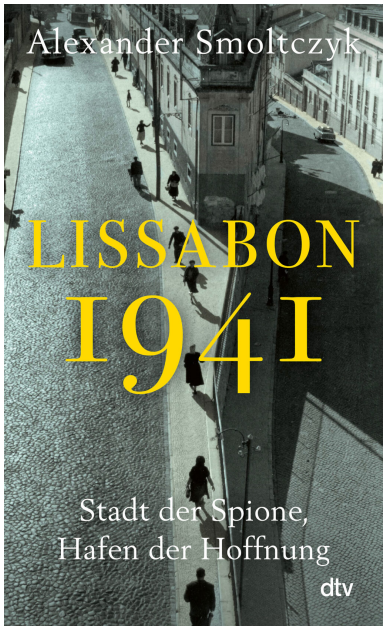


by Alexander Smoltczyk
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Non-Fiction

Lisbon 1941: City of Spies, Port of Hope

Lissabon 1941 – Stadt der Spione, Hafen der Hoffnung

review

Alexander Smoltczyk's 'Lisbon 1941' covers the two years during the Second World War in which Lisbon became a central meeting point for refugees, diplomats, and intelligence agents from across Europe. The city's neutrality made it a major transit gateway for those fleeing Nazi-occupied Europe, as well as a hub of espionage for both Axis and Allied networks, and a site of high-level diplomatic manoeuvring. Among the figures who pass through the narrative is Juan Pujol, the only double agent to receive honours from both sides after the war.

The book is structured in six sections and moves broadly chronologically across two summers, though the narrative shifts frequently between characters and locations, in segments ranging from a few paragraphs to several pages. Figures introduced early in the book often disappear and later reappear, their storylines intersecting as the book progresses. Although the central focus is 1940 and 1941, the narrative extends as far as Hitler's death, and closes with an epilogue tracing what became of its central figures in later life.

The cast includes a wide range of historical figures beyond Germany, among them Hannah Arendt, Graham Greene, Josephine Baker, Jacques Abtey, Alfred Döblin and Salvador Dalí, alongside

Portuguese diplomats and politicians of the period. Smoltczyk also draws connections to individuals such as Ian Fleming, who found inspiration for his fiction in wartime Lisbon, and the real-life agent who later appears as a character in Graham Greene's *Our Man in Havana*.

Smoltczyk, a journalist by background, writes in an accessible, narrative-driven style, occasionally drawing comparisons between the city in wartime and the present day, comparing Josephine Baker's fame to that of a present-day pop star, for instance, or likening the city's guesthouses to contemporary short-term rentals.

Non-fiction accounts of Lisbon during this period are scarce, with most treatments of the subject appearing in fiction rather than history. 'Lisbon 1941? should appeal to readers of Harald Jähner's *Aftermath* for its narrative approach to twentieth-century European history and of Jonathan Freedland's *The Traitor's Circle* for its interwoven structure across a large cast of characters.

Find out more:https://www.dtv.de/foreign-rights/buch/lissabon-1941-28551

about the author

Alexander Smoltczyk studied Economics, Political Science and Agricultural Economics in Berlin and Montpellier. He has written pieces for *taz*, *merian*, *Geo* and other magazines. He joined *Spiegel* magazine as a reporter in 1997, and worked as their correspondent in Paris, Rome, Abu Dhabi and Lisbon. Today he is a freelance writer for Spiegel. Smoltczyk has received numerous awards, including the Henri Nannen Prize.

Previous works: *Auf der Suche nach der verlorenen Revolution – Pariser Spaziergänge mit Mogniss Abdallah*, Félix Guattari u. a., Rotbuch (1989); *Vom Ende der Nacht – Bilder aus dem Osten*, Bucher (1992); *Der Wald ohne Schatten – auf der Suche nach letzten Orten dieser Welt*, Links (1996); *James Bond, Berlin – Hollywood – die Welten des Ken Adam*, Nicolai Verlag (2002); Vatikanistan. *Eine Entdeckungsreise durch den kleinsten Staat der Welt*, Heyne (2008); *Päpste pupsen nicht*, Dressler Verlag (2013); *Wer hat an der Zeit gedreht?*, Dressler Verlag (2015)

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