Decoding Organization

Bletchley Park, Codebreaking and Organization Studies

CHRISTOPHER GREY

CAMBRIDGE

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藏书章

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Decoding Organization

How was Bletchley Park made as an organization? How was signals intelligence constructed as a field? What was Bletchley Park's culture and how was its work co-ordinated? Bletchley Park was not just the home of geniuses such as Alan Turing, it was also the workplace of thousands of other people, mostly women, and their organization was a key component in the cracking of Enigma. Challenging many popular perceptions, this book examines the hitherto unexamined complexities of how 10,000 people were brought together in complete secrecy during World War II to work on ciphers. Unlike most organizational studies, this book decodes, rather than encodes, the processes of organization and examines the structures, cultures and the work itself of Bletchley Park using archive and oral history sources. Organization theorists, intelligence historians and general readers alike will find in this book a challenge to their preconceptions of both Bletchley Park and organizational analysis.

CHRISTOPHER GREY is Professor of Organizational Behaviour at the University of Warwick. He was previously Professor of Organizational Theory at the University of Cambridge and Fellow of Wolfson College. Professor Grey has published numerous academic articles on the sociology and history of management and organizations, on management education and learning, on critical management studies and on professional services organizations. He is the author of the bestselling student primer *A Very Short, Fairly Interesting and Reasonably Cheap Book about Studying Organizations* (2009, second edition).

Dedicated to my mother, Madeleine Grey

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education. She has also been unfailing in encouraging me during my periodic doubts and anxieties as I wrote this book.

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Abbreviations and Acronyms

AD:	Assistant Director (at BP)
AI:	Air Intelligence
AM:	Air Ministry
ATS:	Auxiliary Territorial Service (female branch of the army)
BP:	Bletchley Park
BPT:	Bletchley Park Trust
BPTA:	Bletchley Park Trust Archive
BTMC:	British Tabulating Machine Company
C:	Chief (i.e. Chief of SIS, correlating to the Director of GC & CS or, from 1944, the Director-General)
CBME:	Combined Bureau Middle East
CCAC:	Churchill College Archive Cambridge
CCR:	Cryptographic Co-ordination and Records (at BP)
CR:	Crib Room(s) (of Hut 6 at BP)
CSC:	Civil Service Commission
DD:	Deputy Director (at BP)
DD (C):	DD (Civil)
DD (S):	DD (Service)
DF or D/F:	Direction finding
DMI:	Director of Military Intelligence (at the War Office)
DNB:	(Oxford) Dictionary of National Biography
DNI:	Director of Naval Intelligence (at the Admiralty)
D & R:	Distribution and Reference Section (at BP)
E:	Enigma
FECB:	Far East Combined Bureau
FO:	Foreign Office
GAF:	German Air Force

GC & CS (sometimes GCCS):	Government Code and Cypher (sometimes Cipher) School
GCHQ:	Government Communications Headquarters
GPO:	General Post Office
HUMINT (sometimes Humint or humint):	Human intelligence
ID8G:	Intelligence Division 8G (also known as NID 8G)
IE:	Intelligence Exchange (at BP)
ISK:	Intelligence (or Illicit) Services, Knox
ISOS:	Intelligence (or Illicit) Services, Oliver Strachey
IWM:	Imperial War Museum
JCC:	Joint Committee of Control (at BP)
JIC:	Joint Intelligence Committee
JN-25:	Japanese Navy code assigned the number 25 by the US Navy
KCAC:	King's College Archive Cambridge
KIO:	Knowledge-intensive organization
MI:	Military Intelligence
MI1b:	Military Intelligence 1b (WO cryptanalytic branch in WW1)
MI5:	Military Intelligence 5 (also known as the Security Service)
MI6:	Military Intelligence 6 (also known as SIS)
MI8:	Military Intelligence 8 (signals intelligence service of the WO)
MI14:	Military Intelligence 14 (Germany desk)
MOI (sometimes MoI):	Ministry of Information
MOS:	Mass Observation Society

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MOW (sometimes MoW):	Ministry of Works
MW:	Military Wing (i.e. army section at BP)
MR:	Machine Room(s) (of Hut 6 at BP)
NAAFI:	Naval, Army and Air Force Institutes
NID:	Naval Intelligence Division (at the Admiralty)
NID 8G:	Naval Intelligence Division 8G. Section set up to liaise between NS and OIC (also known as ID8G)
NID 25:	Naval Intelligence Division 25 (formal name for Room 40, the WW1 cryptanalytic section of the Admiralty)
NS:	Naval Section (at BP)
OIC:	Operational Intelligence Centre (at the Admiralty)
OSA:	Official Secrets Acts (of 1911 and 1920)
PRO:	Public Record Office (part of TNA)
RAF:	Royal Air Force
RN:	Royal Navy
RR:	Registration Room(s) (of Hut 6 at BP)
SIGINT (sometimes Sigint or sigint):	Signals intelligence
SIS:	Secret Intelligence Service (also known as MI6)
SIXTA:	Traffic Analysis Section (formerly No. 6 Intelligence School, hence 'six')
SCU:	Special Communications Unit
SLU:	Special Liaison Unit
TA:	Traffic analysis
TNA:	The National Archives of the United Kingdom
UKB:	*Umkehrwalze* B
UKD:	*Umkehrwalze* D
UPW:	Union of Postal Workers
WAAF:	Women's Auxiliary Air Force; or a member thereof

WO:	War Office
Wren (sometimes WREN):	A member of the WRNS
WRNS:	Women's Royal Navy Service
W/T:	Wireless telegraphy
WTI:	Wireless telegraphy intelligence
WW1:	World War One
WW2:	World War Two

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Introduction: Organization Studies, History and Bletchley Park

> I suppose that if you were to put forward a scheme of organization for any service which laid down as its basis that it would take a lot of men and women from civil life and dress some of them in one kind of clothes and some of them in another, and told all those dressed in black that they came under one set of rules and all those dressed in white under another and so on, and then told them that they had a double allegiance, firstly to the ruler of their black or white or motley party and secondly to another man who would partly rule over all of them, but only partly, any ordinary tribunal would order you to take a rest cure in an asylum. But suppose that the tribunal were somehow foolish enough to adopt your idea and in order that you might begin your work said 'We will now lend you some tools – they may not be quite what you want but you must make do with them, and tell us when they get blunt and we'll see if we can sharpen them for you', some higher power would presumably lock up the tribunal as a public menace – or, if it were in Russia or Germany, shoot them out of hand. Yet that is in fact the precise organization of Bletchley Park. Now it happens that Bletchley Park has been successful – so successful that it has supplied information on every conceivable subject from the movement of a single mine sweeper to the strategy of a campaign and the Christian name of a wireless operator to the introduction of a secret weapon.
>
> *Nigel de Grey, Deputy Head of Bletchley Park, Memorandum of 28 March 1943*[1]

As its title implies, this book has two purposes. One is to explicate the 'decoding organization' at Bletchley Park, the place most famous for the breaking of Enigma ciphers in conditions of complete secrecy during the Second World War. The other is, in the process, to develop a certain approach to the analysis of organizations; a way of making sense of, or 'decoding', organization which points to a way of reviving organization studies as currently commonly conducted. In this sense it is a contribution to the social science of organizations and will primarily be of interest to academics working in that field. However, it should also have a value to those working in the area of intelligence studies

and history, and an appeal to general readers with an interest in Bletchley Park[2].

The overall intention is to provide an interpretative analysis which draws on a broad range of concepts in organization studies whilst engaging in considerable historical detail in order to illuminate how 'organization' is achieved or accomplished over time. This is a 'decoding' of organization in that, like the codebreakers of Bletchley Park, an interpretive analysis seeks an answer to the question 'what does this mean?'. It entails considerable complexity; a complexity which is analytical, methodological and empirical. This lengthy opening chapter introduces this complexity by first introducing Bletchley Park, then indicating the problems and possibilities of organization studies. This is followed by a discussion of organization studies and history, and what the linkage of the two has to offer. This serves as a prelude to indicating the approach to historical analysis which I will adopt and the methods and sources of that analysis. There follows a brief overview of the organization of Bletchley Park and, finally, an outline of the contents of the rest of the book.

BLETCHLEY PARK AS A RESEARCH SITE

One reason for choosing Bletchley Park (BP[3]) as the focus for this analysis is the widespread public interest its activities command. This is both a blessing and a curse. The blessing is that the BP story is, in a dramatic sense, an extremely exciting one, filled with human interest and historical significance. George Steiner may have been hyperbolic in claiming that 'it looks as if Bletchley Park is the single greatest achievement of Britain during 1939–45, perhaps during [the twentieth] century as a whole' (Steiner, 1983: 42), but that such a claim could even be made is telling. The official historian of British intelligence in World War Two (WW2), Professor Sir Harry Hinsley, himself an important figure at BP, suggested that its work may have shortened the course of the war by two to four years (Hinsley, 1993a, 1993b), whilst noting the difficult and dubious nature of such counterfactual claims (Hinsley, 1993a: 2).

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