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Book Review

Dragan Živaljević
Counterintelligence Protection of State Institutions: Challenges and Perspectives

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Sovereignty in the Age of Algorithms: Counterintelligence Protection as a Strategic Imperative

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Counterintelligence has always operated within a specific context of political power, security culture, and dominant ideology – shrouded in mystification and deliberately removed from public scrutiny. The monograph *Counterintelligence Protection of State Institutions: Challenges and Perspectives* by Dragan Živaljević, Professor at the Academy of National Security, stands apart within the field of security studies for being professionally and academically grounded, terminologically precise, and empirically verified. Its synthetically and analytically constructed methodological framework systematically uncovers the com-

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plex morphology of threats that determine the processes of counterintelligence protection of state bodies and institutions. The changing geopolitical environment, the intensification of digitalization, and the penetration of artificial intelligence generate a spectrum of "hybrid threats, cyberattacks, and information-psychological operations," which require the competent security services to engage in "continuous refinement of methods of analysis, forecasting, and preventive action."

With encyclopaedic precision and theoretical reliability, Živaljević illuminates the key dimensions of institutional security in the Republic of Serbia, producing a work of exceptional academic merit. Across six dialectically coherent and rationally articulated thematic units, the author synthesises research practice and theoretical thought into a comprehensive, specialised, and methodologically consistent approach to the study of counterintelligence protection. The multidisciplinary orientation of the work is evident in its integration of perspectives from security studies, the legal order, sociology, political science, influence psychology, media and propaganda analysis, and digital risk studies – examined across the organisational, operational, and strategic levels of intelligence and counterintelligence activity. The monograph thereby affirms the axiom that counterintelligence work admits no pre-formulated solutions: methods are derived from the specific structure and character of threats, encompassing "operational surveillance, counterespionage measures, information control, protection of critical infrastructure, and security risk assessment."

Seemingly comprehensive at first glance, Živaljević's text reveals its true analytical value only upon close and critical reading: beneath the academic generalisations and operational definitions lies an intellectual potential open to multiple levels of scholarly reception. The constitutive connection between state sovereignty and subversive and espionage activities is a historical constant – from the intelligence networks of the Chinese Han and Tang dynasties, through Roman courier services, to the secret agencies of European monarchs. In his introductory observations, the author precisely identifies this historical thread, emphasising the fundamental need for "the state to protect its internal political, military, and economic interests." A comparative analysis of the world's leading counterintelligence services, including the history of the establishment of the State Security Administration (UDBA), illuminates the process of institutionalisation of this profession and the evolution of collaborative networks. The key analytical value of the monograph lies in its examination of doctrinal transformations: traditional methods of "physical surveillance and interception of communications" have yielded to new paradigms in which metadata, algorithms, and artificial intelligence redefine the field of counterintelligence activity, with the multidisciplinary composition of personnel underscored as a strategic imperative.

The monograph reveals its full analytical potential precisely in its treatment of preventive protection mechanisms. Through a multidimensional approach, it encompasses the essential insights of contemporary counterintelligence theory and practice, with a focus on the protection of critical national assets. Although the author employs terminologically precise and, at times, didactically accessible exposition, this remains a work that demands a specialised readership. The distinctive quality of the monograph lies in the rare integration of operational experience and strategic analytical perspective – a combination found in very few publications in this field. The adaptive models proposed are grounded in an anthropocentric principle: the Human Being, in synergy with advanced technologies and analytical systems, remains the primary agent of state sovereignty preservation. The mon-

ograph accordingly emphasises the indispensable importance of security vetting, team confidentiality, and the coordination of operational capacities.

Across approximately 240 pages of methodologically consistent text, the key concepts, definitions, and categorical apparatus of counterintelligence protection are systematised in accordance with the national security framework. The author's narrative authority rests on the integration of theoretical competence and practical experience, and is particularly evident in the process of identifying security risks, potential compromise situations, and thresholds of discretion. Živaljević precisely determines the point up to which the public should be informed about threats, "thereby achieving long-term stability and the strengthening of the system." By emphasising that personal integrity, value commitment, and institutional loyalty constitute indispensable prerequisites for intelligence and security engagement, the author simultaneously problematises the question of balancing national security requirements against respect for fundamental human rights, including the use of digital forensic methods and the application of artificial intelligence in intelligence analysis.

A particularly prominent analytical position within the monograph is occupied by the chapter "Psychological Support for Counterintelligence Operations," which examines contemporary methods of behavioural profiling and advanced behavioural analysis techniques relevant to the timely prediction and prevention of security incidents. The integration of digital forensic methods with the analysis of behavioural patterns in crisis situations constitutes a significant methodological contribution to the protection of vital state capacities. A comparison with the practices of the world's leading services is especially valuable in the context of the growing sophistication of subversive activities, with syntactic-semantic analysis of statements on social media platforms acquiring the status of a primary analytical instrument. Živaljević systematically examines the destructive effects of media-psychological manipulation, precisely identifying the destabilising potential of algorithmic information distribution mechanisms, automated accounts, and *deepfake* technologies in disinformation processes, with particular emphasis on the impact of these phenomena on younger generations. Cyber-terrorism, eco-terrorism, quasi-political activism, and the proliferation of forms of ideological extremism systematically radicalise the public sphere, targeting the deconstruction of widely accepted social norms and value systems – a process that almost invariably conceals the intelligence-driven subversive activities of external actors.

Although the monograph is primarily intended for professionals engaged in security structures, its potential readership is considerably wider. The work functions simultaneously as a systematised account of the legal and institutional framework of counterintelligence protection in the Republic of Serbia and as an analytical guide to the principles of personal security, within a context in which every citizen becomes a potential subject of diverse security threats. The particular value of the monograph lies in the synthesis of theoretical rigour and conceptual accessibility, sustained throughout by the highest standards of security culture, confidentiality, and professional loyalty. This dimension is especially significant given the frequent exposure of operational structures to commercial pressures from foreign intelligence services and criminal actors. The monograph thus bears witness that the analytical and security challenges of the future will be marked by continuous intensification, while the prospects for response will become ever more complex and ever more deeply embedded within the order of great-power interests.

The scholarly contribution of the volume is further supported by its distinguished peer reviewers, whose expert commentaries enhanced the clarity and accessibility of the publication for the security studies community. Recognition is equally due to the national publishing houses *Institute for Textbooks* and *Official Gazette*, whose high-quality visual and graphic presentation has further affirmed the academic and editorial standard of the monograph.