

UPCOMING EVENTS

TIANANMEN SQUARE THIRTY YEARS LATER

12:03 p.m. to 7:00 p.m.
May 9

NEW BOOKS

By Farwa Zaidi

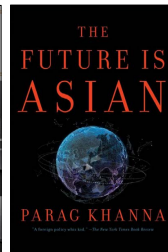
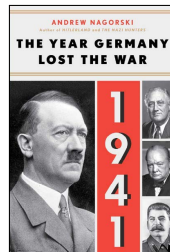
WW II

OPC MEMBER Andrew Nagorski, an award-winning journalist who worked for more than three decades for Newsweek, has taken another deep dive into World War II, this time with a close look at the early days of Hitler's campaign and its galvanizing affect on allies. *1941: The Year Germany Lost the War* [Simon & Schuster, June 2019], is Nagorski's fourth book about different aspects of the war. He chronicles how Hitler's tactical mistakes and policies of terror forged a new and powerful alliance among Churchill, FDR, and Stalin. By the start of 1941, Hitler had already cast his shadow over most of Europe. Poland and France had quickly fallen. Britain remained removed from the conflict, though German bombers were attacking its cities and German U-boats harassed its ships. Stalin was still observing the terms of the Nazi-Soviet pact. Roosevelt vowed to stay out of the war. Hitler was confident that victory was within reach.

Nagorski wrote that Hitler's plan to invade the Soviet Union was not kept secret, due to Soviet spies and Nazi leaks. Allied forces tried to warn Stalin several times, but were dismissed as capitalist propaganda. Nonetheless, Hitler risked several attacks and lost due to disastrous military blunders. His rush to declare war on the United States after the attack on Pearl Harbor helped to secure U.S. involvement. Britain emerged with two powerful allies, and Germany was doomed to defeat.

Nagorski's book is a portrait of hubris and megalomania pitted against the emerging opposition. His chronicle sets the stage for how events led to the Holocaust, and foreshadows the postwar division of Europe, which ultimately led to the Cold War.

During his long tenure at Newsweek, Andrew Nagorski spent three years as Berlin bureau chief. This role allowed him to examine the country's efforts to overcome division, their immigration debate, and German-Jewish relations. His experiences in Germany, and later in Warsaw, helped him to write his multiple books on World War II. Nagorski was also a bureau chief in Hong Kong, Rome, Bonn, Moscow, and Berlin. He has been a member of the OPC since 2001. ❖



ASIA

PARAG KHANNA, a leading strategist on geopolitics and economics based in Singapore, outlines what he sees as a steep global shift in power toward Asia in his newest book, *The Future is Asian* [Simon & Schuster, February 2019]. He wrote that in the 19th century, the world was Europeanized. In the 20th century, it was Americanized, and now, in the 21st century, it is being Asianized.

Khanna challenges the notion that China is the sole power and influence in Asia, arguing that a broader, interconnected Asian system spans from Saudi Arabia to Japan, Russia to Australia, and Turkey to Indonesia. Five billion people across the region are linked through trade, finance, infrastructure, and diplomatic networks that represent 40 percent of global GDP.

He points out the many ways that Western powers have misinterpreted, underestimated and misdiagnosed Asia. Westerners analysts have mistakenly forecast imminent world wars and debt-driven collapses around the region. Yet Asia is experiencing a new wave of growth sparked in part by countries such as India and the Philippines. Khanna wrote that some nationalist leaders have set aside territorial disputes in favor of integration and infrastructure investments that will have a lasting effect on the next generation of digital innovation. From investment portfolios and trade wars to Hollywood's East-facing movies, he demonstrates that Asianization has taken hold of the global zeitgeist.

Khanna is the founder and managing partner of FutureMap, a data- and scenario-based strategic advisory firm. Khanna is a regular commentator on international affairs and is currently a CNN Global Contributor. His articles have appeared in a variety of publications, including *The Wall Street Journal*, *Financial Times*, *The Washington Post*, *New York Times Magazine*, *TIME*, and more. *The Wall Street Journal* said Khanna's book offers a "valuable and thoroughly researched analysis of one course that the region may take." ❖



Krithika Varagur

COURTESY OF KRITHIKA VARAGUR

Meet the OPC Members: Q&A With Krithika Varagur

KRITHIKA VARAGUR is an American freelance journalist based in London. She spent more than two years working in Indonesia, filing a range of stories for print and online media on topics including fundamentalism and extremism, politics, an investigation into Ivanka Trump's clothing factory in West Java, violence against gay Indonesians in Aceh, reunions of East Timor's stolen children, and immigrants who were deported from her hometown in New Jersey to Indonesia. Her work has appeared in *The Guardian*, *The Atlantic*, *The New York Times*, *The New York Review of Books*, *The Financial Times*, and many more. Varagur won this year's OPC Foundation's Sally Jacobsen Fellowship, and a fellowship with the Associated Press in New Delhi. She won awards in two categories of the 2018 Religion News Association awards. Varagur is also a Fulbright scholar and has worked as a writer and editor at the *Huffington Post* in New York, and a contributing writer to *Vogue India*. She is currently writing her first book, for Columbia Global Reports, about Gulf religious investments.

Hometown: Edison, NJ.

Education: Harvard University (A.B. English, 2015).

Languages you speak: Tamil, Bahasa Indonesia, Spanish.

First job in journalism: I interned at *Vogue India* when I was 18, in 2012.

Countries reported from: Indonesia, Malaysia, India, Thailand, Timor-Leste, Singapore, Bosnia, Kosovo, Nigeria, Kenya, Mexico

When and why did you join the OPC: I joined the OPC when I moved to Indonesia in 2016 because I thought the press card might be useful for a freelancer. And it was!

What draws you to reporting on religion? I'm interested in politics and human rights, primarily in Southeast and South Asia, and it's impossible to get a sense of what's going on without accounting for religion. I lived in Indonesia, which is the world's largest Muslim-majority country, for two years, and I wanted to report from there because it's a huge, successful, multicultural democracy, but it's not secular, and in fact never has been. I'm also interested in fundamentalisms (having written about Muslim, Hindu, and Buddhist variants to date) and extremism, so understanding religious dynamics is hugely important. Faith-based networks and links are also really cool. In the course of my book research I've been working in Nigeria and Kosovo, in addition to Indonesia, and am amazed at how religious texts, rituals, and ideas link those disparate places. And since I'm writing about Saudi religious investments and soft power, it is also a story about geopolitics and foreign policy. Really, I can't imagine working as a journalist today without accounting for religion. It is endlessly interesting. (And not just for foreign correspondents; I've riffed on the Indonesia tagline that I'm from the "world's largest Christian-majority nation," the U.S.!)

Major challenge as a journalist: As a freelance journalist, figuring out how to budget your time chasing stories — features vs. breaking news, long vs. short

stories, pitches vs. assignments and so on — is always tough. Having a beat or focus area helps a little with this, but I certainly haven't fully figured it out. Another challenge, of course, is getting paid, both on time and enough. I've been lucky to have made it work over the last few years but strongly endorse a culture of transparency around finances in our industry.

Best journalism advice received: Don't talk too much and lean into silences in interviews.

Worst experience as a journalist: Reporting on human rights issues in the structurally and temporally limited capacity of a journalist is always tough. For instance, I met many abused female migrant workers in Lombok, Indonesia in 2017 and felt really conflicted about making them repeat their traumatic experiences in the Gulf, even after obtaining their informed consent. But I think it's important to sit with those uncomfortable feelings. I don't expect it will get any easier.

Journalism heroes: Jane Mayer, Lawrence Wright, Pankaj Mishra.

Advice for journalists who want to work overseas: Learn the language (or one of them) as well as you can.

Favorite quote: A recent addition: "Turn every page" from Robert Caro.

Place you're most eager to visit: The Silk Road cities of Uzbekistan.

Most over-the-top assignment: For my first *Financial Times* assignment, I took two planes, a cargo ship, and a fishing boat to visit the Indonesian spice island, Pulau Run, that had been traded for Manhattan 350 years ago.

Most common mistake you've seen: Having preconceived notions about the "frame" into which a story fits — it's always apparent in the final product.

Country you most want to return to: Timor-Leste

Twitter handle: @krithikavaragur. ❖

Want to add to the OPC's collection of Q&As with members? Please contact patricia@opcofamerica.org.