, open-ended, focused on the maximal production of material intelligence and its circulation as a state archive to strategic decision-makers. Also similar to previous iterations, the war on terror system involved the extraction of subjective materials from interrogatees, and their transformation into mobile datapoints within a sophisticated compound space of detention facilities, management sites, and information handling pathways. As explored in chapter 2, the result, as so often in the past, would be the construction of a pointillist picture of war that seemed to spatialise it from a disembodied perspective, a way of ‘seeing without being seen’, though this time for a counterterror state, rather than a strictly countercommunist or a colonial counterinsurgent one.

But in other ways the extensivity and technical intensities of the CIA’s apparatus redirected mass interrogation. Like the renewed American imperial project that it served, the Program’s footprint on the ground was in constant flux. The ‘war on terror’s’ underlying ambition was to enact control over an indeterminate but limitless space composed of security ‘events’, rather than the old, solid military terrain of ‘objects’. Mass interrogation was in this

⁷⁰⁰ Glenn J. Voelz, *The Rise of iWar: Identity, Information, and the Individualization of Modern Warfare*, US Army War College Monograph 437 (Carlisle, PA: Army War College, 2015), 1--5, including quotation from Linda Robinson, et al., *Improving Strategic Competence: Lessons from 13 Years of War* (Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation, 2014), 26.

⁷⁰¹ Brian Castner, *All the Ways We Kill and Die: An Elegy for a Fallen Comrade, and the Hunt for His Killer* (New York: Arcade, 2018), epub e-book, chap. 15.

way remade as an intelligence and detention operation for mapping onto and literally charting the new 'global battlespace'.⁷⁰² The conflict's political-geographical range at times seemed 'infinitely extendible', its boundaries exceptionally dispersed and fluid, its next targets for attack radically uncertain. To support it, from late 2001 the CIA set about building a human intelligence apparatus that would facilitate interventions right across this militarised global grey zone, providing its agents with the technical ability to move into and across its 'ungoverned spaces' in order to target non-state actors deemed antipathetic to civilised rule.⁷⁰³ An interrogatee could be identified for urgent capture in Mauritania, Pakistan, or Manchester, the intelligence they possessed potentially of a sociological, ideological, technological, or deeply personal nature.

In a modality of war where combat is pitched against 'names', rather than 'formations', the extensive spatiality of the CIA's detention and interrogation apparatus, and the depths of its informational wells, now established the requisite mass scale that later modern war seems to require, rather than sheer numbers of human sources. While it involved the brutal interrogation of 119 men (that we know of), they were captured in disparate locations around the world and rendered through a global carceral archipelago: foreign government agencies' prison systems, the CIA's own network of 'black sites', unofficial facilities set up in collaborating countries such as Thailand and Poland, as well as in installations sited in or near US Armed Forces' bases of occupation, such as in Afghanistan or the Guantánamo Bay naval facility in Cuba. Moreover, in subjecting at least thirty-nine of these captives to 'enhanced interrogation techniques', the CIA's programmers prosecuted the everywhere war's other global claim: that US national security agencies possessed not just the technical ability, but the authority to intervene anywhere, apprehend anyone and instrumentalise their body in almost anyway necessary.⁷⁰⁴ This included establishing the legal foundation through which a sweeping, punitive, and undeclared war against non-state actors could be prosecuted.

⁷⁰² Derek Gregory, "Seeing Red: Baghdad and the Event-ful City," *Political Geography* 29 (2010): 267, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.polgeo.2010.04.003>.

⁷⁰³ Gregory, "The Everywhere War," 242.

⁷⁰⁴ *SSCI Report*, xv--xxi.

As some of the architects of a liberal counterinsurgency, the CIA's interrogation programme managers were keenly aware of the central imperative that drove this kind of liberal, individualised war: the re-establishment of the security of the population through the application of 'humanitarian violence', pain and suffering according to legal principles.⁷⁰⁵ Hence an extraordinarily bloody and shockingly frenzied everywhere war was nonetheless constituted by, and conducted through, law. An armature of legal and administrative procedure was constructed through which it could be performed as if it were not a geopolitical project at all, but a series of expert technical calculations that bordered on a police hunt.⁷⁰⁶ As such, the CIA's interrogation programme articulated with the war on terror's politico-legal apparatus. By invoking law in order to defend civilised society, the US counterterror state asserted not just the capacity but the right to roam, detain, and interrogate on a global basis.

For these reasons, the CIA's detention programme was a mass interrogation apparatus, but a highly conditional one. And because it was once again recast, this time according to the ambitions of a liberal everywhere war, the spatialities and disciplinary arrangements through which interrogation was performed were also transformed. Mass interrogation would not be performed along the lines of an industrial production process, as in the past. In addition, even as it supported another liberal counterinsurgency, it would not be utilised to map and police a national population for the purposes of colonial occupation. Instead, the CIA's interrogation apparatus would operate as a flexible, biopolitical weapon founded upon medical-scientific knowledge and whose abuses were shielded by a carapace of instrumentalised law.

To ensure these several ambitions could be met simultaneously—intelligence production, severe violence by scientific means, and legal indemnity—medical experts were enlisted to observe and affirm that the thresholds of permissibility were not overtly crossed. However, far from detached witnesses, their roles as legal observers were highly performative, implicated in the very practice of medicalised torture. Their dual role as programme monitors and abettors

⁷⁰⁵ Weizman, *The Least of All Possible Evils*.

⁷⁰⁶ Gregory, "The Everywhere War," 247. See also Laleh Khalili, "Scholar, Pope, Soldier, Spy," *Humanity: An International Journal of Human Rights, Humanitarianism, and Development* 5, no. 3 (2014): 417--434, <https://doi.org/10.1353/hum.2014.0023>.

meant that the medical and legal limits of ‘safe’ torture were worked out in practice, recursively. In doing so, the Program folded together the main historical functions that medicine has played in interrogational torture. As the next section shows, two distinct threads run through the genealogy of the torture doctor. First, and more antiquated, is the idea of the medically trained *adjudicator* of victims’ states of being during the process of juridical torture. The second, and more recent, is the figure of the medical scientist who possesses the means to perfect psychological torture, the ‘no touch’ technology of total control that continues to beguile agents of liberal war. During the war on terror, these historical subject positions would be lashed together in order to perform the CIA’s ‘enhanced’ interrogations as at once scientifically advanced, medically safe, and legal.

Doctor’s orders

One of the SSCI study’s central findings is that the architects of the CIA programme acted with callous disregard for prisoners’ health and safety. From April 2002, when the Agency captured its first ‘high-value’ detainee, Abu Zubaydah, until November 2007, when ‘enhanced interrogation techniques’ were last applied, Headquarters ordered brutal interrogations to ‘take precedence over preventative medical procedures’.⁷⁰⁷ Leading international legal experts now generally concur that these acts met the criteria for torture under international humanitarian law.⁷⁰⁸ As such, the use and misuse of medicine went beyond negligence, the Senate finding that medical professionals had been systematically martialled to perform the programme’s most callous elements in two ways. First, and most notoriously, to an extraordinary degree Headquarters relied on the services of two contractors—James Mitchell and Bruce Jessen—and Agency personnel with medical and psychological training to design, perform, and improve ‘enhanced’ techniques, as well as the spaces and conditions in which they would be carried out.

⁷⁰⁷ *SSCI Report*, 16, 107--113.

⁷⁰⁸ Lisa Hajjar, "International Humanitarian Law and "Wars on Terror": A Comparative Analysis of Israeli and American Doctrines and Policies," *Journal of Palestine Studies* 36, no. 1 (2006): 35--37, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/10.1525/jps.2006.36.1.21>; David Luban, "Human Dignity, Humiliation, and Torture," *Kennedy Institute of Ethics Journal* 19, no. 3 (2009): 211--230, <https://doi.org/10.1353/ken.0.0292>.

Operating as ‘Behavioral Science Consultation Teams’ (BSCTs), Mitchell, Jessen, and other psychological and human intelligence experts played a leading role in conducting torture sessions in JTF-GTMO and at black sites.⁷⁰⁹ However, the Agency’s own medical personnel had secondary, but no less vital responsibilities. As clinical therapists, they were functional to the torture process, helping to hone its ‘behavioural scientific’ dimension also. These support staff contributed their empirical observations, manipulated conditions experimentally, collected data methodically, and analysed results on a systematic basis. In this sense, both the programme in general, and medical officers’ roles in it, fit into a longer genealogy of psychological torture.⁷¹⁰

But as the next section shows, medical practitioners were habitual visitors to the torture chamber long before the advent of psychological torture in the twentieth century. As figures of legal adjudication, the participation of physicians, nurses, psychologists, and other clinical practitioners in the CIA’s programme renewed a ‘partnership of healers and abusers’ that was centuries in the making.⁷¹¹ In the early modern period, doctors offered their services to state judiciaries, advising on medical grounds when torture victims’ pain and suffering should be initiated, paused, or terminated. With the CIA’s enrolment of medical practitioners into the legal procedure of authenticating interrogatees’ physical and mental states, this antiquated historical role would irrupt into the early twenty-first century.

Torture and punish

In the early modern period, medical practitioners across western Europe frequently participated in the common process of juridical torture. Their assistive roles inside the interrogation chamber provided one of most important points of contact between the emerging modern disciplines of medicine and the law. Before they reached decisions, early modern courts generally demanded to

⁷⁰⁹ *SSCI Report*, 36--65.

⁷¹⁰ Alfred W. McCoy, *A Question of Torture: CIA Interrogation, from the Cold War to the War on Terror* (New York: Metropolitan, 2006); Sara Dougherty and Scott Allen, *Nuremberg Betrayed: Human Experimentation and the CIA Torture Program*, Physicians for Human Rights report, June 2017, <https://phr.org/resources/nuremberg-betrayed-human-experimentation-and-the-cia-torture-program/>.

⁷¹¹ Steven H. Miles, *Oath Betrayed: Torture, Medical Complicity, and the War on Terror* (New York: Random House, 2006), 25, [https://doi.org/10.1016/S0140-6736\(00\)04729-2](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0140-6736(00)04729-2).

be in hand of confessions, and that the statements of the accused be tested by pain of torture. In so doing, it was understood that state evidence and decisions could be affirmed as true. As Edward Peters put it, ‘the queen of proofs [confession] required the queen of torments [torture]’.⁷¹² Physicians were commonly called upon to facilitate and mediate this process by assisting in the extraction and verification of confessions.

In the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries in the French *Ancien Régime*, northern Italy, Germany, and elsewhere, courts commonly enlisted doctors to assess the state of mind of the accused. Written authorisations were sought to verify that those charged with an offense would probably survive courts’ torture methods and trials by ordeal. From 1532, for example, the *Constitutio Criminalis Carolina*, a German criminal code, required for a verdict not only the confession of the guilty, by ordeal if necessary, but that a physician first certify that the accused was capable of giving testimony (that they were not blind, mute, or insane) and they could endure the verificatory torture process. Midwives were recruited to confirm pregnancies and grant women temporary exemptions. Not until the eighteenth century—when torture largely became illegal or passed into juridical disuse—did the practice of issuing medical and midwifery certificates to courts decline.⁷¹³

But doctors were by no means the only extra-legal disciplinarians installed in the juridical torture process in order to ensure its correct operation. During the early modern period judges often performed interrogations in the presence of a range of technical specialists, including clerks, court functionaries, and notaries. In this milieu, the role of court torture physician gradually became professionalised, with a class of experts emerging who had access to a specific body of technical knowledge and skills. In the sixteenth century, career torture physicians in Germany and southern France offered their services in the planning of interrogation sessions, advising on the appropriate cessation of torture in order to avert death, diagnosing whether unconsciousness was authentic, and treating wounds so that ordeals could resume.⁷¹⁴

⁷¹² Edward Peters, *Torture* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1985), 67.

⁷¹³ Giovanni Maio, "History of Medical Involvement in Torture—Then and Now," *The Lancet* 357, no. 9268 (2001): 1610, [https://doi.org/10.1016/S0140-6736\(00\)04729-2](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0140-6736(00)04729-2).

⁷¹⁴ Maio, "History of Medical Involvement in Torture," 1610.

The line between the expert monitoring and facilitation of brutal interrogations by medical practitioners was thus indistinct. But early modern doctors' responsibilities to the court and their 'patients' became particularly fuzzy when they were called upon to revive interrogatees during the torture process. Even if they were mere witnesses to judicial process, as state functionaries they were very often expected to record their observations in detail, with these authoritative texts of medical practice sometimes bleeding into the evidence production process. A French doctor's 1739 account of the torture of 'Simon L.' illustrates how a physician's account of his 'patient's' torture involved the blurring of medical and legal record-keeping:

The patient, who had begun to moan, gave out sharp, piercing cries which went on for an hour ... then the cries subsided, giving way to whimpers which progressively diminished ... As it had been nearly an hour that his body, bent backward, was resting on the extremity of his arms, raised and stretched by the rope that tortured him, I checked for the beat of his heart; I found it to be so faint that I predicted a failure. I advised Councillor Collard of this, and he ordered that the patient be released to avert it. To no avail, I found him unconscious ... Haste was made to pour a bit of liqueur in his mouth. To no avail, which gave me reason to fear that he had expired. One then resorted to volatile spirits and rubbed some of this on his nostrils and face until he was revived and breathing normally again ... Advantage was taken of this moment to resume the interrogation.⁷¹⁵

When judicial torture declined on the Continent in the late-seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, it was often not for benevolent reasons. Rather, a new common sense emerged in legal fraternities that torture confounded the guilt finding process in trials for property crimes. As those comparatively less serious offenses increasingly preoccupied criminal courts, so the evidentiary basis for determining guilt was moderated, demands grew for more calculative

⁷¹⁵ Quoted in Marie-Sylvia Dupont-Bouchat, "Criminal Law and Human Rights in Western Europe (14th--18th Centuries): The Example of Torture and Punishment, Theory and Practice," in *Human Rights and Cultural Diversity: Europe, Arabic-Islamic World, Africa, China*, ed. Wolfgang Schmale (Goldbach, Germany: Keip, 1993), 190; see also Maio, "History of Medical Involvement in Torture," 1610.

judicial procedures, and for punishments that could be meted out.⁷¹⁶ However, as we will see, the job of observing and resuscitating torture victims would fall to medical professionals once again in the war on terror. But this time that expertise would be twisted around the new forms of power and knowledge supplied by an intervening age of experimental scientific torture.

Scientific torture

As juridical state torture fell out of use, liberal states began to enact its legal abolition. However, this did not mean that the techniques of brutal interrogation were forgotten altogether. Rather, during the late modern period their use by government agencies in Europe, North America, and elsewhere, was merely driven underground, or at least away from mainstream public view, and into some of the more peripheral zones of state power. In the nineteenth century, just as its use as a public juridical instrument was phasing out in western Europe, torture was frequently reconfigured for new uses in punitive systems in corporal institutions such as militaries and prisons, as well as a weapon of colonial policing and for controlling slaves outside imperial metropolises.⁷¹⁷ By the twentieth century, state-sanctioned interrogational torture was reframed as a practice capable of facilitating the extraction of knowledge from obdurate subjects if it was refined according to scientific principles. To serve the purposes of later modern war, it was refit for use in experimental, or even clinical settings.

⁷¹⁶ Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison* (New York: Vintage, 1995). The Italian penologist Cesare Beccaria famously denounced criminological torture on the grounds that it mistook guilt-finding for punishment and required ‘that pain be made the crucible of truth as if its criterion lay in the muscles and sinews of the miserable wretch’, as quoted in Graeme Newman and Pietro Marongiu, "Penological Reform and the Myth of Beccaria," *Criminology* 28, no. 2 (1990): 337, <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1745-9125.1990.tb01328.x>. In a groundbreaking work of legal history, *Torture and the Law of Proof: Europe and England in the Ancien Régime* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1977), John Langbein ascribes the decline of interrogative torture to shifting institutional and juridico-cultural conditions, rather than abolitionist pronouncements by historical legal theoreticians. He argues that judicial torture was almost never legalised in England in the middle ages simply because courts there lacked sophisticated laws of evidence, with its ‘legal institutions so crude that torture was unnecessary’ (page 77). For a provocative analysis of Langbein’s arguments see Mirjan Damaška, "The Death of Legal Torture," *Yale Law Journal* 87, no. 4 (1978): 860--884, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/795611>.

⁷¹⁷ Darius Rejali, *Torture and Democracy*: (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2007), 294--311.

The combination of industrial warfare and race thinking seems to have created openings for expert spaces of ‘scientific’ interrogational torture in the mid-twentieth century. Physicians’ service to the Nazi state remains the most notorious example of such collaboration. As theories of racial hygiene took hold in professional associations and institutes in Germany and social ills became biologised, medicine was ‘meshed’ with national socialist ideology. Significant political rewards began to flow to doctors promising to render enemy Others biomedically knowable by systematic, scientific means.⁷¹⁸ The Dachau concentration camp was just one of several key sites in the Third Reich where human scientific research was conducted into interrogation techniques. From the late-1930s, under the direction of Kurt Ploetner, doctors in service to the *Schutzstaffel* paramilitary organisation tested the effects of mescaline on prisoners as an interrogation aid.⁷¹⁹ Then, in 1942, physicians in the camp experimented upon two hundred subjects for the *Luftwaffe*. In those studies, prisoners’ were exposed to extreme conditions, undergoing hypothermia and high altitude experiments, their deaths documented on film and shown at a 1942 Nazi aviation medical conference.⁷²⁰ In doing so, these torture doctors became ‘socialised to atrocity’ and committed medical war crimes.⁷²¹ But they also brought themselves to the attention of the US cold war national security state.

As Alfred McCoy has documented, thirty-four of the Dachau doctors were subsequently recruited by the USAF as it utilised Nazi research in the establishment of its post-War School of Aviation Medicine in Texas. More broadly, the ‘Dachau model’ was replicated across a huge range of experimental interrogation programmes conducted by US national security agencies during the cold war. The result was American scientists’ often unknowing recruitment into

⁷¹⁸ Michael Grodin and George Annas, "Physicians and Torture: Lessons from the Nazi Doctors," *International Review of the Red Cross* 89, no. 867 (2007): 635--654, <https://doi.org/10.1017/S1816383107001208>.

⁷¹⁹ McCoy, *A Question of Torture*, 18.

⁷²⁰ Alfred W. McCoy, "Science in Dachau's Shadow: Hebb, Beecher, and the Development of CIA Psychological Torture and Modern Medical Ethics," *Journal of the History of the Behavioral Sciences* 43, no. 4 (2007), 403, <https://doi.org/10.1002/jhbs.20271>; William J. Aceves, "Interrogation or Experimentation? Assessing Non-consensual Human Experimentation During the War on Terror," *Duke Journal of Comparative and International Law* 29 (2018), 46--52, <https://scholarship.law.duke.edu/djcil/vol29/iss1/2>.

⁷²¹ Robert J. Lifton, "Doctors and Torture," *New England Journal of Medicine* 351 (2004): 415--416. <https://www.nejm.org/doi/full/10.1056/nejmp048065>.

covert research, particularly through the CIA's extensive support of programmes of academic experimentation through its intermediary funding institutes.

In the early cold war, the CIA also provided a steady source of finance for university-based behavioural scientific research across North America in order to improve its coercive interrogation knowledge. In the 1950s, for example, the 'Human Ecology Fund', saw a leading cardiologist, Lawrence Hinkle and a neurologist, Harold Wolff, receive secret funds to examine how stress positions and isolation could be utilised for 'mind control'. In this case, medical experts were knowingly funded and purposely developed harsh interrogation techniques—Wolff was a close friend of CIA director Allen Dulles. However, cold war funding floods burst the banks of direct patronage, taking esteem and opportunities with it. As McCoy puts it, the period saw a 'veritable Manhattan Project of the mind' as many medical, social, and behavioural scientists were enlisted by the Fund's lead investigators on an unwitting basis.⁷²² For example, an ethnographer, William K. Carr, was given almost \$50 000 for the 'Anthropological identification of the determinants of Chinese behavior' in the early-1960s and, relevant to this study, a separate funding programme permitted social scientists unknowingly to gather intelligence for the CIA through the mass interview of Hungarian refugees.⁷²³

During this period, what began as a mode of 'defensive' medical and behavioural research into interrogation resistance was soon re-oriented to more offensive ends. For example, in the 1950s, the Air Force commissioned Albert Biderman, a sociologist, to develop a typology of 'communist interrogation techniques' and the means by which they could be resisted. He also received Human Ecology Fund money and his methods largely revolved around interviewing US soldiers who had returned from prison in North Korea.⁷²⁴ However, what began as a study into 'enemy techniques' for eliciting interrogation responses and safeguarding American service personnel was soon weaponised for the psychological control of enemies. Biderman's major

⁷²² McCoy, *A Question of Torture*, 7.

⁷²³ David H. Price, "Buying a Piece of Anthropology: Part 1: Human Ecology and Unwitting Anthropological Research for the CIA," *Anthropology Today* 23, no. 3 (2007), 17--22, <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-8322.2007.00537.x>.

⁷²⁴ David H. Price, *Cold War Anthropology: The CIA, the Pentagon, and the Growth of Dual Use Anthropology* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2016), 209.

1961 publication, *The Manipulation of Human Behavior*, integrated both his USAF work and that of CIA's, including Human Ecology Fund research. It claimed to synthesise interrogation techniques in order that they may be resisted, but nonetheless noted that they could be used proactively, 'for the purposes of intelligence'.⁷²⁵

The CIA funding of scientific research into coercive interrogation during the cold war allowed it to drop its interest in hypnosis and LSD when that research showed middling results. Focus shifted to work like Biderman's, and to furthering the discipline of 'psychological torture', and in that paradigm, interrogatees' subjective states would be manipulated primarily by means of sensory deprivation and other 'no-touch' methods.⁷²⁶ Torturers working on behalf of liberal democracies, it seems, are often particularly creative exponents of these procedures, or what Darius Rejali calls 'clean' techniques. Because they leave no trace of violence, they can be euphemised into something else entirely.⁷²⁷

In 1963 Human Ecology Fund research found its way into the CIA's *Kubark Counterintelligence Interrogation* manual. It was an interdisciplinary but sternly practical text that would form the basis for Agency interrogation training and practice for four decades.⁷²⁸ During the 1980s, significant sections of it were incorporated into the CIA's *Human Resource Exploitation Training Manual*, used in interrogation training programmes for state agencies in Latin America. While the officer responsible for its international dissemination was recommended for reprimand by the CIA's inspector general, in the fall of 2002 he was made chief of interrogations in the CIA's Renditions Group, and thus its most senior interrogator.⁷²⁹

The above examples demonstrate that from the sixteenth to the twentieth centuries, medical and psychological experts have been recurrent visitors to spaces of state torture. Their

⁷²⁵ McCoy, *Torture and Impunity*, 21; see also Michael Welch's treatment of the development of 'scientific' psychological torture, including Biderman's role in studying 'self-inflicted pain', in his "American 'Pain-ology' in the War on Terror: A Critique of 'Scientific' Torture," *Theoretical Criminology* 13, no. 4 (2009), 454, <https://doi.org/10.1177/1362480609340394>.

⁷²⁶ McCoy, *A Question of Torture*, 1--12, passim.

⁷²⁷ Rejali, *Torture and Democracy*, 1--31, passim.

⁷²⁸ McCoy, *A Question of Torture*, 50.

⁷²⁹ *SSCI*, 18--19.

contributions spanned the authorisation of confessions during juridical torture, to scientific experimentation in total war. After 1945, when the US national security state began to develop its own coercive interrogation programmes, a historically accreted role for doctors in the torture chamber persisted. McCoy points out that the perfection of psychological torture—whereby interrogatees’ are ‘broken’ without producing any physical sequelae—remains ‘elusive’.⁷³⁰ However, that has not stopped it animating decades of expert practical innovation. In almost every performance of it by agencies of the US national security state, its experimental nature, and the requirement that victims’ pain and suffering is exactly calibrated, rendering the presence of medical experts almost obligatory.

Liberal torture

The modern history of medicalised torture helps to explain how medical professionals may be endowed with the capacity to assist in the production of spaces of violent state interrogation. The previous section showed that, once inside, their labour has been directed to a huge range of ends. However, in almost all those cases, those state agencies or practices are decidedly illiberal, or, if they are conducted under the aegis of a liberal state, they are kept secret and prone to disavowal. Indeed, it seems that before the twenty-first century, most examples of state torture disclosed illiberal motivations: the desire to incite terror, to punish by means of spectacular or cruel acts, to extract forcefully confessions, or to instrumentalise bodies for the ends of unlimited, tyrannical government. There is something fundamentally different between those historical examples and medical professionals’ complicity with the war on terror torture apparatus in the early-twenty first century. After all, the US national security state historically operated within a liberal political culture. That is, in a tradition of government wherein state power is nominally exercised for purely instrumental and pragmatic purposes.⁷³¹ There is a liberal theory of state violence, of

⁷³⁰ McCoy, *A Question of Torture*; Alfred W. McCoy, *In the Shadows of the American Century: The Rise and Decline of US Global Power* (Chicago: Haymarket, 2017), 183.

⁷³¹ David Luban, "Liberalism, Torture, and the Ticking Bomb," *Virginia Law Review* 91 (2005): 1436, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/3649415>.

course. As a liberal counterinsurgency, the war on terror was waged on the fundamental premise that it would deliver better, limited government in exchange for a measurable quantity of necessary violence.

Notwithstanding the abjection of its torture victims and the cruel costs of the US counterterror state's actions in Iraq, Afghanistan, and elsewhere in the Middle East, the 'war on terror' was continually rationalised on these avowedly liberal grounds.⁷³² It was a civilising mission ('armed social work'), fought under the assumption that the US's best interests lay in the 'expansion of democracy worldwide'.⁷³³ Its central aims circled around the elimination of foreign political actors who were deemed to threaten humanity with their own versions of illiberal—irrational, cruel and tyrannical—rule. Moreover, from September 11, 2001 the US counterterror state fought its everywhere war *through* liberal political technologies. These included the weaponisation of law ('lawfare'), the targeting of civil society, the deployment of a rhetoric of humanitarian intervention, and the pursuit of a biopolitical conception of power, wherein population and biological information are the referent objects of rule.⁷³⁴

It was in this context that the CIA's programme emerged, refitting the established model of mass interrogation to the new ends of individualised warfare. Its underlying liberal ambitions made it possible to defend torture as the necessary cost of exacting some pain from a very few in exchange for making life possible for a greater number. Its agents' plans were organised around a crusade-like project of discharging rule by securitising space, by intervening globally in the management of the endless risks and contingencies that threatened humanity. The subjects of one

⁷³² Khalili, *Time in the Shadows*.

⁷³³ Michael C. Desch, "America's Liberal Illiberalism: The Ideological Origins of Overreaction in U.S. Foreign Policy," *International Security* 32, no. 3 (Winter 2007/08): 17, <https://www.mitpressjournals.org/doi/pdf/10.1162/isec.2008.32.3.7>.

⁷³⁴ John Morrissey, "Liberal Lawfare and Biopolitics: US Juridical Warfare in the War on Terror," *Geopolitics* 16, no. 2 (2011): 280--305, <https://doi-org/10.1080/14650045.2010.538872>; Craig Jones, "Lawfare and the Juridification of Late Modern War," 221--239; Gregory, "Seeing Red: Baghdad and the Event-ful City," 266--279; Dillon and Reid, *The Liberal Way of War*.

liberal state needed to be defended by first calculating a quota of necessary violence, and then administering judicious amounts of pain and suffering by rational, precise, and limited means.⁷³⁵

In liberal wars, there is one acceptable rationale for torture: intelligence collection. David Luban argues that this is because liberal torture is deemed permissible because it is performed as a future-oriented and preventative means for defending the greater good, the delivery of a little bad in order to offset much greater costs to the body politic.⁷³⁶ In this formulation, torture becomes shrewd and premeditating, delivered in a calculative way. A liberal torturer is a figure of reluctance, a state deputy who is forced to gather intelligence aggressively in order to ‘forestall greater evils’.⁷³⁷ This is because, Luban argues, liberalism permits state violence when it is dissociated from wanton cruelty and misgovernment and, instead, is presented as legal and arrayed on a ledger board of calculated costs and benefits to the liberal state and its subjects. For this reason, liberal torture is also calculating. It requires a cast of expert technicians to be arrayed as workers inside a machine space of instrumentalised reason that operates according to the law.

As we will see in the following sections, calculative thinking pervaded the CIA’s Detention and Interrogation Program, as well as medical practitioners’ contributions to it. This was not only so in the sense that numbers and measurement were central to the actual performance of coercive interrogation, but in the broader sense that torture was rationalised on the basis that it was a necessary instrument of a calculative state. That is, a state that computes ‘ever new, ever more promising and at the same time economical possibilities’.⁷³⁸ As expert measurers of pain and suffering, and computers of new possibilities, the CIA’s medical practitioners were enrolled in the broader calculative work required of a liberal state agency when it goes to war.

⁷³⁵ Brad Evans, "Foucault's Legacy: Security, War and Violence in the 21st Century," *Security Dialogue* 41, no. 4 (2010): 413--433, <https://doi.org/10.1177/0967010610374313>.

⁷³⁶ Luban, "Liberalism, Torture, and the Ticking Bomb," 1436.

⁷³⁷ Luban, "Liberalism, Torture, and the Ticking Bomb," 1439; Lisa Hajjar, "The Liberal Ideology of Torture: A Critical Examination of the American Case," in *The Ethics and Efficacy of the Global War on Terrorism*, eds. Charles P. Weber and John A. Arnaldi (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), 200--202, https://doi.org/10.1057/9781137001931_16.

⁷³⁸ Martin Heidegger, *Discourse on Thinking: A Translation of Gelassenheit* (New York: Harper and Row, 1966), quoted in Crampton, "Cartographic Calculations of Territory," 94.

Divine forensics

In liberal wars, military violence—and torture—becomes an expression of a calculative state’s economising conception of the world. As Eyal Weizman argues, while acts of aggression, and destruction are well within the reckoning of liberal states, when they are deployed to achieve political ends they are generally presented as calculations made in the administration of ‘humanitarian violence’.⁷³⁹ For Weizman, the war on terror was a clear example of a liberal war because it was framed as the ‘least of all possible evils’, a necessary but regrettable solution to an existential threat to the health of the state. During precisely what was thought to be that kind of challenge, the CIA and Defense Department utilised torture. It was claimed to be a means of applying violence to a select few, a lesser evil, so as to reach a greater good, that of minimising collective pain and suffering. However, for torture to be presented as a forceful practice that attenuates greater violence by calculative reasoning and disciplined technique, it has to be offered as a practice that is measurable, its limited application in the midst of liberal warfare expertly observed.

The calculative logic of contemporary wars commands a proliferation of ‘monitoring’ human calculators, each bestowed with discrete responsibilities for making countless, non-incident and instantaneous decisions regarding the acceptable provision of pain, suffering, and collateral damage. ‘Just wars’, when waged by liberal states, are powered by a cast of expert agents wielding ‘moral technologies’ such as a delegated authority of legal interpretation, techniques for determining blast radiuses, or the means to quantify the number of hunger and disease-related deaths likely to result from a checkpoint’s closing. For Weizman, the prosecution of liberal war is based on a presumption of a battlespace populated by economising, future-oriented God-figures who possess the power to moderate military violence through calculations of ‘lesser evils’:

Choosing for the optimum combination of good and evil involves a constant monitoring of the world, a task undertaken by examining its smallest units ... These are substances that contain the imprint of all worldly relations, powers and effects. In a process resembling a ‘divine

⁷³⁹ Weizman, *The Least of All Possible Evils*.

forensics' God infers from these fragments what is happening everywhere in the universe. The examination is of course not about a crime, or other forms of imperfection, in the present or past—all things that do exist are necessarily the best possible things—but rather is the condition for choosing the best next possible world in the future.⁷⁴⁰

For the CIA to employ torture as a means for conducting humanitarian violence, it needed to be rehearsed as an iteration of divine forensics: selective, systematic, and measured, in both senses of the word. It had to work through law, remaking it if necessary, so that the application of violence could be constantly reaffirmed as humanitarian in the final instance, delivered within the acceptable parameters of liberal violence. One means of verifying that its illiberal qualities were minimised was to introduce medical practitioners into the interrogational torture chamber. And so, during the war on terror, their function would include supporting the application of psychological torture while also performing the role of detached monitor. As part of a liberal war, with physicians working inside spaces of coercive interrogation, torture would be performed as humanitarian and legalistic. They would support the broader process of intelligence production but would not be involved directly in extracting it. But this required the CIA to construct a new witnessing subject, the distanced medical expert who could 'weigh the scales of risk and proportionality' and thereby translate a state's violent political ambitions into techno-medical calculations of pain and suffering. Doctors were enrolled as 'observers' delegated to affirm that coercive interrogations were 'nasty' but 'medically safe'.⁷⁴¹

⁷⁴⁰ Weizman, *The Least of All Possible Evils*, 2.

⁷⁴¹ During the Bush Administration, incommunicado prisoners were frequently described as 'medically safe'. For example, President George W. Bush described the brutal interrogations of Abu Zubaydah and Ramzi bin al-Shib as 'safe, lawful and effective', (see *SSCI Report*, 202, n. 1171), parroting an indemnifying phrase repeated ad nauseum by the CIA both internally and in its external affairs after Zubaydah's interrogation (see, for example the non-legal memorandum "The High Value Terrorist Detainee Program," released 20 December 2016, ACLU Torture Database, document ACLU-RDI 229, https://www.thetorturedatabase.org/files/foia_subsite/16_1.pdf). The cited example was supplied by the CIA's psychologist contractor, Bruce Jessen. Concerned with legal culpability when speaking with a CIA investigator two months after he interrogated Gul Rahman at the 'Salt Pit' secret prison near Kabul, Jessen claimed the 'atmosphere was very good ... nasty, but safe'. Rahman died from hypothermia five days after Jessen interrogated him, half-naked and chained to the floor of an unheated concrete cell, see Larry Siems, "Inside the CIA's Black Site Torture Room," *The Guardian*, 9 October 2017, <https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/ng-interactive/2017/oct/09/cia-torture-black-site-enhanced-interrogation>.

‘If the detainee dies you’re doing it wrong’

The aggressive capture and interrogation of prisoners was not just CIA strategy, but a core means through which the ‘war on terror’ was prosecuted more broadly. In its incipient phases a legal architecture was constructed so that it could be carried out by federal agencies with comparative freedom. One week after September 11, 2001, President George W. Bush signed into force, the ‘Authorization for Use of Military Force’ joint resolution, the key statutory device that would permit wide-ranging detention powers for military and intelligence agencies.⁷⁴² Immediately, the technical groundwork for its combination with a new system of brutal interrogation was constructed by senior members of the Bush Administration, Defense Department, and the CIA. One of the first moves on the part of the DOD’s General Counsel Office was to request information on aggressive interrogation from the Joint Personnel Recovery Agency, a unit whose Survival Evasion Resistance and Escape (SERE) training focuses explicitly on simulating and withstanding interrogation techniques researched during the early cold war period and considered illegal under the Geneva Conventions.⁷⁴³ Mobilising those techniques against non-US citizens thus risked exposing its practitioners to legal jeopardy. Accordingly, a framework of legal permissibility was assembled to accommodate and redefine torture.

Through late-2001 and 2002, two broad and interrelated administrative measures were pursued in order to ensure that pain and suffering could be inflicted on captives while a liberal ‘golden shield’ of legality and proportionality protected its exponents.⁷⁴⁴ The first involved retracting the applicability the 1949 Geneva Conventions for prisoners captured as part of the ‘war on terror’. On November 13, 2001, President Bush authorised a military order radically relaxing federal constraints on the detention of non-US citizens, determining that those deemed

⁷⁴² Authorization for Use of Military Force, Pub. L. No. 107-40, 115 Stat. 224 (2001), <https://www.congress.gov/107/plaws/publ40/PLAW-107publ40.pdf>; see also Oona Hathaway et al., "The Power to Detain: Detention of Terrorism Suspects After 9/11," *Yale Journal of International Law* 38, no. 1 (2013): 123--177, https://digitalcommons.law.yale.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=5733&context=fss_papers.

⁷⁴³ *SASC Inquiry*, xiii.

⁷⁴⁴ Mark Danner, *Stripping Bare the Body: Politics, Violence, War* (Melbourne, Australia: Black Inc, 2009), 505.

enemies could be interned as he ordered 'from time to time in writing'.⁷⁴⁵ In a string of subsequent memoranda filtering between the Department of Justice's Office of Legal Counsel (OLC) and lawyers at the White House and Department of Defense, it was determined that imprisoned al Qaeda and Taliban prisoners could thus be legally managed by US forces in ways 'consistent with' the principles of the Geneva Conventions but not its actual provisions.⁷⁴⁶ Internal memos maintained that loosening the restraints on prisoner's status and rights under interrogation would not only preserve 'flexibility' in the 'war on terror' but would also 'reduce the threat' of later domestic prosecutions for war crimes.⁷⁴⁷ The effect was to negate conventional standards for war prisons and relegate prisoner treatment 'to a matter of policy not law'.⁷⁴⁸ From early 2002, Executive and Department of Defense figures began to speak of captured persons as unlawful 'enemy combatants' rather than prisoners of war, and therefore subject to different protective standards.

The second means of establishing legal, proportionate, and therefore liberal torture, involved circumventing established rules proscribing it. In large part this was achieved through the delineation of new definitions and acceptable standards of health, pain, medical care, and conditions of detention. As prisoners arrived at Guantánamo Bay in January 2002, the Presidential authorisation was already informing a string of legal memoranda reforming interrogation standards that circumvented international legal norms. In February, a further Executive Order affirmed that a 'new paradigm' in armed conflict and the laws of war required that al Qaeda and Taliban prisoners lose any protections under the Geneva Conventions

⁷⁴⁵ "Detention, Treatment, and Trial of Certain Non-Citizens in the War Against Terrorism," Military Order of November 13, 2001, <https://fas.org/irp/offdocs/eo/mo-111301.htm>.

⁷⁴⁶ Memorandum from Secretary of Defense to Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, "Status of Taliban and Al Qaeda," 19 January 2002, <https://nsarchive2.gwu.edu/torturingdemocracy/documents/20020119.pdf>.

⁷⁴⁷ Memorandum from White House Counsel Alberto Gonzales to the President, 25 January 2002: <https://nsarchive2.gwu.edu/NSAEBB/NSAEBB127/02.01.25.pdf>; see also Memorandum from John Yoo, Deputy Assistant Attorney General and Robert J. Delahunty, Special Counsel to William J. Haynes II, General Counsel, Department of Defense, <https://nsarchive2.gwu.edu/torturingdemocracy/documents/20020109.pdf>.

⁷⁴⁸ Gregory, "Black Flag," 415.

wherever required by military necessity.⁷⁴⁹ In part decision followed action as the CIA, coordinating with other national security entities, began to set up an archipelago of secret ‘black sites’ where prisoners were submitted to increasingly brutal interrogation tactics. Concern grew that participants would be legally culpable under US federal code, which banned the torture of persons outside the US.

Action was quickly taken to reform interrogation standards according to extremely narrow legal definitions of torture and ill-treatment. The most important task Bush Administration lawyers were set was to construct a protective barrier around the still-unofficial coercive interrogation programmes that were being conducted in Bagram and elsewhere. Managers of those programmes risked contravening US obligations to the United Nations Convention Against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (CAT).⁷⁵⁰ This instrument defined torture as

any act which by *severe pain or suffering*, whether mental or physical, is intentionally inflicted on a person for such purposes as obtaining from him or a third person information or a confession...⁷⁵¹

New, elevated thresholds of severe pain or suffering would need to be defined if the extremely violent methods utilised in SERE-style psychological torture were to continue being used. Just as important, a medico-legal armature was required so that those thresholds could be observed *and legitimated* by calculative means. The result was that medical officers would be deputised to supervise and perform the new, permissive legal thresholds of pain and suffering.

In August, White House lawyers requested that the Department of Justice senior counsel clarify the legal constraints surrounding interrogators given the provisions of CAT and its

⁷⁴⁹ Memorandum from President Bush to the Vice President et al., 7 February 2002, <https://nsarchive2.gwu.edu/NSAEBB/NSAEBB127/02.02.07.pdf>.

⁷⁵⁰ See "Counter Resistance Strategy Meeting Minutes," record of meeting between CIA lawyers and Joint Task Force-Guantanamo interrogation corps planners, 02 October 2002, <https://nsarchive2.gwu.edu/torturingdemocracy/documents/20021002.pdf>.

⁷⁵¹ Convention Against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, art. 1, 10 December 1984, 1465 U.N.T.S. 85 [hereafter CAT], https://treaties.un.org/doc/Treaties/1987/06/19870626%2002-38%20AM/Ch_IV_9p.pdf, emphasis added.

implementation into law under Sections 2340-2340A of title 18 of the US Code.⁷⁵² Interpreting the Code, two senior OLC attorneys, John Yoo and Jay Bybee, opined that ‘severe pain’ should be understood as that which might accompany the *threat to life*, ‘generally of the kind difficult for the victim to endure’.⁷⁵³ Given CAT’s inclusion of mental and physical pain, the Bybee Memo advised on appropriate thresholds for determining severity. Their interpretation was extremely permissive:

Where the pain is physical, it must be of an intensity akin to that which accompanies serious physical injury such as death or organ failure. Severe mental pain requires suffering not just at the moment of infliction but it also requires lasting psychological harm, such as seen in mental disorders like posttraumatic stress disorder ... Because the acts inflicting torture are extreme, there is significant range of acts that though they might constitute cruel, inhuman, or degrading treatment or punishment fail to rise to the level of torture.⁷⁵⁴

This legal performance did not take place in a vacuum. The limit categories established in the Bybee Memo (‘severe’ physical and mental pain, and suffering) were not simply abstract ethical propositions, to be deduced solely by lawyers within the OLC. Rather, they were developed as a body of working knowledge that emerged in collaboration with other experts overseeing interrogations in the ‘war on terror’. This included engaging with reviewing lawyers at the National Security Council, the White House counsel’s office, and Vice President Cheney’s office, as well as senior military and CIA officers who had already been overseeing interrogations.⁷⁵⁵ For these managers of liberal war, the questions surrounding which procedures might result in ‘lasting psychological harm’, pain accompanying ‘serious physical injury’, and other legally fraught outcomes were not the stuff of legal or philosophical theory, but urgent and

⁷⁵² Title 18 - Crimes and Criminal Procedure, U.S. Code §§2340A-2340A, Torture (1994).

⁷⁵³ Memorandum from John C. Yoo, Deputy Assistant Attorney General, US Department of Justice Office of Legal Counsel, to Alberto R. Gonzales, Counsel to the President, "Re: Standards of Care for Interrogation under 18 U.S.C. §§ 2340-2340A," 1 August 2002 [hereafter the ‘Bybee Memo’], <https://nsarchive2.gwu.edu/torturingdemocracy/documents/20020801-1.pdf>, 46.

⁷⁵⁴ Bybee Memo, 46.

⁷⁵⁵ Luban, "Liberalism, Torture, and the Ticking Bomb," 1455.

empirical. The practical knowledge required to answer them was increasingly available. From early-2002, senior officers in war prisoners, such as the commander at JTF-GTMO, had been asking for permission to interrogate prisoners more aggressively.⁷⁵⁶ The initiation and evidentiary bases for those requests had been heavily influenced by CIA behavioural scientist contractors and lawyers from its Counter Terrorist Centre who had undertaken their own surveys from trips to prison sites. It was in those initial, pre-authorised stages of experimentation where the legal thresholds of legal torture were worked out in practice. The idealised medico-legal apparatus for defining and managing torture that emerged in 2002 began in extempore fashion, became convention, and then cascaded back through the war on terror planning structure in the form of abstract legal reasoning.

By late-2002, a new common sense was taking hold across the US national security state and inside its mass interrogation apparatuses: coercive, pain-inducing interrogation techniques were legal if they did not induce pain and suffering verging on that which might accompany death or organ failure, and that that elevated legal threshold was to be monitored by medical officers through their powers of expert clinical observation. In October, John Fredman, the CIA's chief counterterrorism counsel, travelled to Cuba to brief senior military staff on the Agency's gradual 'reverse engineering' of SERE techniques. His interactions with Lieutenant Colonel Diane Beaver, the Army Judge Advocate General's Corps lawyer at the site, and David Becker, the civilian Interrogation Control Element Chief at Guantánamo (amongst others) demonstrate how the legal armature around torture was emerging from a recursive cycle of military practice and lawyerly interpretation:

LTC BEAVER: Disrupting the normal camp conditions is vital. We need to create an environment of "controlled chaos". We may need to curb harsher operations while ICRC is around. It is better not to expose them to any controversial techniques. We must have the support of the DOD.

⁷⁵⁶ Memorandum from Major General Michael B. Dunlavey, Joint Task Force-170, to Commander, US Southern Command, "Counter-Resistance Strategies," 11 October 2002, <https://nsarchive2.gwu.edu/torturingdemocracy/documents/20021011.pdf>.

BECKER: We have had many reports from Bagram about sleep deprivation begin used.

LTC BEAVER: True, but officially it is not happening. It is not being reported officially. The ICRC is a serious concern. They will be in and out, scrutinizing our operations, unless they are displeased and decide to leave. This would draw a lot of negative attention...

FREDMAN: The DOJ has provided much guidance on this issue ... Under the Torture Convention, torture has been prohibited by international law, but the language of the statutes is written vaguely. Severe mental and physical pain is prohibited. The mental part is explained as poorly as the physical. Severe physical pain described as anything causing permanent damage to major organs or body parts. Mental torture described as anything leading to permanent profound damage to the sense or personality. *It is basically subject to perception. If the detainee dies you're doing it wrong.* So far, the techniques we have addressed have not proven to produce these types of results, which in a way challenges what the BSCT paper says about not being able to prove whether these techniques will lead to permanent damage. Everything on the BSCT white paper is legal from a civilian standpoint. (Any questions of severe weather or temperate conditions should be deferred to medical staff.) Any of the techniques that lie on the harshest end of the spectrum must be performed by a highly trained individual. *Medical personnel should be present to treat any possible accidents...*

LTC BEAVER: We will need documentation to protect us.

FREDMAN: Yes, if someone dies while aggressive techniques are being used, regardless of cause of death, the backlash of attention would be severely detrimental. *Everything must be approved and documented...*

MAJOR BURNEY [PSYCHOLOGIST AND LOCAL BSCT MEMBER]: Whether or not significant stress occurs lies in the eye of the beholder. The burden of proof is the big issue. It is very difficult to disprove someone else's PTSD.

FREDMAN: *These techniques need involvement from interrogators, psych, medical, legal, etc.*⁷⁵⁷

⁷⁵⁷ "Counter Resistance Strategy Meeting Minutes," 02 October 2002, 3--4, emphases added.

Here several legal categories are undergoing formation through deliberative practice between lawyers and non-lawyers, in this case categories of severe pain, mental torture, and so on. Clearly, technical knowledge or, at least rumour, of torture was travelling (for example, from Bagram, to Defense, to Guantánamo) and when it did, it took with it an understanding that non-lawyerly expertise was required to verify legal practice. Relationships between the Department of Defense and CIA took the form of a recursive pattern of experimental practice, formal supervision, documentation, and new and expansive limits to abuse. Over the following months, as Agency Headquarters drew up a list of proposed ‘enhanced’ techniques for legal review, its senior legal counsels promised Department of Justice lawyers that their use would be ‘subject to a competent evaluation of the medical and psychological state of the detainee’.⁷⁵⁸

By 2003, interrogational torture was formalised. But to be legally performed by US agents it was reframed as a juridico-clinical event inside an expertly monitored space. In January, Secretary of Defense Rumsfeld organised a working group to explore and systematise ‘enhanced’ interrogation techniques on this ‘safe’ and legal basis. It utilised the now familiar and permissive definitions of ‘severe pain’ and other loosened legal definitions. The Working Group Report that was produced in April was heavily indebted to the Bybee Memo, utilising tracts from it almost verbatim.⁷⁵⁹ It constructed a legal, technical, and policy basis upon which the Secretary of Defense would approve a raft of ‘aggressive counter-resistance techniques’ and the means for planning their calculated application to prisoners in a mixed or graduating fashion (see figure 7.1).⁷⁶⁰ Rumsfeld subsequently approved the use of twenty-four of the Working Groups’ proposed techniques and, in April, US Southern Command’s leaders, the ultimate administrators of the JTF-GTMO facilities, received approval to incorporate numerous ‘enhanced’ techniques

⁷⁵⁸ Central Intelligence Agency Office of Inspector General, "Special Review: Counterterrorism Detention and Interrogation Activities (September 2001 – October 2004)," 7 May 2004, released 29 September 2016. ACLU Torture Database [hereafter TDB], document ACLU-RDI 6617, 14, <https://www.thetorturedatabase.org/document/cia-oig-special-review-counterterrorism-detention-and-interrogation-activities-sept-2001-oc>.

⁷⁵⁹ See Luban, "Liberalism, Torture, and the Ticking Bomb," 1454.

⁷⁶⁰ US Department of Defense, "Working Group Report on Detainee Interrogations in the Global War on Terrorism: Assessment of Legal, Historical, Policy and Operational Considerations," 4 April 2003, 2, <http://hrlibrary.umn.edu/OathBetrayed/Rumsfeld%204-4-03.pdf>.

into their operations.⁷⁶¹ These included dietary manipulation, forced nudity and standing, measures for ‘significantly increasing the fear level in a detainee’, slapping, sleep deprivation, and isolation.

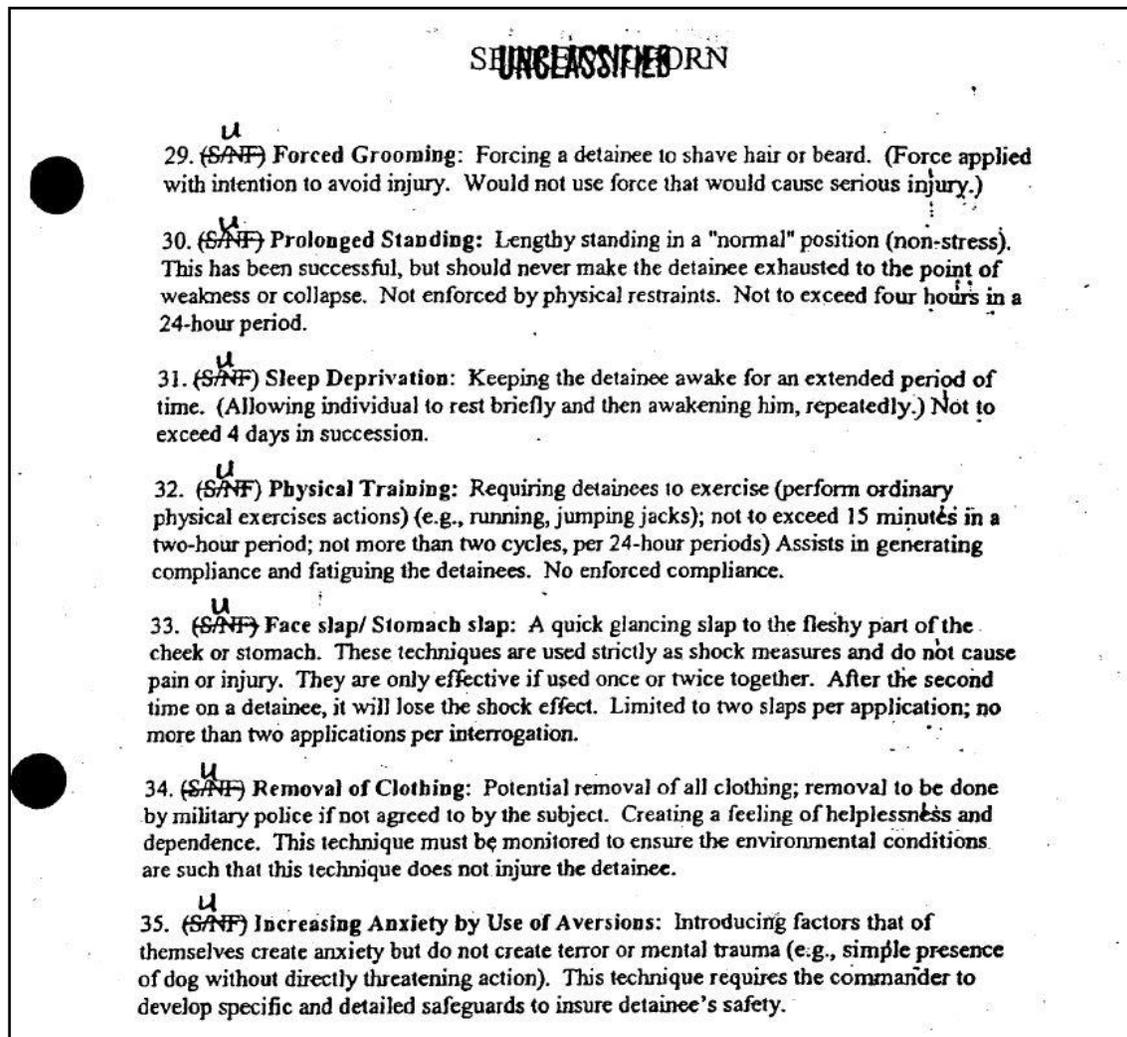


Figure 7.1 Extract of some of the ‘exceptional techniques’ recommended for use against ‘unlawful combatants’ by the General Counsel of Defense’s Working Group Report, April 2003.⁷⁶²

⁷⁶¹ Memorandum from Donald Rumsfeld, Secretary of Defense, to the Commander, US Southern Command, "Counter-Resistance Techniques in the War on Terrorism," 16 April 2003, <https://nsarchive2.gwu.edu/torturingdemocracy/documents/20030416.pdf>.

⁷⁶² US Department of Defense, "Working Group Report," 65.

A key element of the Report is its recommendation that interrogation policies mandate ‘the presence or availability (as appropriate) of qualified medical personnel’ during harsh interrogations.⁷⁶³ More specifically, it noted that ‘the use of isolation as an interrogation technique requires detailed implementation instructions, including specific guidelines regarding the length of isolation, medical and psychological review’, and that ‘exceptional’ techniques, such as sleep deprivation and prolonged standing, should be limited by medical evaluation.⁷⁶⁴ In fact, any exceptional techniques were to be performed only under appropriate ‘supervision’, a stipulation that effectively made legal torture contingent upon the presence of medical officers. The opinions of physicians, psychologists, and others were not only to be sought out for general guidance in the design of interrogation plans but doctors were to provide detailed and documented readings of prisoners’ capacities in their specific, tailored construction, taking into account the combination of exceptional techniques. They would also monitor and document termination criteria, limits on duration, safeguards, and the interrogation itself.⁷⁶⁵ Later that month, the Director of Central Intelligence, George Tenet, cabled to his interrogation teams that

appropriate medical and psychological personnel must be on site during all detainee interrogations employing Enhanced Techniques. In each case, the medical and psychological personnel shall suspend the interrogation if they determine that significant and prolonged physical or mental injury, pain, or suffering is likely to result if the interrogation is not suspended. *In any such instance, the interrogation team shall immediately report the facts to Headquarters for management and legal review to determine whether the interrogation may be resumed...*

...In each interrogation session in which an Enhanced Technique is employed, a contemporaneous record shall be created setting forth the nature and duration of each such technique employed, the identities of those present, and a citation to the required Headquarters approval cable.

⁷⁶³ Ibid., 56.

⁷⁶⁴ Ibid., 3B—4.

⁷⁶⁵ Ibid., 56; 69--70.

This information, which may be in the form of a cable, shall be provided to Headquarters.⁷⁶⁶

This directive followed the recent hypothermic death of Gul Rahman in the ‘Salt Pit’ black site in Kabul—later explained by OMS as a result of inexperienced staff lacking ‘guidance’ and ‘monitoring equipment’—and the use of a gun and a powered drill in interrogations of Abd al-Rahim al-Nashiri.⁷⁶⁷ Nonetheless, the standards Tenet’s memo laid down for detainee treatment and prison conditions were later deemed by SSCI to be shockingly minimal.⁷⁶⁸ But, rather than protective measures, what mattered was the operationalisation of legal standards *per se*. Over the next two years, a formal corpus of procedures was drafted and refined by OMS so that its medical officers could observe the newly concocted thresholds of pain and suffering, with the CIA’s Chief of Medical Services first distributing draft guidelines in April 2003.⁷⁶⁹ Later versions would become much more elaborate and the December 2004 iteration is now accessible (hereafter ‘the OMS Guidelines’).⁷⁷⁰ It emphasises that OMS was responsible for both ‘monitoring the health of all Agency detainees’ subject to interrogations and ‘for determining that the authorized administration of these techniques would not be expected to cause serious or permanent harm’.⁷⁷¹ The war on terror’s liberal torture apparatus had its expert calculators of good and evil, its means of conducting divine forensics.

⁷⁶⁶ Memorandum from George Tenet, Director of Central Intelligence, for CIA interrogators, "Guidelines on Interrogations Conducted Pursuant to the Presidential Memorandum of Notification of 17 September 2001," 28 January 2003, released 24 August 2009, TDB document ACLU-RDI 4562, https://www.thetorturedatabase.org/files/foia_subsite/pdfs/DOJOLC001043.pdf.

⁷⁶⁷ CIA Chief of Medical Services memorandum, "Summary and Reflections of Chief of Medical Services on OMS Participation in the RDI Program," ca. September 2008, released 14 August 2018, TDB document ACLU-RDI 6828, 33, <https://www.thetorturedatabase.org/document/memo-re-summary-and-reflections-chief-medical-services-oms-participation-rdi-program-2>.

⁷⁶⁸ *SSCI Report*, 61--62.

⁷⁶⁹ CIA Chief of Medical Services memorandum, "Summary and Reflections of Chief of Medical Services," 49.

⁷⁷⁰ CIA Office of Medical Services, "Guidelines on Medical and Psychological Support to Detainee Rendition, Interrogation, and Detention," December 2004, released 13 June 2016, <https://www.cia.gov/library/readingroom/docs/0006541536.pdf>. The precise procedures by which the OMS personnel would carry out these duties are tabulated in Annex 1.

⁷⁷¹ CIA Office of Medical Services, "Guidelines on Medical and Psychological Support, 9.

By early 2005, however, CIA lawyers' anxiety had nonetheless renewed. Concerned that the violence unleashed by their interrogation plans was violating even their elevated definition of torture, they again sought legal opinion, this time from the head of the OLC, Steven Bradbury. As in the Bybee Memo and other DOJ findings, his advice hinged on the question not of the subjective experience of suffering, but the aetiology, manifest material signs, and effects of 'severe' pain and long-term mental harm. He asked whether 'in the monitoring of detainees undergoing interrogation, is it possible to tell reliably (e.g. from outward physical signs like grimaces) whether a detainee is experiencing severe pain?' Does sleep deprivation 'lower the threshold of pain', so that it might now be 'severe'? Would the pain caused by an oedema induced by forced standing and shackling become 'severe' under sleep deprivation? The CIA's response was composed by OMS, and was reassuring: 'We have not observed this phenomena in the interrogations to date' and, given that 'all pain is subjective, not objective':

Medical officers can monitor for evidence of condition or injury that most people would consider painful, and can observe the individual for *outward displays and expressions associated with the experience of pain*. Medical officer [*sic*] can and do ask the subject, after the interrogation session has concluded, if he is in pain, and have and do provide analgesics, such as Tylenol and Aleve, to detainees who report headache and other discomforts during their interrogations. We reiterate, that an interrogation session would be stopped if, in the judgment of the interrogators or medical personnel, medical attention was required.⁷⁷²

This piece of advice from OMS was relied upon by Bradbury to reconfirm Rumsfeld's list of 'enhanced' interrogation techniques (the 2005 'Bradbury Memo'). In particular, supportive documents like it were subsequently used to reassert that waterboarding did not trigger 'physical pain' as 'far as can be determined' by doctors.⁷⁷³ In this way, the 'torture memos' did not clear

⁷⁷² Faxed letter from CIA counsel to Steve Bradbury, Acting Assistant Attorney General, Office of Legal Counsel, 4 May 2005, CIA FOIA document 6541714, released 13 June 2016, 3, <https://www.cia.gov/library/readingroom/docs/0006541714.pdf>.

⁷⁷³ Department of Justice, Office of Professional Responsibility, "Investigation into the Office of Legal Counsel's Memoranda Concerning Issues Relating to the Central Intelligence Agency's Use of "Enhanced Interrogation Techniques" on Suspected Terrorists," report, 29 July 2009, released 19 July 2010, TDB document ACLU-RDI

out a space of pure sovereign power but constructed the bases of liberal torture: the forward-looking, intelligence-gathering meting out of pain and suffering through a medico-legal apparatus of expert procedure and monitoring, or what Mark Danner calls torture by means of ‘intricate bureaucratic machines’.⁷⁷⁴ The OMS was not endowed with this responsibility from above, but provided an important plank in building its case as an agency of adjudication, its memo underscoring its officers’ responsibility to monitor interrogatees to a maximal point at which physical and mental pain could be inflicted without resulting in prolonged and demonstrable ‘harm’. The conjugation of caring and breaking bodies in the everywhere war’s mass interrogation apparatus was established.

Observe and report

For Weizman, when ‘lesser evil’ arguments are invoked to trigger and sustain humanitarian wars, state violence commonly begins to assume the model of a ‘necro-economy’. A utilitarian impulse guides the distribution of destructive measures, and later modern war resembles an effort in differential accounting, with state agents assembled to divine and monitor the ‘mathematical minimum’ of violence necessary to secure the greater social good. With CIA management cadre securing the authority to wage a war in this way, medical observation represented one of the key intricate bureaucratic machines for prosecuting liberal torture according to law and by empirical induction. In doing so, its mass interrogation apparatus folded together the two historical functions of torture doctors as adjudicators and torture scientists. Three examples of their efforts in divine forensics will be reviewed here: the repair and medical observation of Abu Zubaydah, and his submission to early, uncharted experiments with the waterboard; the extraordinarily extensive torture of Khalid Sheik Mohammed, including the significant medico-legal refinement

5022,

https://www.thetorturedatabase.org/files/foia_subsite/20090729_opr_final_report_with_20100719_declassifications_0.pdf.

⁷⁷⁴ Danner, *Stripping Bare the Body*, 525.

of the waterboard; and, finally, the supervision and administration of dietary torture and forced feeding.

Repairing and observing Abu Zubaydah

Far from serving as ‘detached’ monitors, medical officers were core participants in the CIA’s torture programme. Their professional decisions constructed the body of knowledge—the biomedical baselines and continuous feedback—and reparative function, necessary for a liberal torture programme to be deemed ‘safe’ and proportionate, and therefore legal. By transforming coercive interrogation into a series of technical medico-legal decisions, their participation helped to perform torture as limited violence, a ‘lesser evil’ required for the greater mission of intelligence collection. But for that process to occur, victims’ bodies first had to be authorised as capable of withstanding the violence of ‘enhanced’ techniques. The rehabilitation and waterboarding of the Program’s first detainee, Abu Zubaydah, is instructive.

From the moment of Zubaydah’s capture, and throughout his subjection to the waterboard, OMS personnel and contracted physicians were intimately involved in monitoring and repairing his body. Without their efforts, an injured suspect could not have been transposed into an interrogatable body. In March 2002, CIA, FBI, and Pakistani intelligence personnel set out to arrest Zubaydah, raiding suspected safehouses in Faisalabad. In the process of his arrest he was shot several times, suffering complex entry and exit wounds to his abdomen, groin, and thigh, all of which required the immediate services of trauma surgeons. He was transported to an unnamed intensive care unit, where his month-long hospitalisation was supervised by OMS personnel. When his status wavered and became serious, an intensivist was called in to monitor his condition. Other specialists were dispatched to address his pulmonary congestion, fever, poor liver function, the endophthalmitis that threatened his damaged and inflamed left eye, and to repeatedly debride the necrotic tissue from his deteriorating wounds. By the end of April, the Agency’s medical service recorded, Zubaydah was ‘afebrile, pain-free, on a full diet, with a leg wound now healthy in appearance, and able to get up and down on his own’. Soon, OMS assured Program managers, he would be able to withstand the trials of aggressive interrogation, the Agency’s medical chief later noting that, as he was ‘transferred to a VIP suite ... [m]edical

concerns were now replaced by operational concerns'. Medical personnel continued to provide continual care, with OMS nurses stationed at the site holding Zubaydah and arrangements made for a Regional Medical Office (RMO) to make regular visits.⁷⁷⁵

His body sufficiently repaired, Zubaydah was flown to 'Detention Site Green', a black site at Udon Thani, Thailand. At CIA Headquarters an interrogation plan for him could now be developed based around taking a 'hard approach' to extracting information from him and the Agency's Counterterrorism Center arranged for James Mitchell's transfer to Thailand.⁷⁷⁶ The plan outlined an 'increased pressure phase' that would cycle through an escalating 'menu' of techniques, including the waterboard, with Mitchell the only person authorised to perform them. The Agency's Bin Ladin Issue Station cabled to confirm their 'understanding that the interrogation process takes precedence over preventative medical procedures'.⁷⁷⁷ Site leaders awaited approval to begin.

During the Spring of 2002, the Agency's research and development branch, the Office of Technical Service, had lobbied for the broad authorisation of coercive techniques, arguing that the waterboard would have to constitute the most critical element of the Program. Senior managers sought out legal and policy approval for its use in Thailand, and potentially elsewhere.⁷⁷⁸ However, figures in both the Agency and the federal Executive regarded its use as a risky proposition, threatening to cast all involved into extremely fraught legal terrain. For this reason, National Security Advisor Condoleezza Rice instructed the CIA to attach 'specific details' of the techniques it proposed to use in its applications for legal opinion from OLC.⁷⁷⁹ Once again, the Agency incorporated expert statements about the waterboard's proven utility and safety from Mitchell, despite the fact that he had no direct experience of it and was the very

⁷⁷⁵ See the account of Zubaydah's arrest and rehabilitation in CIA Chief of Medical Services memorandum, "Summary and Reflections of Chief of Medical Services," 7--8.

⁷⁷⁶ Jane Mayer, "The Experiment," *The New Yorker*, 3 July 2005, <https://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2005/07/11/the-experiment-3>; *SSCI Report*, 21.

⁷⁷⁷ *SSCI Report*, 35.

⁷⁷⁸ CIA Chief of Medical Services memorandum, "Summary and Reflections of Chief of Medical Services," 37.

⁷⁷⁹ *SSCI Report*, 34.

figure seeking to use it at Site Green.⁷⁸⁰ Mitchell assured the CIA that when it was expertly supervised nothing categorically distinguished the waterboard from other aggressive techniques. The question was of expert measurement and medical decision, not ethical valuation: ‘any physical pressure applied to extremes can cause severe mental pain and suffering ... The safety of any technique lies primarily in how it is applied and monitored’.⁷⁸¹ In a circular chain of legal reasoning, this and similar endorsements supported the Bybee Memo, which in turn cleared the way for Zubaydah’s brutal interrogation plan approved on August 3.

It is crucial to emphasise that despite authorising the Agency to expose Zubaydah to ferocious violence, in the OLC memorandum that effectively sanctioned his ‘enhanced’ interrogation plan, Bybee was nonetheless acutely concerned to mitigate any long-term or visible effects on his body.⁷⁸² To do this it assumed that medical personnel would constantly supervise the process and at key points includes precise instructions for obviating physical injuries that might produce noticeable sequelae. For example, the technique of ‘walling’ was to involve the construction of a flexible false wall and the support of a victim’s neck and head with a rolled hood or towel, ‘to reduce the probability of injury’. When utilising the ‘facial hold’, interrogators were to ensure their ‘fingertips were kept well away from the individual’s eyes’. Prolonged deprivation was permitted provided that ‘personnel with medical training are available to and will intervene in the unlikely event of an abnormal reaction’.⁷⁸³

The OLC attorneys’ opinion on Zubaydah’s interrogation plan also established the legal basis upon which the Agency incorporated the waterboard into the war more broadly. This technique aimed to restrict air flow to a victim’s mouth and nose, saturate with water much of the head and body, with the effect that, as carbon dioxide levels rose in the blood, a feeling of

⁷⁸⁰ *SSCI Report*, 36. Jessen and Mitchell, psychologists with previous dealings with the Air Force’s SERE programmes, relied on hearsay of the waterboard’s use in Navy training, which was only ever extremely brief and occasional.

⁷⁸¹ *Ibid.*

⁷⁸² Memorandum from Jay S. Bybee, Assistant Attorney General US, Department of Justice Office of Legal Counsel to John Rizzo, Acting General Counsel of the Central Intelligence Agency, "Interrogation of al Qaeda Operative," 1 August 2002, 4, <https://www.justice.gov/sites/default/files/olc/legacy/2010/08/05/memo-bybee2002.pdf>.

⁷⁸³ *Ibid.*, 2--4.

intense panic would be triggered.⁷⁸⁴ However, even for this extreme act, pain and suffering was to be meted out in measurable quantities, according to determinate rules, and overseen within a space of technical observation:

We also understand that a medical expert with SERE experience will be present throughout this phase and that the procedures will be stopped if deemed medically necessary to prevent severe mental or physical harm to Zubaydah. As mentioned above, Zubaydah suffered an injury during his capture. You have informed us that steps will be taken to ensure that this injury is not in any way exacerbated by the use of these methods and that adequate medical attention will be given to ensure that it will heal properly.⁷⁸⁵

This meant that in addition to Mitchell, the torture chamber was to be populated by a number of expert medical witnesses. On call during all of Zubaydah's interrogations, according to the OMS, was a senior physician's assistant (PA) or an RMO. During the 'aggressive phase', a whole 'medical team' was to be present. While officially their 'exclusive' role was to ensure Zubaydah's safety, in an experimental process of graduated psychological torture, this obviously required their ready intervention, including with regards to decisions about how to execute the waterboard process legally, and the weighing up of the specific biophysical consequences of attacking his body using other authorised techniques. For example, the PA reported checking that wounds were treated such that Zubaydah could withstand confinement in a small box for two hours. When he was subject to 'large box' confinement, the medical officer monitored his condition 'through the night via a grainy video feed from inside the box', later providing interrogators with a report on his sleep.⁷⁸⁶ In messages to OMS, medical and 'operational'

⁷⁸⁴ Ibid.

⁷⁸⁵ Ibid.

⁷⁸⁶ CIA Chief of Medical Services memorandum, "Summary and Reflections of Chief of Medical Services," 18; CIA Cable, "Eyes Only – Details RE 05 August 02 Cycle of Interrogations of Abu Zubaydah," released 20 December 2016, TDB document ACLU-RDI 6751, https://www.thetorturedatabase.org/files/foia_subsite/39_0.pdf.

assessments were combined, the PA recording that Zubaydah ‘seems amazingly resistant to the waterboard’ and was ‘becoming habituated to the boxes’.⁷⁸⁷

In this way medical officers’ involvement in Abu Zubaydah’s torture was facilitative. And if there is any doubt that their involvement as ‘observers’ extended into outright participation, a number of other examples from the records show otherwise. Physicians were engaged in the decision-making process that saw make Zubaydah’s care become contingent upon cooperation. At one point, site personnel ordered his potentially infected gunshot wounds to be left to deteriorate.⁷⁸⁸ As part of the ‘conditioning’ phase, wound evaluations were reduced and deliberately ‘interweaved’ with interrogations, so that Zubaydah would not know when his necrotic injuries were being checked. After leaving his dressings unchanged for seventy-two hours, the ‘interrogation team devised a strategy’ to leave new dressings and antiseptic for Zubaydah to self-apply, after which a PA ‘carefully monitored’ his wounds but only furtively, so that his anxiety about neglect would worsen.⁷⁸⁹ When they did enter his cell or interrogation room, medical officers communicated using hand signals and disguised themselves as guards, wearing the same all-black uniforms, masks, and tinted goggles as operations officers and interrogators.⁷⁹⁰ Even more significantly, during the final waterboarding sessions at Udon Thani, OMS reviewed and assessed the utility—not only the safety—of dosing Zubaydah with sodium amytal (a potential ‘truth serum’). Its Chief agreed to supply a qualified physician to administer it if necessary.⁷⁹¹ At the height of the torture sessions in August, medical officers’ role even

⁷⁸⁷ Ibid.

⁷⁸⁸ *SSCI Report*, 491.

⁷⁸⁹ CIA Chief of Medical Services memorandum, "Summary and Reflections of Chief of Medical Services," 17; CIA Cable, "Eyes Only – Details RE 07 August 02 Cycle of Interrogations of Abu Zubaydah."

⁷⁹⁰ CIA Cable, "Eyes Only – Interrogation Plan [Redacted]," released 20 December 2016, TDB document ACLU-RDI 6694, https://www.thetorturedatabase.org/files/foia_subsite/50_0.pdf.

⁷⁹¹ Through 2002, and perhaps beyond, OMS undertook an extensive exploration of drug-based interrogation, consulting with the Agency’s Central Eurasian Division on what they knew about Soviet pharmacology studies. The medical service eventually determined that if ‘narco-analysis’ was to be pursued it would recommend its physicians intravenously administer a benzodiazepine, midazolam. Legal counsel at the Counterterrorism Center eventually declined to seek DOJ opinion, see CIA Chief of Medical Services memorandum, "Summary and Reflections of Chief of Medical Services," 25.

included counselling distressed staff, such was their functional role in supporting the Agency's work on site.⁷⁹²

In America's war on terror, the 'bits of truth' that would emanate from mass interrogation evolved, with intelligence recast as personal, biological, and behavioural data. The Office of Medical Services' role was reformed as part of this broader transformation. They recorded the application and effects of the waterboard in detail not simply due to its inherent risk, but as part of a broader programme of experimental research. In August 2002, the waterboard was untested, not yet programmatic, and so OMS personnel were asked to build a body of knowledge as it was trialled, to construct technical baselines of safety going forward. After Zubaydah's initial waterboarding, a medical officer updated OMS leadership, adopting a language of clinical formality while projecting a sense of discovery. The email was entitled 'So it begins':

The sessions accelerated rapidly progressing quickly to the water board after large box, walling, and small box periods. [Abu Zubaydah] seems very resistant to the water board. Longest time with the cloth over his face so far has been 17 seconds. This is sure to increase shortly. NO useful information so far.... He did vomit a couple of times during the water board with some beans and rice. It's been 10 hours since he ate so this is surprising and disturbing. We plan to only feed Ensure for a while now. I'm head[ing] back for another water board session.⁷⁹³

As the next section explains, by 2004 mission feedback such as this had contributed the base of knowledge OMS required to prescribe a set of specific monitoring and recording duties to be followed by its officers during waterboarding, which are itemised in appendix A. This circular relationship between medical expert' observing and refining torture, begun during Zubaydah's 'conditioning' phase and extended into his 'enhanced' interrogation show how indistinct the two roles could be. Despite the Agency's prior assurances of the waterboard's safety and the Bybee Memo's subsequent determination of legality, the technical parameters of legitimate pain and suffering were worked out in practice, in part through testing various

⁷⁹² CIA Chief of Medical Services memorandum, "Summary and Reflections of Chief of Medical Services," 18.

⁷⁹³ *SSCI Report*, 41--42. Ensure is a commercially available nutritional drink.

permutations of its use and by recording results systematically in a space of medico-legal expertise.

Medical personnel were intimately involved in this process of experimenting upon Zubaydah's body. The Chief of the OMS later reflected that their 'experience with [him] supplemented the sparse information available' on the waterboard's safe management.⁷⁹⁴ While they could consult with Navy officials who had subjected SERE students to one-off, ten-second demonstrations, CIA medical officers could not otherwise identify any recorded cases of its 'multi-application' prior to Zubaydah's. But that episode was not a success. For two weeks he was waterboarded, undergoing the process eighty-three times, but failed to provide new information to his interrogators.⁷⁹⁵ Even more disturbing, he had entered a non-responsive state at least once and the aggressive phase of his interrogation yielded far fewer 'actionable intelligence' reports than did earlier approaches that relied on building rapport.⁷⁹⁶ Nonetheless, OMS felt it had established a more concrete understanding of the medical risks it had originally been entrusted to understand and calculate. In this case, monitoring Abu Zubaydah's rehabilitation and torture was not so much a matter of observing legal thresholds as inventing them.

Maximising the benefit: Torturing Khalid Sheik Mohammed

From a state of almost complete ignorance about the suite of approved 'enhanced' interrogation techniques in August 2002, over the next eighteen months OMS managers set about constructing a formal body of procedures for its medical officers to follow. This included setting down guidelines for ensuring torture was 'safely' performed, but also for recording those operations in order to sharpen legal thresholds and to learn how to maximise pain and suffering. For example, by the time of the CIA's much vaunted capture and initial questioning of Khalid Sheik

⁷⁹⁴ CIA Chief of Medical Services memorandum, "Summary and Reflections of Chief of Medical Services," 38.

⁷⁹⁵ Department of Justice, Office of Professional Responsibility, "Investigation into the Office of Legal Counsel's Memoranda Concerning Issues Relating to the Central Intelligence Agency's Use of 'Enhanced Interrogation Techniques' on Suspected Terrorists," report, 29 July 2009, 135, <https://www.hsdl.org/?view&did=28555>.

⁷⁹⁶ *SSCI Report*, 230.

Mohammed in March 2003, the OMS Chief was still determining guidelines for medical officers when supervising the waterboard. Their experience with Abu Zubaydah merely suggested to OMS that ‘2-3 sessions of 2-3 applications per day was *probably* medically safe during the first 2-4 days’. It was still an ‘emerging understanding’, despite current use.⁷⁹⁷

Within two days of Mohammed’s capture in Rawalpindi, Pakistan, a plan for his ‘enhanced’ interrogation was authorised. Non-coercive approaches were not to be attempted first.⁷⁹⁸ He was soon rendered to the Salt Pit black site in Bagram, where he was exposed to aggressive techniques within the first ‘few minutes’ of his initial interrogation, and, by now, medical officers had a firmer grasp on their supervisory roles during this phase. Their work would centre on the assiduous recording and communication of feedback to OMS. To better understand the key thresholds of ‘severity’ and ‘prolonged harm’, medical personnel were to ‘report all waterboard sessions in detail’ to ‘assist with future reviews’.⁷⁹⁹ But they also had more responsibilities. When Mohammed refused food and water, OMS personnel were authorised to administer a water enema, describing it as helping ‘to clear a person’s head’ and useful for getting him to talk.⁸⁰⁰

Several days of intensive, brutal interrogations at Bagram yielded only false information and, when it was acted upon, wrongful arrests. Mohammed was soon rendered to another black site in Poland, where was to be waterboarded by Mitchell and Jessen.⁸⁰¹ The medical team on site finally gained access to OMS’s draft guidelines, which were recently completed and cabled through. They included a formal warning, though extremely vaguely stated, that the waterboard carried inherent risks and that they accumulated over time. Medical personnel were finally issued formal instructions noting the waterboard’s serious dangers, which ‘directly related to number of exposures and may well accelerate as exposures increases’. Cumulative effects were predicted to

⁷⁹⁷ CIA Chief of Medical Services memorandum, "Summary and Reflections of Chief of Medical Services," 39, emphasis added.

⁷⁹⁸ *SSCI Report*, 81--82.

⁷⁹⁹ *Ibid.*

⁸⁰⁰ *SSCI Report*, 83; CIA Chief of Medical Services memorandum, "Summary and Reflections of Chief of Medical Services," 38.

⁸⁰¹ *SSCI Report*, 84.

emerge after three to five days, so a loose limit was put on total waterboard ‘exposures’, ‘perhaps 20 in a week’. However, by the time Mohammed was brought into the Poland site, the interrogation team had not reviewed the medical guidelines and, even when they did, they ignored the new recommendations.⁸⁰²

Over the next several days, Mitchell and Jessen submitted Mohammed to the waterboard almost continuously. In one twenty-four-hour period he was drowned eighty times, with half the exposures lasting twenty to forty seconds. While in 2002 OLC had authorised twenty-minute maximum sessions for the waterboard, but some of Mohammed’s lasted at least thirty. Fearing legal repercussions, at one point during the process the chief of Base blocked the RMO from cabling OMS directly. When the medical officer cabled Headquarters, their messages explicitly interweaved medical and operational information, the RMO describing Mohammed’s brutal, fruitless waterboarding as both excessive and indicative that the technique lacked a positive ‘cumulative effect’. Little could be expected. The ‘novelty and initial shock having worn off’, as OMS put it.⁸⁰³

On March 13, three days into Mohammed’s waterboarding, the RMO finally attempted to intervene, albeit in an avowedly ‘non-confrontational manner’.⁸⁰⁴ But they were rebuffed by the chief of Base, who pronounced OMS’s advice as lacking official standing. The chief of Base ordered the resumption of the waterboard on the false assumption that a new authorisation to resume was imminent, with the RMO writing to OMS that:

Things are slowly evolving form [sic] OMS being viewed as the institutional conscience and the limiting factor to the ones who are dedicated to maximizing the benefit in a safe manner and keeping everyone’s butt out of trouble.⁸⁰⁵

⁸⁰² Ibid.

⁸⁰³ CIA Chief of Medical Services memorandum, "Summary and Reflections of Chief of Medical Services," 40.

⁸⁰⁴ *SSCI Report*, 87, n. 485.

⁸⁰⁵ Ibid., 87.

On March 24, Mohammed underwent a fifteenth and final waterboarding session, at least as far as we know.⁸⁰⁶ During the preceding two weeks, the RMO had attempted to decelerate the torture process and, the experience led the Chief of Medical Services' to subsequently rebuke Mitchell and Jessen as dictatorial and out of their depth. Yet, the on-site medical officer was nonetheless fully involved in modulating and even extending Mohammed's torture. Indeed, records now suggest that their medical updates resulted in Counterterrorism Center's recommending not the cessation of waterboarding at the Poland black site, but its *tapering and combining with other violent techniques*.

In the week following the RMO's 'non-confrontational' attempt at pausing Mohammed's drowning, the waterboard was applied a further ninety times (the total was 183).⁸⁰⁷ This was considered a reduction of the original plans, with the new approach interspersing sleep deprivation and water dousing so that excessive waterboarding did not 'poison the well'.⁸⁰⁸ Almost half the exposures exceeded the recommended twenty seconds, but even then medical monitoring continued without serious intervention. Instead, Mohammed recalled that his many sessions were merely broken up when the RMO periodically recorded his blood oxygen with a pulse oximeter.⁸⁰⁹ And the medical officer made sure that the plain water being used to drown him was alternated with saline solution after becoming concerned that Mohammed may suffer electrolyte loss and water intoxication.⁸¹⁰ That innovation was introduced after the officer cabled OMS to tell them that Mohammed was 'ingesting and aspiration [sic] a LOT of water' and that '[i]n the new technique [waterboarding] we are basically doing a series of near drownings'.⁸¹¹

Towards the end of the two weeks, OMS and the Poland RMO exchanged reports. In an email titled, 'Re: Medical limitations of WB [waterboard] - draft thoughts', the officer was

⁸⁰⁶ Ibid., 92.

⁸⁰⁷ *SSCI Report*, 118; CIA Chief of Medical Services memorandum, "Summary and Reflections of Chief of Medical Services," 40.

⁸⁰⁸ *SSCI Report*, 88.

⁸⁰⁹ "Verbatim Transcript of Combatant Status Review Tribunal Hearing for ISN 10024," released 13 June 2016, TDB document ACLU-RDI 6539, Exhibit D-d, 2, <https://www.aclu.org/other/khalid-sheikh-muhammad-csrt-transcript>.

⁸¹⁰ CIA Chief of Medical Services memorandum, "Summary and Reflections of Chief of Medical Services," 38.

⁸¹¹ *SSCI Report*, 86, capitalisation in original.

unequivocal: in the determination of those limitations, it was understood that their role was to mete out pain and suffering for intelligence collection, not to defend any medical ethical commitments. In the report the RMO reflected upon the way in which the Agency's waterboarding techniques had 'moved even further from the SERE model':

Truthfully, though, I don't recall that the WB *produced anything actionable* in [Abu Zubaydah] any earlier than another technique might have. This may be different with [Khalid Sheik Mohammed], but that is still as much a statement of faith as anything – since we don't seem to study the question as we go ... it's been many more days of constant WB repetitions, with the evidence of progress through most of them not being actionable intel but rather that 'he looks like he's weakening'. The WB may *actually be the best; just don't like to base it on religion*.⁸¹²

It turned out the OMS did not base its further work on religion, but studious analysis of the results of Zubaydah's and Mohammed's waterboarding. The RMO in Poland had been ordered to 'report all waterboard sessions in detail' in order to 'assist with future reviews'.⁸¹³ These provided the kind of data which would allow future thresholds of safety to be set. And so, in April 2004, OMS released new and more detailed guidelines.⁸¹⁴ Now medical officers were required to perform a detailed pre-check of victim's resilience, testing their gag reflex, anterior dentition, and heart and lung function. They also now had to supervise a preparatory liquid diet and four-hour fast before waterboarding and were encouraged to remain in the 'treatment room', ready to act on any warning signs of respiratory arrest following laryngospasm, the most likely serious complication. Medical officers were to be aware of the new definitions of a waterboarding 'session' (the period of time a subject is strapped to the waterboard, which was not to exceed two hours) and an 'application' (the period in which water is poured on the victim's face), and the maximum number of times for each.

⁸¹² Ibid., 89.

⁸¹³ CIA Chief of Medical Services memorandum, "Summary and Reflections of Chief of Medical Services," 39.

⁸¹⁴ CIA Office of Medical Services, "Guidelines on Medical and Psychological Support to Detainee Rendition," 18. A tabulation of many of the text's procedural checks and recommendations is included in Appendix 1.

By mid-2004, the CIA's medical observers could thus call upon a relatively concrete body of procedure through which to regulate their actions within the mass interrogation apparatus. The Chief of OMS admitted in his reflections that by this point some officers became 'uncomfortable' when their work increasingly fell into a 'gray zone'.⁸¹⁵ This was understandable given that they now took on formal orders not only for evaluating prisoners' capacities to withstand renditions and 'enhanced' techniques—in other words, to confirm that their application would probably meet the law's understanding of 'serious or permanent harm'—but also continuously to record their effects on the body. To do this they were to use their medical instruments and cable the results up the administrative chain. This task was particularly critical during waterboarding sessions, which now required the presence of a physician for emergencies. They were to record 'hard data' at all times, given that

in order to best inform future medical judgments and recommendations, it is important that every application of the waterboard be thoroughly documented: how long each application (and the entire procedure) lasted, how much water was used in the process (realizing that much splashes off), how exactly the water was applied, if a seal was achieved, if the naso- or oropharynx was filled, what sort of volume was expelled, how long was the break between applications, and how the subject looked between each treatment.⁸¹⁶

Medical officers thus supported the construction and refinement of legal guidelines for inflicting pain and suffering, rather than simply providing care for interrogatees, as Michael Hayden claimed in 2007. Indeed, in 2005, when OLC was again asked to provide fresh legal opinion about the use of the waterboard, its senior counsel Steven Bradbury 'carefully discussed' appropriate limits and procedures with OMS prior to reconfirming its legality. When he did, he acknowledged the Chief of Medical Services' input, which contributed to the improvement of constraints, including limiting the waterboard's frequency and cumulative use by advancing data-filled reports made by officers witnessing Abu Zubaydah's and Khalid Sheik Mohammed's

⁸¹⁵ CIA Chief of Medical Services memorandum, "Summary and Reflections of Chief of Medical Services," 30--31.

⁸¹⁶ CIA Office of Medical Services, "Guidelines on Medical and Psychological Support to Detainee Rendition," 17.

torture. The fact that OMS introduced precise guidelines for monitoring the waterboard—which were drafted in haste, *after* its original approval, and based on extremely limited and recent experimentation—were now cited by Bradbury as a positive development and relevant to his decision to *affirm its continued use*.⁸¹⁷ A circuit was in operation that cycled knowledge and power around the legal and intelligence community. The medical monitoring of brutal interrogations not only permitted their formalisation, but further expanded OMS's role in the machine space of intelligence production. This recursive relationship sowed the seeds for the idea to take hold that safe waterboarding was something that had always been medically and legally adjudicated.

Dietary manipulation and forced feeding

Medical personnel were not only expected to perform their 'monitoring' roles when the CIA interned new suspects into its programme and during the initial stages of 'enhanced' interrogations. As psychological torture encompassed the long-term manipulation of environmental conditions, so medical professionals were enlisted to oversee that victims' extended deprivation was also conducted according to legal thresholds. For the OMS, one of its officers' most complex and delicate responsibilities was to guide the application of dietary manipulation and force-feeding.

Dietary manipulation was a pervasive instrument of abuse used throughout the programme. In 2002, the DOJ advised that it was a lawful 'less-aggressive Standard Technique' and in 2005 its permissibility was reaffirmed with its inclusion in the Bradbury Memo's refined list of thirteen aggressive techniques available to interrogators.⁸¹⁸ Until at least December 2005, prisoners were commonly put on restrictive regimens both as a 'security measure' and as a

⁸¹⁷ Memorandum from Steven Bradbury, Principal Deputy Assistant Attorney General, for John A. Rizzo, Senior Deputy General Counsel, CIA, "Application of U.S. Obligations Under Article 16 of the Convention Against Torture to Certain Techniques that May Be Used in the Interrogation of High Value al Qaeda Detainees", 30 May 2005, released 31 August 2016 [the 'Bradbury Memo'], TDB document ACLU-RDI 6795, https://www.thetorturedatabase.org/files/foia_subsite/7_1.pdf, 41. The OMS Chief later claimed that this was an unexpected use of his or her opinion, see CIA Chief of Medical Services memorandum, "Summary and Reflections of Chief of Medical Services," 55.

⁸¹⁸ Bradbury Memo, 8.

means of expediting the state of ‘learned helplessness’ thought necessary during the ‘enhanced’ phase of interrogations.⁸¹⁹ At least thirty men had their diets severely manipulated for extended periods. This would generally involve their subjection to an entirely liquid diet of water and Ensure, a commercially available nutritional supplement, or what Joseph Pugliese calls ‘dietary torture’.⁸²⁰

In developing the systematic protocols for administering dietary torture, OMS officers played a critical role in its performance as a medically safe means of delivering pain and suffering. Again, the assumed objective was the maximisation and meting out of distress while avoiding the emergence of visible sequelae on victims’ bodies. This was a delicate balancing act. In the early phases of its formalisation, concerns were raised by Agency managers that dietary manipulation could not only cause long-term harm, but that malnutrition and dehydration may, in fact, lower the threshold of ‘severe’ physical pain when it was combined with other forms of torture. In addition, the contents of prisoners’ digestive tracts needed to be finely controlled before the application of the more extreme measures available to interrogators. Most critically, if waterboarding was initiated without victims first being put on a restrictive dietary regimen, they could vomit, risking aspiration and, therefore, legal peril. As a result, and supported by recommendations from OLC lawyers and OMS, physicians and PAs were deputised to monitor and moderate these elements of the programme while ensuring that the ordeal would be maximised without crossing the legal threshold of ‘severe pain’ and ‘prolonged suffering’.⁸²¹

The Office of Medical Services dutifully translated medical officers’ duties to manipulate and monitor diets into standardised procedures. In its 2004 guidelines, OMS confirmed that managing prisoners’ diets should be considered a medical intervention and therefore should support the mission of achieving psychological distress. Any feeding was to be performed in ways that did not ‘undermine the anxiety and dislocation that the various interrogation

⁸¹⁹ CIA non-legal memorandum, "Chronology of CIA High-Value Detainee Interrogation Technique," undated, released 20 December 2016, TDB document ACLU-RDI 6703, 1--3, https://www.thetorturedatabase.org/files/foia_subsite/8_0.pdf.

⁸²⁰ *SSCI Report*, 493; Joseph Pugliese, *State Violence and the Execution of Law: Biopolitical Caesurae of Torture, Black Sites, Drones* (Routledge, Abingdon, UK, 2013), 146.

⁸²¹ Bradbury Memo, 52, 62.

techniques are designed to foster'.⁸²² To this end, food was to be nutritionally 'adequate' but 'basic', supportive of the harsh interrogation environment.⁸²³ Medical officers were to monitor and measure everything prisoners ate to ensure they received a minimum of 1500 kilocalories of nutritional energy per day, but while 'recognizing that intakes of 1000 [kilocalories] are safe and sustainable for weeks at a time'.⁸²⁴ All food supplied was to be 'not necessarily palatable', with any medications and supplements hidden in it so as to avoid any suggestion that their health was a priority. Meals were to be unscheduled and unpredictable, in order to weaken detainees' grasp on a sense of time. These precise procedures laid out how medical personnel were to assist in the planning of diets for maximally debilitating effect while still avoiding any risk of 'severe' pain or prolonged damage to prisoners' organs or basic bodily functions.

Perhaps more important, however, were medical staff's duties during the aggressive phases of interrogations, when the 'enhanced' technique of 'dietary manipulation' was often authorised. Once again, a calculative disposition was recommended. Agency memoranda advised torture managers to utilise a 'mathematical formula with which to determine the caloric requirements authorized'.⁸²⁵ That was, according to OMS guidelines, '900 + 10x weight in kilograms for basal [kilocalories] requirement; multiply by 1.2 for sedentary activity level, 1.4 for moderate activity level'.⁸²⁶ Detainees were thus recast as bare life, biologised bodies through which starvation could be legally waged, with medical officers playing the fundamental role of managing the requisite metabolic system, recording and quantifying their inputs and excreta. While biomedical knowledge and calculative techniques came together in all the Agency's 'enhanced' interrogation sessions, perhaps it is dietary manipulation and the 'corporeal economy of starvation' that it summoned that brings into starkest relief the basic function of medicine to perform legality in the torture chamber. Through their capacities to precisely measure and

⁸²² CIA Office of Medical Services, "Guidelines on Medical and Psychological Support to Detainee Rendition," 10.

⁸²³ Ibid.

⁸²⁴ Ibid., 12, see also appendix A.

⁸²⁵ CIA non-legal memorandum, "Chronology of CIA High-Value Detainee Interrogation Techniques," 3.

⁸²⁶ CIA Office of Medical Services, "Guidelines on Medical and Psychological Support to Detainee Rendition," 12.

discern the threshold of death, physicians could also be appointed to observe the legal thresholds of a state approximating the experience of death, severe pain and prolonged suffering.⁸²⁷

To this end, as Pugliese argues, the product Ensure represents a strikingly calculative ‘instrumentality’ of medicalised torture at Guantánamo Bay. On the one hand, the experience of being administered the liquid supplement—often as a method of force-feeding—was humiliating and degrading. The supply of a monotonous, bland liquid by force and into vulnerable orifices of the body was a first-line technique of psychological attrition and sensory deprivation.⁸²⁸ In the case of force-feeding, the singular goal, medical officers were instructed, was at all times ‘the preservation of the life of the detainee, with or without his/her consent’. To follow this rule, staff were encouraged to adopt an approach that elevated procedure and intelligence collection, and derogated prisoner’s will from the equation completely and keeping in mind an arbitrary weight loss ratio, after which force-feeding would be initiated. The ratio was well above any commonly accepted point of medical danger: ‘if fluids are taken but not nutrients take forcible intervention when prisoner’s weight reaches 90 percent of normal’.⁸²⁹ To do this the nasogastric tube was utilised extensively throughout the Program, both in its ‘interrogation’ and ‘detention’ phases. While the Geneva Conventions protect a measure of self-determination for hunger striking detainees—Common Article 3(1) specifically proscribes ‘outrages upon personal dignity, in particular humiliating and degrading treatment’—the 2004 OMS Guidelines failed to channel the spirit of the provision in any way.⁸³⁰

In this context it is less surprising that when prisoners began hunger strikes in JTF-GMTO in 2004, the Agency’s response was once again to order the use of the rectal tube, this time for nutrition, a measure that medical experts agree ‘doesn’t make physiologic sense’.⁸³¹

⁸²⁷ Pugliese, *State Violence and the Execution of Law*, 146.

⁸²⁸ *SSCI Report*, 42, 100, n. 584, 115..

⁸²⁹ CIA Office of Medical Services, "Guidelines on Medical and Psychological Support to Detainee Rendition," 12.

⁸³⁰ *Geneva Convention Relative to the Treatment of Prisoners of War*, August 12, 1949, 75 U.N.T.S. 135, article 3, paragraph 1, <https://ihl-databases.icrc.org/applic/ihl/ihl.nsf/vwTreaties1949.xsp>

⁸³¹ Clinical Assistant Professor of Medicine Steven Field (New York University School of Medicine), quoted in Physicians for Human Rights, "Fact Sheet: Rectal Hydration and Rectal Feeding," 1 December 2014, 1, <https://phr.org/our-work/resources/fact-sheet-rectal-hydration-and-rectal-feeding/>.

When Abd al Rahim al-Nashiri embarked on a 'short-lived hunger strike', he was forced into a downward-facing Trendelenberg position and 'rectally fed' Ensure nutrition supplement.⁸³² Between 2004 and 2006, Majid Khan initiated several periods of food refusal and self-harm. Initially, medical personnel responded by implementing fluid and nutrition intravenously and via nasogastric tube, a period in which, records suggest, Khan was generally cooperative, even infusing the fluids and nutrients himself when permitted.⁸³³ In September 2006, however, after three weeks of cooperatively infused feedings, CIA personnel began a more aggressive regimen 'without unnecessary conversation'. Khan was involuntarily subjected to rectal hydration and 'feeding', first with two bottles of Ensure and then his 'lunch tray' in 'pureed' form (hummus, pasta and sauce, nuts, and raisins).⁸³⁴

Despite these moments of seemingly wonton and spectacular violence, dietary torture was yet one more ledger board upon which the differential accounting of divine forensics could proceed. For example, the OMS guidelines now show that the widespread utilisation of Ensure in the global war prison was not simply due to its material propensity to permit the further control of detainees' bodies, but its chemical elementality. After all, each can contained precisely 360 kilocalories of nutritional energy.⁸³⁵ This meant that OMS could calculate a victim's future, minimal nutritional needs in advanced and remotely, ordering any number of cans to be pre-stocked and meted out as required. In an extended compound space where techno-legal adjudication was delegated to medical officers on site, caloric restriction and Ensure provided another means of moderating the application of pain and suffering clinically and mathematically. And, again, this effort in divine forensics did not just descend from law but remade it at the margins. In 2004, OMS guidelines stipulated that a diet of pure Ensure was to be provided throughout the interrogation phase 'if waterboarding is likely', in order to minimise the likelihood of victim aspiration. This experimental innovation became routine, with the 2005 Bradbury Memo drawing from OMS's growing knowledge base and setting it into stone. The

⁸³² *SSCI Report*, 488.

⁸³³ *Ibid.*, 115.

⁸³⁴ *Ibid.*

⁸³⁵ CIA Office of Medical Services, "Guidelines on Medical and Psychological Support to Detainee Rendition," 12.

pre-waterboarding Ensure diet was made formal, its formulation by medical observers preceding law. In doing so those monitors of liberal torture did not just interpret the regulations governing liberal torture but became implicit in its brutal performance and remaking.

Conclusion

As the CIA's Detention and Interrogation Program wound down, its Chief of Medical Services produced a history of the OMS's involvement. It was a wholehearted defence that hewed to the company line that had been laid down so unequivocally by the Agency's director, Michael Hayden, in front of the SSCI. The history contrasted a pernicious 'utopian ethicist view' that had afflicted milquetoast media outlets and the professional health associations with the more realist position adopted by those who understood what was really at stake during the 'war on terror'. That existential threat, the Chief said, demanded OMS balance its responsibilities to 'patients' with its 'societal obligation'. The CIA had reached out to OMS not to restrain its aggressive mass interrogation apparatus, but to combat the 'horrors' inherent to 'a very real and dangerous world'. In this context

the medical presence reflected a government commitment to the fundamental well-being of the detainee, while not allowing this commitment to preclude the acquisition of important, time-perishable intelligence not otherwise attainable. The limits medical personnel set, and interventions made, allowed for the acquisition of the greatest possible information without placing the detainee at medical risk. In combination with [Rendition and Detention Group's] tightly circumscribed policies on coercive measures, medical monitoring *spared* almost all detainees from experiencing more than a very time-limited period of discomfort.⁸³⁶

Setting limits, medical risk, monitoring, sparing life. The role delimited for OMS was to participate in divine forensics, to strike a shrewd balance between 'patient preferences' and the

⁸³⁶ CIA Chief of Medical Services memorandum, "Summary and Reflections of Chief of Medical Services," 71, emphasis added.

‘public good’, considering the need to occasionally choose the lesser evil. And, where necessary, to measure out the pain and suffering required to right the balance and restore the liberal order. The OMS Chief’s words here should give us pause to consider where and how the ‘limits’ are set in a seemingly boundless war, and who is deputised to perform those calculations inside its machine spaces. In this case, the template of mass interrogation was recast for the purposes of performing liberal torture and, in that formulation, spectacular violence was not an aberration, but ‘tightly circumscribed policy’. Medical monitoring was the kind of instrumental knowledge that mass interrogation now requires, not just to facilitate brutal treatment, but to spare ‘almost all detainees’. Just as laws are most successfully remade at the margins, this episode in the historical geography of mass interrogation pushes us to consider how that might now be increasingly done by a cast of deadly disciplinarians operating as proxy lawyers, each discerning and monitoring the legal limits of pain and suffering.

Chapter 8: Conclusion

Postscript: Reform failure

In 2009, US mass interrogation was overhauled once more, at least in theory. Taking stock of the Bush-era torture regime, the Obama Administration launched a new interagency intelligence unit, the High-Value Detainee Interrogation Group (HIG). Spearheaded by the FBI, but also bringing together CIA and DOD intelligence professionals, it was designated to be the national security state's peak interrogation taskforce. The HIG's dual mandate encompasses operational and research capacities. Its expert Mobile Interrogation Teams of FBI, CIA and Defense Intelligence Agency (DIA) personnel are available for deployment domestically and abroad, tasked with utilising their training 'based on the latest scientific research' to conduct intelligence interviews using non-coercive methods. In addition, the HIG awards contracts to psychological and behavioural scientists in the US and internationally to conduct experiments into the effectiveness of the questioning 'approaches' listed in the Army's *Field Manual 2-22.3*, the nineteen interrogation techniques to which all executive agencies and the DOD have been restricted by law since 2009. Research is also commissioned into the development of entirely new methods for inclusion in the Field Manual. So far, the taskforce claims it has funded over a hundred academic studies on a disparate range of topics, including 'social influence tactics, the impact of interpreters, the cognitive interview, and science-based methods of detecting deception'.⁸³⁷

At its inception, the HIG and its associated Senate-led reforms signalled that a fundamental redirection for US mass interrogation may be possible. Rather than the inhumane tactics which plagued CIA and DOD human intelligence production in the early years of the 'war on terror', the administrators of subsequent interrogation apparatuses might have been compelled to adopt rapport-based approaches to intelligence gathering and to moderate the wartime

⁸³⁷ Department of Justice, "High-Value Detainee Interrogation Group," *FBI.gov*, no date, <https://www.fbi.gov/about/leadership-and-structure/national-security-branch/high-value-detainee-interrogation-group>.

detention of potential interrogatees.⁸³⁸ Even more fundamentally, the extension of civilian oversight might have introduced an expectation that intelligence interrogations should be conducted at least somewhat transparently, and according to legal procedures that encourage a ‘rights-respecting’ model, rather than one overwhelmingly facilitative of efficient information production. All of these alternatives would have constituted a considerable deviation from the templates of machine space.

It seems such a future is not in the offing. Since 2016, executive agencies and the DOD have been re-populated with figures strongly committed to defending the right to launch large-scale programmes of forceful interrogation whenever and wherever deemed necessary. In his 2017 Senate testimony, the Trump Administration’s first nominee for CIA director, Mike Pompeo, did not rule out the possibility that under his stewardship the Agency may re-evaluate whether the ‘Army Field Manual uniform application is an impediment to gathering vital intelligence.’⁸³⁹ In other words, the restrictions binding the CIA to the uniform rules prohibiting torture and the partial civilian oversight offered by the HIG have been made conditional, open for review if warranted by the national security situation. Later, when Pompeo was made Secretary of State, his replacement was a career CIA intelligence officer, Gina Haspel. It appeared that her appointment was inspired, at least in part, by her earlier involvement in the Agency’s Detention and Interrogation Program. She had been chief of base at Detention Site Green in Thailand in 2002, where she personally supervised the torture of Abu Zubayah and Abd al-Rahim al-Nashiri. It is now clear that in the years that followed Haspel played a crucial role in ordering that dozens of videotapes depicting those brutal interrogations be thrown into a shredding machine. A potentially criminal action, the tapes’ destruction will prove almost impossible to prosecute given the Agency’s long delay in acknowledging their existence.⁸⁴⁰

⁸³⁸ Scott Roehm, "The HIG Speaks on Effective Interrogation," *Lawfare*, 11 April 2017, <https://www.lawfareblog.com/hig-speaks-effective-interrogation>.

⁸³⁹ Mike Pompeo, "Prehearing Questions for the Honorable Mike Pompeo Upon His Nomination to be the Director of the Central Intelligence Agency," 3 January 2017, US Senate Select Committee on Intelligence, 9, <https://www.intelligence.senate.gov/sites/default/files/documents/pre-hearing-b-011217.pdf>.

⁸⁴⁰ Tim Golden, "Haspel, Spies and Videotapes," *ProPublica*, 9 May 2018, <https://www.propublica.org/article/haspel-spies-and-videotape>.

But the CIA is not the only US agency that has failed to weed out supporters of the harshest versions of mass interrogation. In recent years, Trump has nominated figures connected to the ‘war on terror’ torture system for other senior positions at the Department of Justice, other federal entities, and for lifetime judicial appointments.⁸⁴¹ The result has been reform failure for US mass interrogation and a ‘slow plod into obscurity’ for the HIG.⁸⁴² Rather than overt repudiation, its assets have simply been ignored by intelligence planners in the Army, the DIA, and even the FBI, all keen to ward intruders off their institutional territories.⁸⁴³ Very often the HIG’s operational role has largely been sidelined by the national security apparatus. For example, in 2017, when a US citizen was detained in Syria as part of the war against Islamic State militants, officials within the Trump Administration shocked the HIG’s senior managers by excluding their unit from his interrogation. That was only one instance where it failed to gain the support of the military and intelligence establishments. Reports suggest that in addition to operational neglect, HIG staff also now fear the further loss of resources and funding as its civilian science role is increasingly subjected to attacks on its relevance. Indeed, soon after the commencement of the Trump presidency, the DIA withdrew its support for the academic research programme altogether.⁸⁴⁴

Clearly the targeting of individual interrogation candidates does not amount to anything like mass interrogation. But, in combination, these political and institutional challenges seem to have stultified the HIG’s mission to reform and temper the scale and velocity of US intelligence interrogation and, critically, to introduce some of the procedural rights and privileges that are taken for granted during forensic interviews in the civilian sphere. In late 2016, the unit delivered its report on ‘interrogation best practices’, fulfilling a Senate demanded requirement for a federal

⁸⁴¹ Benjamin Haas, "Trump’s Torture Appointees," *Just Security*, 15 March 2018, <https://www.justsecurity.org/53882/torture-appointees/>.

⁸⁴² Ali Watkins, "Elite Terrorist Interrogation Team Withers Under Trump," *Politico*, 12 May 2017, <https://www.politico.com/story/2017/12/05/elite-terrorist-interrogation-trump-279930>.

⁸⁴³ Jeff Stein, "Obama Banned Torture Years Ago but Its Replacement Is Still Brutal," *Newsweek*, 29 November 2018, <https://www.newsweek.com/2018/12/07/obama-banned-torture-interrogators-still-cant-agree-replacement-1233717.html>.

⁸⁴⁴ *Ibid.*

review of the Army Field Manual's nineteen interrogation techniques.⁸⁴⁵ But the document was devoid of detail, running to a mere thirteen pages. It abjectly failed to critically question any of the long-established assumptions that continue to safeguard US national security agencies' power to gather up huge numbers of enemy subjects and submit them to hurried 'breaking' and 'processing', by violent means or otherwise. A second HIG report, a 'review of the science' of interrogation, was more extensive but was also delayed and now constitutes a bland annotated bibliography of secondary literature.⁸⁴⁶ Most telling, as anti-torture and civil rights advocate, Scott Roehm, has pointed out, the second review failed to provide specific recommendations for revising the Army techniques 'despite explicit statutory authorization to do so'.⁸⁴⁷ Most notably, its authors neglected to assess the empirical or theoretical bases for the Field Manual's 'emotional approaches', which are claimed to 'hasten the source's reaching the breaking point'.⁸⁴⁸ That objective would seem to run counter to the rapport-based approach to questioning increasingly taken for granted in civilian settings and whose promotion was originally a core purpose of the HIG.

By neglecting to evaluate critically the Army Field Manual's more dubious allowable tactics, the HIG studies leave open the possibility of a return to coercive tactics, even if interrogating agencies assiduously follow its standard operating procedures. Specifically, the two reviews failed to identify or discuss any research that supports the use of the 'separation' and 'field expedient separation' techniques (the latter permits the use of goggles, blindfolds, or earmuffs when physical separation would be difficult to achieve). These two approaches to breaking sources are permitted by the Field Manual, described in its controversial Appendix M.⁸⁴⁹ Appendix M licences officers to seek authorisation to separate physically interrogatees for

⁸⁴⁵ High-Value Detainee Interrogation Group, *Interrogation Best Practices*, High-Value Detainee Interrogation Group, 26 August 2016, <https://www.fbi.gov/file-repository/hig-report-august-2016.pdf>.

⁸⁴⁶ High-Value Detainee Interrogation Group, *Interrogation: A Review of the Science*, High-Value Detainee Interrogation Group, September 2016, <https://www.fbi.gov/file-repository/hig-report-interrogation-a-review-of-the-science-september-2016.pdf>.

⁸⁴⁷ Roehm, "The HIG Speaks on Effective Interrogation."

⁸⁴⁸ Department of the Army, *FM 2-22.3, Human Intelligence Collector Operations*, §8-9.

⁸⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, Appendix M.

renewable thirty-day periods and to subject them to sleep deprivation (a minimum of only four hours of sleep every twenty-four is mandated for detainees during the thirty day period). In 2014, the UN's Committee Against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman and Degrading Treatment or Punishment concluded that these techniques may contravene the CAT's provisions against total isolation and sensory deprivation.⁸⁵⁰ Even if the measures in Appendix M are tightly controlled so that international humanitarian law is not plainly violated, the UN committee noted that they are eerily reminiscent of the 'torture lite' systems constructed during the 'war on terror', which allowed interrogators to maintain an 'illusion that the captor is not personally inflicting pain and suffering on the victim', but simply manipulating psychological and environmental settings in order to induce sources to cooperate.⁸⁵¹ The HIG has also failed to address the obvious risk that the Appendix M techniques are open to abuse, or could easily be reframed as disciplinary tools when officers come under pressure to deliver intelligence expediently. Indeed, the Field Manual advises interrogators that separation is not just useful in 'deny[ing] the detainee the opportunity to communicate' with other sources, but can be used to 'foster a feeling of futility' and to 'prolong the shock of capture'.⁸⁵² The Army encourages users to consider how it can be combined with 'Fear Up' approaches, so that a sense of isolation can be deepened by exploiting subjects' pre-existing fears.

None of these specific contentious provisions have so far been publicly explored by the HIG. But the agency's lack of teeth in this instance is symptomatic of its broader decline. A mixture of institutional neglect, a hobbled public mission, and internal constraints have contributed to the degeneration of a law enforcement-led agency explicitly tasked with advancing a rapport-based, moderated model of intelligence interrogation. The attempt to civilianise US mass interrogation over the past decade has yielded disappointing results. We can

⁸⁵⁰ United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, Committee Against Torture, *Concluding Observations on the Third to Fifth Periodic Reports of the United States of America*, 19 December 2014, https://digitallibrary.un.org/record/790513/files/CAT_C_USA_CO_3-5-EN.pdf.

⁸⁵¹ Beth Van Schaak, "The Torture Convention & Appendix M of the Army Field Manual on Interrogations," *Just Security*, 5 December 2014, <https://www.justsecurity.org/18043/torture-convention-appendix-army-field-manual-interrogations/>.

⁸⁵² Department of the Army, *FM 2-22.3, Human Intelligence Collector Operations*, §M-8.

expect its return to new iterations of later modern war, and the construction of novel machine spaces within which to realise its efficient, industrial-scale performances.

Information offensive?

Greater support for the HIG on the part of other national security agencies would not necessarily have inaugurated a new age of benign human intelligence collection. Rather, I offer its story here because its decline speaks to the persistent historical, technical, and political dynamics that have shaped how mass interrogation has been conventionally imagined by US intelligence branches over the last seven decades. It also helps us to answer a depressingly relevant question: why has it proved so difficult to proscribe force from US intelligence interrogations and to submit them to more stringent public regulation? One partial explanation for the HIG's hobbling is simply that it threatens to encroach on established agencies' territories. In this sense, unrestrained mass interrogation is part of an institutional culture whose transformation would be resisted like any other bureaucratic reform. But the appeal of violent state interrogation clearly runs deeper than mere state habit. The pro-torture campaign continues to result in extraordinary returns when it spews forth across the American political landscape.

In recent years, many sensitive critical analyses of the enduring appeal of torture in the US have considered it as a phenomenon of national political sociology. Some of the most articulate interventions have been made by Lisa Hajjar. In a powerful reflection on her decade-long attempt to fluently explain why Americans support brutal interrogation policies, Hajjar has recently admitted that during much of that period she fell onto 'shallow platitudes about rampant Islamophobia and high levels of ignorance about the world'.⁸⁵³ Now, forced to reckon with the adaption of pro-torture rhetoric to new right-wing political projects, she believes a deeper explanation is needed. Hajjar points to studies showing a rise in support for coercive measures *after* the 'war on terror' programmes were cancelled. Over half of those surveyed in 2009 not only supported the torture of national enemies, but most of its defenders, it seems, are generally

⁸⁵³ Lisa Hajjar, "The Afterlives of Torture: The Global Implications of Reactionary US Politics," *State Crime Journal* 8, no. 2 (2019): 173, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/10.13169/statecrime.8.2.0164>.

unconcerned about whether it ‘produces a positive or negative security outcome’.⁸⁵⁴ For its advocates, the imagined recipients of American torture are very often not even specifiable. Much more important than neutralising definite threats is conservatives’ instinctive sense that a combination of detention, intelligence, and impunity promises to renew national cultural and geopolitical dominance.

Hajjar’s deeper political explanation follows. In the US in the twenty-first century, conservative political figures have resurrected torture as one component of a wider, pattern of nationalistic reactionism. Hostile interrogations have become a means of ‘expressing nationalistic and racialized resentments’ by supplying state officials with the policy power to brutalise enemy others.⁸⁵⁵ For Hajjar, reactionary pro-torture campaigning has emerged in two ‘strands’. First is the ‘quasi-intellectual realist project’ of unitary executive power, the neo-conservative restoration of Presidential authority most often personified in the form of Bush-era advocates such as Richard Cheney. In this conception of state behaviour, the pursuit of national security by government agents must never again be hamstrung by international law or meddling judiciaries. The second strand of reactionism Hajjar cites is a political enterprise much less driven by a core theory of government. It is the Trump-era ‘America first’ rhetoric that is given voice by the current president, with his promise to ‘bring back a hell of a lot worse than waterboarding’.⁸⁵⁶ That mode of reactionism, Hajjar believes, is much more apathetic about the effectiveness of brutal interrogation techniques, but just as opposed to internationalist legal institutions. In both these forms, torture represents a dramatic expression of the power of a state to return to an idealised past, with unhampered force and xenophobia identified as national bulwarks against threatening others. Both strands of nationalistic reactionism assume that

harming “them” for “us” instrumentalizes certain human beings for the benefit of others. The “them” can be anyone outside the nationalistic construct of the legitimate community. Indeed, the popularity of pro-torture rhetoric in the contemporary United States is a potent marker of

⁸⁵⁴ Darius Rejali, quoted in Hajjar, "The Afterlives of Torture," 169.

⁸⁵⁵ Ibid.

⁸⁵⁶ Tom McCarthy, "Donald Trump: I'd bring back 'a hell of a lot worse than waterboarding,'" 7 February 2016, <https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2016/feb/06/donald-trump-waterboarding-republican-debate-torture>.

reactionary disdain for the normative values of universal humanity and human dignity.⁸⁵⁷

Hajjar speculates a hopeful end to torture that is in part won by changing the public narrative surrounding its usefulness to operations. To make that dream a reality, an ‘information offensive’ will be necessary to ‘take back the field of public understanding’ so that the ‘benefit’ of torture is proved illusory, she says.⁸⁵⁸ This is because that field continues to be dominated by those who have successfully sold much of the US public not only on the idea that national security interests should be pursued everywhere, but that the actionable intelligence collected to do it is ever expertly collected, flawless, an objective way of gauging and representing the world. Hajjar foresees torture’s decline when prosecutions for crimes committed within the ‘war on terror’ interrogation apparatuses are finally fought for on the basis not only of their illegality, but also their dysfunction and counterproductive effects. As well, she argues, the information offensive will require that mainstream liberals—so often apologists of unchecked executive power—seek the declassification of key texts such as the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence’s study of the CIA’s mass interrogation programme. These too will show that intelligence collection by means of brutal interrogations are faulty and damaging to US interests. In addition to defending human dignity and universal rights, these bright lights of truth will be weapons in a ‘fact-filled attack’ on the reactionary assumption that brutal interrogations really do deliver ‘actionable intelligence’.

“You bag em - We nag em”

After studying the historical geography of mass interrogation for six years, I believe that Hajjar’s critique of conservative reactionism helps to clarify something about the current conjuncture. The conditions of possibility for state torture for the purposes of intelligence seem to include a sense of institutional impunity, racial hierarchisation, and a national imperial dynamic. Read

⁸⁵⁷ Hajjar, "The Afterlives of Torture," 168.

⁸⁵⁸ Ibid., 174.

alongside Hajjar's critique of nationalistic reactionism, the demise of the HIG is thus a predictable outcome for an entity that has been effectively tasked with demilitarising human intelligence and opening up its operations to greater scrutiny. As long as the promise to unleash brutal interrogations against America's imagined enemies anywhere on earth continues to summon so much rhetorical and political power, reform measures such as the HIG stand little chance of mustering the necessary countervailing force to regulate the activity.

But after working through the documentary history of US military and civilian intelligence, it seems to me that the spatial and material qualities of interrogation are too often still left out of the equation. As with many other critical sociological analyses, Hajjar's explanation addresses the problem of torture as if it is an integral institution, a political practice that is separate to humane interrogation, and a cultural project pursued primarily by figures operating at the highest levels of strategic calculation. That latter factor has, of course, been critical to the normalisation of brutal interrogations in the US in this century. But I remain sceptical that a 'fact-filled attack' will finally end torture. After all, intelligence interrogation almost literally trades in the production of facts and, when gathered by state agencies, those can always be considered the *best available under exigent circumstances*. The power of forceful interrogation is not just a figment of political theatre, but something material, assumed, and expertly vouchsafed. As the geography of later modern war evolves, so it seems that this promise drives new transformations in intelligence interrogation, and new technologies for supplying endless reams of facts for planners of political violence. For this reason, it is not clear to me that arguments addressing the security costs or ineffectiveness of torture will ever have purchase beyond those who already dismiss it as perhaps the most unambiguous of human rights violations. Intelligence is a powerful mode for envisioning the world not because its representations are necessarily true, but because they are preceded by the *technical and political* authority of state agents to wield whatever means are available to know enemies and their territories. Even when its production processes 'fail', the systems by which data is assembled are ever rationalised, justified by the conditions of the moment.

The research in this dissertation shows that political sociologists might well galvanise their studies of 'dysfunctional' intelligence interrogations (those afflicted by institutionalised

violence, for example) by examining the historical geography of their function *per se*, as expert undertakings in large-scale information production. In doing so they would find that interrogation is not just a policy that descends from on high, or an interpersonal encounter, what goes on in the interrogation room. It is an extended socio-spatial practice, a basic means for performing later modern war. As a material military technology, it is utilised to control bodies and extend power over space. As a political technology, it beckons new subjects, lays down rational frameworks for dividing labour processes, introduces measures for producing new knowledge, and conceptual apparatuses for legitimating what is true and known within a broader military intelligence bureaucracy.

This study has provided a model for moving inside intelligence interrogation as it is performed, for examining how it operates as a technopolitical apparatus. When one does so it becomes clear that those responsible for powering the interrogation enterprise are not just national political leaders. Those labouring within it seldom refer to high political purposes and national-level policies (though that does happen, of course, especially by state agents of counterinsurgency in chapters 5 and 7). Much more salient is their awareness of interrogation not as a political project as much as a specialised service, or a stretched-out material infrastructure. The diagram of industrial production is constantly laid over this information producing enterprise, its settings modelled along the lines of machine space. Conceived in this way, US human intelligence must be carried out at a mass scale almost by necessity, so that the productive ‘value’ of the datapoints collected can be maximised, their delivery to ‘consumers’ speeded up.

One way of humanising US intelligence interrogations is to extricate them from machine space. Within it, as I have argued, only instrumental forms of knowledge are recognised, and the only actions permitted are those that further production cycles or promise to improve the efficient operation of industrial componentry. In machine space, all objects are revealed to specialist subjects as if they were potential forms of equipment, even human sources. Together, these mechanical precepts ensure that the coordination of physical forces—and their arraying against human subjects—is the primary optic through which interrogation planning is viewed. As a physical production process, intelligence interrogation bestows upon its political subjects the challenge to ‘break’ sources efficiently, ‘enter’ them, employ high-speed production routines to

collect data points and ‘pass the pieces on’, as Chris Mackey described. His words were not at all eccentric. They reflect the way in which intelligence interrogation continues to be conceived by the US military establishment today.

In moments of crises, the machine of mass interrogation can always descend into rounds of spectacular violence. But this dissertation has examined a variety of such systems, charting a century of development and experimentation. In some cases, brutal methods are not used. This is particularly so when interrogatees are not subject to the effects of cultural distancing that Hajjar describes, such as in Project Wringer. Nonetheless, in all cases, sources are instrumentalised and interrogation is understood to activate the *extended circuits* of violence that make up war. Indeed, even when torture is not utilised, through all the performances profiled in the preceding chapters, mass interrogation involves the professional coordination of technical capacities, material resources, rhetorical frameworks, and disciplinary knowledges around the problems of writing the space of war so that it can be violently rearranged. Much more than simply the technical challenge of questioning ‘sources’, the chapters have identified how the challenge to know enemies and their territories has continually triggered the development of new conceptual apparatuses and sprawling infrastructures for achieving these larger martial ambitions.

I argue that this imperative to detach data from human subjects (often held captive) at industrial scales and rhythms is a crucial, but overlooked, condition of possibility for the maiming and even killing of interrogatees under conditions of rationalised production. Interrogation and torture are not completely separate institutions, the latter a grotesque version of the former. Rather, they exist on a spectrum; both means of taking part in the ‘business’ of human intelligence. Perhaps this way of thinking is conveyed most directly by a mock business card I discovered in the records of the American war in Vietnam stored at Texas Tech University. It advertises the services supplied by an Interrogation of Prisoners of War section operating within the Army’s notorious Americal Division (see figure 8.1).⁸⁵⁹

⁸⁵⁹ The 23rd Infantry Division (also known as the Americal Division) became inextricably linked with the My Lai Massacre of hundreds of unarmed civilians, perpetrated in June 1968 by soldiers from its 11th Brigade.

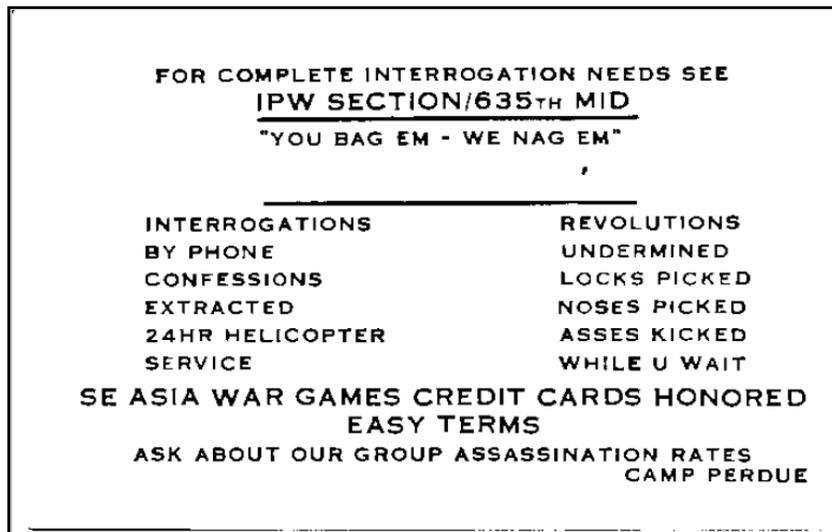


Figure 8.1 The business of interrogation. A mock services card for the Interrogation Section of the Americal Division's 635th Military Intelligence Detachment.⁸⁶⁰

The machine spaces that make up later modern war are populated by a diverse cast of characters. In mass interrogation operations there are interrogators, of course. But there are also mapmakers, analysts, doctors, military police, translators, typists, report editors, managerial officers, jailers, and information technology specialists. This study has suggested that we should focus less on the mystified work practices of the interrogator and examine rather more expansively the complex mechanics of the mass interrogation apparatus. After all, the creator of the card in figure 8.1 is addressing a class of product suppliers and service consumers ('*You bag 'em - we nag 'em*'). In intelligence interrogation enterprises, roles are specialised, the division of labour is made explicit and known. There are specialist 'baggers' and expert 'naggers', each assuming discrete responsibilities in the cycling of the detainee-as-commodity object.

The grim calling card also conveys the presupposition that the war demands quickly produced knowledge in commoditised and mobile form: intelligence. This is the kind of material that can be mechanically 'extracted' from human sources by breaking them open ('locks picked, noses picked, asses kicked ... while u wait'). In this case the Americal interrogators claim to specialise in gaining 'confessions', but what is ultimately demanded by users elsewhere in the

⁸⁶⁰ Document no. 13640113001, Folder 13, Box 1, Frederic Whitehurst Collection, VCA-TTU.

intelligence establishment is really information, concrete data points advanced militaries can use to write the geography of war in order to dominate political space ('revolutions undermined'). In the course of gaining that material almost any humanitarian commitment can be suspended, especially if the victim is detained as part of a neo-imperial counterinsurgency ('ask about our group assassination rates').⁸⁶¹ Finally, the mercantile spirit that pervades human intelligence is highlighted by the card's overall allusion to interrogation as a *profitable enterprise powered by the circulation of goods and services*: 'Credit cards honored, easy terms'. A sarcastic pledge to do swift commerce underlines how, time and again, US mass interrogation has been linked to the spheres of industrial production and business, both rhetorically and through deeper conceptual exchanges.

As this dissertation has shown, the later modern history of military interrogation has been characterised by mission secrecy, and too often impunity on the part of its planners. An ethos of mass industrial production has continually elevated one objective over all others: the maximal and efficient compilation of intelligence. In this technical and organisational context, even systems that do not employ coercive measures as a rule, such as USAF's Project Wringer, are nonetheless structured around the collective ambition to instrumentalise human beings, to push ever greater numbers of them through the interrogation machine, to 'break' rapidly any resistance or reluctance to participate, to extract from them information for the immediate purposes of spatialising the geography of war. Even with its classified charter, the HIG's administration by law enforcement officials might have introduced a modicum of civilian supervision into the human intelligence enterprise. And, if Lisa Hajjar is right, a repudiation of the function of torture might ensure future mass interrogation apparatus operate at more moderate scales, at a careful pace, and to prioritise the rights of interrogatees over their unbridled, often humiliating, and sometimes savage, instrumentalisation. However, the notion that interrogation involves the breaking of sources and extraction of data from them by

⁸⁶¹ The card's promises of interrogations 'by phone' and the unit's '24hr helicopter service' refer to the widespread use of field telephones to deliver electrocution and the use of helicopters to kidnap and disappear victims, both of which were explored in chapter 6.

mechanical-industrial means must first be finally disavowed. Any such changes will require a reckoning with the imperatives of machine space.

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Appendix A: CIA OMS Medical Officer responsibilities

OMS Medical Officer responsibilities for Rendition Missions, December 2004⁸⁶²

<p>Initial History and Physical (first 15 minutes)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Obtain pertinent detainee history from responsible capture officers prior to operation. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Gather information on recent trauma and whether subject is clinically stable • Perform physical examination, including but not limited to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Establishing ‘baseline’ vital signs – blood pressure, pulse, respirations, record oxygen saturation reading with pulse oximeter ○ Record general observations (‘gross abnormalities and any existing injuries or bruising’) ○ Perform Head, Eyes, Ears, Nose, Throat (HEENT) check ○ Heart check ○ Lungs check ○ Abdomen check ○ Genital check ○ Musculoskeletal check • Check vital signs every six hours.
<p>Cavity Search (first 15 minutes)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Perform cavity search with the intent of locating potential harmful devices. Search: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Oral cavity, including under the tongue ○ Head, hair, behind and in ears ○ Behind scrotum ○ Rectum (employing adequate lubricant) • Complete diagram of the findings of any marks on the body. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Photo-documentation may be necessary, especially if signs of prior trauma are manifest • File report of physical findings with diagram attached.

⁸⁶² Adapted by the author from CIA Office of Medical Services, "Guidelines on Medical and Psychological Support to Detainee Rendition".

<p>Monitor restraints and detainee condition during rendition</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Observe restraints (e.g. ankle and wrist) are applied or adjusted so that a space of one finger is maintained between the restraint and subject’s tissue. • Monitor restraints to ensure they do not impede circulation or lead to significant abrasions, in order to infection or vascular and neurological damage (‘beyond our obligation to protect the health of the detainee, complications of this sort limit or foreclose the Agency’s ability to interrogate those affected’). • Offer water to detainee on longer flights through a straw as needed, but no less frequently than every two hours. • Check pulse oximetry periodically: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ If readings drop below ninety-four percent in an otherwise healthy person consult with rendition team leader so that hood may be adjusted and subject’s body may be physically repositioned to improve respiration.
<p>Decision to administer sedatives</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sedate subject only if necessary to protect subject or rendition security team: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Violent behaviour must be witnessed and documented by Medical Officer and Rendition Team Leader • Upon sedation document time, medication, amount, route, and any adverse reaction • Vital signs to be taken and documented every 30 minutes in case of sedation
<p>Intramuscular neuroleptic (sedative) protocol</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Begin with intramuscular injections (IM) of 5mg diazepam and 100mg diphenhydramine • If little or no effect is noted after 15 minutes, repeat 5mg diazepam IM • If agitation continues for another 30 minutes, 5mg diazepam and 100mg diphenhydramine may be repeated • In case of diazepam overdose, administer 0.2 – 1mg flumazenil antidote intravenously at 0.2mg per minute. Repeat dose at same rate at 20 minutes. Ensure no more than 3md of flumazenil is administered in less than one hour. • In case diazepam triggers hypotension administer 2 – 10mg metaraminol IM • Neuroleptic agents may lead to dyskinesia (muscle and movement discoordination). Monitor for signs of severe limb rigidity, cogwheeling, torticollis (head and neck rigidity), oculogyric crisis (eye muscles lock eyes in upward position). • In case of dyskinesia, apply 50mg diphenhydramine, repeat if symptoms persist every 30 minutes for a total of 3 doses.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitor for signs of neuroleptic-induced akathisia (severe motor restlessness and hyperactivity). <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Treat akathisia with further 5mg diazepam IM. • Keep subject well-hydrated and monitor body temperature in case of neuroleptic malignant syndrome. • In case of neuroleptic malignant syndrome: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Cool subject, monitor vital signs. ○ Administer 2mg/kg dantrolene intravenously, with additional doses every 10 minutes to a maximum of 10mg/kg.
<p>Documentation and recording</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide a record of all assessments to receiving OMS Medical Officer at destination detention site. • Report physical evaluation in cable to [REDACTED] • Ensure intake medical findings is included on electronic file maintained locally on each detainee • Ensure electronic file is accessible to successive medical practitioners for updates.

OMS Medical Officer responsibilities during Interrogations and Detention, December 2004⁸⁶³

<p>General intake evaluation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Perform thorough medical assessment and document subject's history completely, addressing any chronic or previous medical problems. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Focus documentation especially on cardiovascular, pulmonary, neurological, and musculoskeletal issues. • Record vital signs and weight, record evidence of injury. • Draw bloodwork using 'tiger' top (serum separating) and lavender top tubes for complete blood count, hepatitis B and C, HIV, and chemistry panel, including for albumin and liver function tests. • Where clinically indicated take stool sample for ova and parasite examine.
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⁸⁶³ Adapted by the author from CIA Office of Medical Services, "Guidelines on Medical and Psychological Support to Detainee Rendition."

<p>Rechecks and briefings during detention</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regularly perform medical rechecks during interrogation period and document thoroughly. Frequency to be judged by medical officers and Chief of Site: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>‘Work closely with security and interrogation personnel’</i>: follow direction of security personnel, bring only necessary equipment, remove extraneous items that might be used as a weapon or disclose detention facility location. • Data should include what was checked and negative findings. • Communicate recheck data through appropriate [REDACTED] communication channels. Assessments subject to review and release by Chief of Site. • Maintain a copy of all medical evaluations in an electronic file kept locally on each detainee. • Participate in weekly briefings at detention sites and discuss risks involved with handling prisoners who have tested positive for blood borne pathogens. • Observe signs of tuberculosis development in the detainee population.
<p>Assessment for ‘enhanced’ interrogation techniques</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Become familiar with Director of Central Intelligence’s ‘Guidelines’ formalising responsibilities during ‘enhanced’ interrogations. • Become familiar with the use and limitations of each physical pressure. • Technique-specific advance approval from Headquarters is required to use ‘physical pressures’. Approval is contingent upon: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>Direct examination</i> of detainee by on-site medical and psychological personnel, and ○ Confirmation that the enhanced technique(s) is not expected to produce ‘severe physical or mental pain or suffering’. • Assess and monitor ‘enhanced’ interrogation techniques: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>‘OMS is responsible for assessing and monitoring the health of all Agency detainees subject to ‘enhanced’ interrogation techniques, and for determining that the authorized administration of these techniques would not be expected to cause serious or permanent harm’.</i> ○ <i>‘[U]se of the waterboard requires the presence of a physician’.</i>

<p>Medical treatment during interrogation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide adequate medical care to detainees, even those undergoing enhanced interrogation, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Delivering chronic medications, treating acute medical problems, and providing adequate fluids and nutrition. • <i>‘These medical interventions, however, should not undermine the anxiety and dislocation that the various interrogation techniques are designed to foster. Medical assessments during periods of enhanced interrogation, while encompassing all that is medically necessary, should not appear overly attentive.’</i> • Follow up examinations may be performed in person, in the guise of a guard, or through remote video. • Perform assessments in coordination with Chief of Site and interrogation team and in such a way as to ‘minimize undermining interrogation aims to obtain critical intelligence’. • NB: <i>‘All medical officers remain under the professional obligation to do no harm ... [they] must remain cognizant at all times of their obligation to prevent “severe physical or mental pain or suffering.”</i>
<p>Nutrition</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Basic diet during enhanced interrogation should include adequate fluids and nutrition but need not be palatable: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>‘Liquid Ensure is a good way to assure that there is adequate nutrition’.</i> • Medications and nutritional supplements may be hidden in the basic food provided • Avoid a time-rigid administration of medication if detainees are being deprived of measurements of time (e.g., through continuous light, variable schedules). • In sustained periods without exposure to sunlight supplement diet with two 500mg tablets of plain calcium/day and one capsule of rocaltrol (active vitamin D), or two Centrum Silver tablets and 500mg plain calcium. • Monitor and record actual fluid and nutrition consumption.
<p>Dietary manipulation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OMS recommends a minimum intake of 1500 kilocalories/day. However, the interrogation team may choose to limit the detainee’s food intake: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 1000 kilocalories are to be considered safe and sustainable for weeks at a time. ○ Nutrients may be provided by a liquid supplement (e.g, Ensure Plus, 360 kcal/can) or a reduction in normal solid food intake.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Administering a liquid is preferable for prisoners subject to enhanced interrogation methods in order to minimise risk of aspiration. • <i>'[A] liquid diet is mandatory if use of the waterboard is being contemplated'</i>.
<p>Uncomfortably cool environments</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assess detainees for tolerance to uncomfortably cool environments on a case by case basis. • Continuously re-evaluate safety over time. The following reference points <i>'are intended to assist the medical staff in advising on acceptable lower ambient temperatures'</i>. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ For a 'typical detainee' (young, health, dry, lightly clothed), attempt to ensure detention cells and interrogation rooms are 24-26°C, the Director of Counterterrorism Center's baseline requirement. • During interrogation process detainees may be housed in spaces with ambient temperatures of 13-16°C: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ When temperatures fall below thermoneutral range (20-30°C), <i>monitor and document temperatures</i>. ○ If prisoner is unclothed and exposed to a bare floor, ensure exposure is no longer than 2-3 hours. ○ Monitor prisoners for development of hypothermia when ambient temperatures fall below 18°C, particularly when subject is naked, exposed to conductive surface, restrained, have comparatively little muscle mass, sleep deprived, or over the age of 45.
<p>Water dousing</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure soaked prisoners are dry before being placed in a space with an ambient temperature below 26°C. • <i>'Medical officers should refer to Counterterrorism Center guidelines for a discussion of water dousing techniques'</i>: • When dousing prisoners via hose or bottle take care to keep water away from face. • For maximum time exposed to dousing follow standards derived from submersion studies: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Water temperature of 5°C, total exposure not to exceed 20 minutes. ○ Water temperature of 10°C, total exposure not to exceed 40 minutes. ○ Water temperature of 15°C, total exposure not to exceed 60 minutes.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prisoners exhibiting signs of developing hypothermia <i>'should prompt immediate rewarming and recommendation to terminate water exposure for the session'</i>. • Take <i>'an aggressive medical intervention'</i> when signs of moderate hypothermia are present – e.g. permit freedom of movement, increase clothing, provide floor mat, increase ambient temperature.
<p>White noise or loud music</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>'For purposes of interrogation, [the Director of Counterterrorism Center] has set a policy that no white noise and no loud noise used in the interrogation process should exceed 79 [decibels, dB]'</i> • Utilise provided instruments to measure ambient sound levels and take note of thresholds: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 24-hours-a-day exposure: 82 dB or lower. ○ Up to 18 hours per day: 84 dB or lower. ○ Up to 9 hours per day: 90 dB or lower. ○ Up to 4 hours per day: 95 dB or lower. ○ Up to 2 hours per day: 100 dB or lower.
<p>Shackling and prolonged standing</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shackling in non-stressful positions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>'requires monitoring for the development of pressure sores'</i>, with appropriate treatment and shackle adjustment. ○ Intervene early as lesions emerge in order to <i>'avoid the development of an interrogation-limiting cellulitis'</i>: clean lesions and loosen shackles lightly when appropriate. • Shackling when standing with hands at or above head (for purposes of sleep deprivation): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>'Pre-check for anatomic factors that might influence how long the arms could be elevated'</i>. ○ Check range of shoulder motion, compare pulses in neutral and elevated positions, check for vascular murmurs, assess basic sensorimotor status of upper extremities. ○ If assessed and approved prisoners may be placed in forced standing position for up to 48 hours. • <i>'Our experience ... indicates that dependent edema will develop in most detainees'</i>: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Monitor for reddish streaking along the saphenous (femoral) nerve route. ○ Dependent edema will increase over time, <i>'regular attention to leg circumference and the fit of shackles is mandatory'</i> ○ Detainees with lower limbs in cast or amputees <i>'should be monitored carefully for the development of excessive edema'</i> in weight-supporting leg.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ If edema approaches knee level detainees should be repositioned. ○ In case of lower limb cellulitis detainees should be shifted to seated leg-elevated position, begin antibiotics. ○ When shackles impinge on venous return, substitute with adjustable steel link chain or flexcuffs to prevent constriction. ○ Continue sleep deprivation absent other contraindications. ● Erythema and limb tenderness: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>'[T]o best inform future medical judgments and recommendations'</i> and monitor developing edema or erythema, record pre-existing lesions and daily observations <i>'that document the length of time the detainee has been in the stress position'</i>. ● Monitor subjects for excessive distress when placed in more stressful arms-elevated shackle position.
Sleep deprivation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● <i>'[t]he medical officer and psychologist should monitor the detainee for evidence of thought disturbance or other mental derangement, and be prepared to intervene should such circumstances arise, including stopping sleep deprivation.'</i> ● To return subject to reasonable attentiveness a 6-hour recovery should be allowed. ● Maximum sleep deprivation permitted under Counterterrorism Center policy is 180 hours, medical officers can estimate recovery hours from formula: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ $8 + [(Number\ of\ sleep\ cycles\ lost - 1) \times (6\ hours\ of\ core\ sleep\ per\ cycle) \times (.33)]$. ● <i>'The circumstances that medical officers will be called to advise on in the detainee programs are not the ones that have been subject to reported research; thus, medical officer will rely on their clinical judgment, informed by what research results do exist to formulate a safe recommendation to the interrogation team in the event that sleep deprivation will be reinstated following a sleep period'</i>. ● Record current number of hours without sleep in medical examinations during periods of sleep deprivation.
Waterboard	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● <i>'The procedure ... carries some potential risks ... Several medical dimensions need to be monitored to ensure the safety of the subject'</i>. ● Before technique may be employed ensure that subject:

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Is free of serious heart or lung disease, particularly any obstructive airway disease or respiratory compromise from morbid obesity. ○ Has stable anterior dentition and no recent facial or jaw injuries. ○ Has an intact gag reflex. ● Since vomiting is associated with these sessions ensure subjects receive a liquid diet throughout interrogation phase, when waterboard is likely, and are fasted for at least 4 hours before any session. ● Medical officers must be aware of Agency policy on waterboard exposure, though <i>'the exact number of sessions cannot be medically prescribed, and will depend on the response to each'</i>. ● <i>'In order to best inform future medical judgments and recommendations, it is important that every application of the waterboard be thoroughly documented: how long each application (and the entire procedure) lasted, how much water was used in the process (realizing that much splashes off), how exactly the water was applied, if a seal was achieved, if the naso- or oropharynx was filled, what sort of volume was expelled, how long was the break between applications, and how the subject looked between each treatment.'</i> ● Medical team <i>'must be prepared to respond immediately'</i> to respiratory arrest crisis associated with laryngospasm. <i>'Preferably the physician will be in the treatment room'</i>. ● Observe for warning signs of respiratory complications: hoarseness, persisting cough, wheezing, stridor, difficulty clearing airway. Waterboard should be discontinued for 24 hours if these develop. ● Observe for signs of developing pneumonia if there has been a suggestion of aspiration. ● If subject is fatigued or enters a state of psychological resignation, they may lose consciousness or give up, allowing excessive filling of airways: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ In response, interrogator should deliver a sub-xyphoid thrust. If normal breathing is not restored, aggressive medical intervention is required. ○ In this event, <i>'physician on the scene can not concur in further use of the waterboard without specific [Chief of OMS] consultation and approval'</i>. ● Aggressive waterboard programs beyond 3-5 days:
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>'Without any hard data to quantify either this risk or the advantages of this technique, we believe that beyond this point continued use intensive waterboard applications may not be medically appropriate. Continue aggressive use ... should be reviewed by the [High Value Target] team in consultation with Headquarters... Absent medical contraindications, sporadic use probably carries little risk.'</i>
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OMS Medical Officer responsibilities during Post-Interrogation Detention, December 2004⁸⁶⁴

<p>Periodic re-evaluation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Absent specific complaint, re-evaluate prisoners at 1-2 month intervals, approximately. ● Report examinations and evaluations through approved [REDACTED] communications channels, subject to review/release by Chief of Site. ● Record detainee weights at least monthly and assess for indications of inadequate nutrition. ● Standardised BMI charts may be used. ● Prisoners should be monitored to insure they are involved in self-care (bathing, dental hygiene, etc).
<p>Food refusal</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Administer nutrition and fluids if detainees refuse consumption: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Attempt to ensure a fluid intake of 35 ml/kg/day. Calculate requirement with reference to ambient temperature, body temperature, activity levels, and illnesses. ○ Attempt to ensure male prisoners consume daily kilocalorie (kcal) requirement: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ $900 + (10 \times \text{weight in kg})$. Multiply by 1.2 for sedentary activity level, 1.4 for moderate activity level. ○ Measure and record urine output if it appears fluid intake is inadequate. ○ Specific gravity of urine may be measured if dehydration is suspected. ○ If detainees refuse, administer fluids at the earliest signs of dehydration.

⁸⁶⁴ Adapted by the author from CIA Office of Medical Services, "Guidelines on Medical and Psychological Support to Detainee Rendition."

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If fluids are taken but not nutrients, take forcible intervention when prisoner’s weight reaches 90 percent of normal: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Force feeding with nasogastric tube, ascertaining position of the stomach. ○ Infuse liquid sustenance, such as Ensure, at a rate not exceeding 400 ml/hour. ○ If safe, nasogastric tube may be left in place and treatment continued until detainee ends hunger strike and resumes food intake. • <i>‘For reasons of staff safety, the rectal tube is an acceptable method of delivery of rehydration fluids’</i> and is a <i>‘first line’</i> forcible rehydration <i>‘intervention’</i> over intravenous rehydration as it is a less invasive medical procedure: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Infuse several litres of fluid with each treatment <i>‘until the strike resolves’</i> ○ Consider potassium replacement if strike is not resolved quickly. • In all circumstances of hunger strike, <i>‘the goal is the preservation of the life of the detainee, with or without his/her consent’</i>.
<p>Restraint and sedation of violent detainees</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Involuntary medication should be regarded as a means of last resort and may only be undertaken by an OMS medical officer. • Involuntary sedation includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Combination of 5mg diazepam IM, 5mg haloperidol IM, and 100mg diphenhydramine IM. ○ If little or no effect noted after 15 minutes, repeat diazepam and haloperidol doses. ○ Repeat diazepam and haloperidol doses after another 30 minutes if agitation continues. • Or, follow Bureau of Prisons regimen: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 10mg haloperidol, plus 2mg Cogentin, plus 2mg Ativan IM. Ativan can be repeated every hour, haloperidol plus Cogentin every 8 hours, with a maximum of three doses in 24 hours. • OMS to provide consultation via telephone until medical officer arrives on scene.
<p>Immunisations</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All prisoners to be vaccinated wherever feasible. As they transition into long-term detention, OMS can provide Td, MMR, Hepatitis B, and influenza vaccines when available.