

CALL FOR PAPERS

Locating the Man Who Never Was: Understanding Covert Action in International Relations

6 September 2016, Nottingham UK

Covert action is often associated with the CIA and the Cold War. In reality, states from the UK to France, Russia to Israel have long relied on deniable and indirect interventionism to achieve policy goals. This remains the case today. From Russian intervention in Ukraine to Western activity in the aftermath of the Arab Spring, special operations and covert action continue to appeal to policymakers.

Covert action has long been an important tool in a state's foreign and security policy arsenal, yet its necessarily secretive nature means it remains a controversial and little understood activity. This one-day workshop explores covert action from a variety of perspectives to examine when, why, and how states use such means.

Topics for discussion include (but are not limited to):

- States' approaches to and understandings of covert action
- The role and purpose of covert action; when and why states use it
- Types of covert action (political action; economic warfare; special operations; deception; proxy warfare etc.)
- Defining covert action
- The relationship between intelligence and covert action
- Oversight, coordination and management of covert action
- Appraising covert action
- History of covert action; lessons from the past

Please send a 250 word abstract to rory.cormac@nottingham.ac.uk by 29 April. A provisional programme will be drawn up by the end of May.