



BRILL

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Introduction

During the Second World War Holland's publishing industry, like many individuals and institutions, went through turbulent times. Much has been written about the war, but never before has there been such a minute examination of publishing in the Netherlands under the occupation (1940-5) like that presented in this theme issue of *Quaerendo*. The subject is important, not just to Dutch readers but to an international audience too, because before the war the country had a flourishing book trade very much geared towards the international market. The question is, then: how did the industry cope with the occupation? What were the rules that supposedly governed it, and how did publishers respond to them? Here an attempt has been made to put the spotlight on at least one representative of every major category of publishers that continued to be active under German rule, from the hard-boiled National Socialists of the early nineteen-thirties to the clandestine operations of the occupation itself.

De Arbeiderspers, to take one example, was selected because as a social democratic firm it was taken over by Nazi officials immediately after the invasion in 1940 and was placed under the management of a *Verwalter* [administrator]. In other words it continued to operate, but only under Nazi management. Frederike Doppenberg delved deeply into corporate changes, fundraising and employment policy at De Arbeiderspers while researching her book *'De Arbeiderspers Moest Blijven Marcheeren': Een Uitgeverij in Oorlogstijd*, published in 2009.

De Amsterdamsche Keurkamer was established in 1932 to spread pure, unadulterated National Socialist ideology. In 1992 Gerard Groeneveld published his monograph *Nieuwe Boeken voor den Nieuwen Tijd. Uitgeverij De Amsterdamsche Keurkamer 1932-1944*, and in his contribution to this issue of *Quaerendo* we can profit from his years of studying the so-called 'brown' book of that period and a number of authoritative publications on the subject.

Lisa Kuitert's article on Uitgeverij Contact shows how an actively left-wing publishing house was able to make a tidy profit from mainstream publications thanks to the influence of the war. (It was also Contact that first published the diary of Anne Frank.)

Sjoerd van Faassen and Salma Chen, writing about A.A.M. Stols, explain how difficult it is to pigeonhole almost any publisher operating under the German occupation. Resistance and opportunism are just two of the elements that run through this tale of war and occupation. At long last this complex material has received the attention it deserves.

In 2004 Hans Renders published *Gevaarlijk Drukwerk: Een Vrije Uitgeverij in Oorlogstijd*. Sixty years after the founding of the resistance publishing house De Bezige Bij, the book finally charted the political course sailed by the business during and in the aftermath of the occupation. In his contribution to this issue the author looks not only at the origins of the most prolific publisher to come out of the resistance but also at why it is important to question the distinction between illegal and clandestine works and publishers. Many writers present the two terms as referring on the one hand to actively anti-German work and on the other to innocent literary work for which no approval had been sought but which was not calculated to bring about the downfall of Nazism. The tale of De Bezige Bij demonstrates that a better term would be 'underground' printing and publishing.

Perhaps the biggest surprise of this issue is the conclusion to be drawn from the painstaking research done by Gerrold van der Stroom en René Kruis. Until recently, even book historians specializing in the occupation – not to mention bibliographers at the *Nederlandse Nationale Catalogus* – were under the impression that a 'K number' in a book was in some way connected to the *Kultuurkamer*, a body set up by the country's German governor or *Reichskommissar* Arthur Seyss Inquart towards the end of 1941. Van der Stroom and Kruis definitively debunk this misconception and demonstrate the actual significance of K numbers, which appeared in a great many publications produced during the occupation. In fact, the K number was a number that printers were obliged to print in each and every work they printed, however large or small, identifying the printing shop in which it had been printed. It is only now, therefore, that we can understand how it comes about that there are publications bearing a K number that are also recorded as illegal or clandestine in Dirk de Jong's *Het Vrije Boek in Onvrije Tijd; Bibliografie van Illegale en Clandestiene Belletrie*. In 1942 a self-published book appeared under the title *Richard van Paul* (pseudonym of Paul Roelof Citroen). It was printed by Mouton (with typographic design by Henri Friedlaender) and contained a K number, but also appears as No. 643 in de Jong's bibliography. It is only thanks to our new understanding of how the book industry was organized during the occupation that we can explain how a work could apparently be

printed with German approval and yet at the same time can be regarded as an underground publication.

The contributions in this issue devoted to specific publishers are accompanied by lists of each one's publications covering the years 1940-5. This theme number draws extensively on the book *Inktpatronen. De Tweede Wereldoorlog en het Boekbedrijf in Nederland en Vlaanderen* (Amsterdam, De Bezige Bij, 2006), though the article on De Arbeiderspers in this issue is entirely new. In addition, not only have the articles in *Inktpatronen* been updated on the basis of recent research, the lists too have become more reliable: since the Brinkman catalogue of books has been digitized and made electronically searchable, both the annual and five-year volumes often allow the date of publication to be pinpointed more accurately. Thanks to the digital version of the *Nieuwsblad voor den Boekhandel* from the war years, for the publisher lists it has also been possible to produce detailed descriptions of books that are not found only in *Brinkman* or were otherwise difficult to describe bibliographically. Precise dating can be important because a difference of a month can make the difference between appearing before or after the establishment of the *Kultuurkamer* or before or after a change in management or publisher.

What certainly has become clear is that book production during the occupation is a complicated matter and can only be explored effectively by linking corporate histories to the legislation and regulations introduced and imposed by both German and Dutch official, military and industry authorities. Responsibilities in the industry were so fragmented that until now no single publication has really been able to do the subject justice. In particular, the fact that the Netherlands had a *Zivilverwaltung* rather than a *Militärverwaltung* – unlike Belgium, for instance – meant that there was a profusion of tangled measures which often ran counter to one another.

In his book *Books as Weapons. Propaganda, Publishing, and the Battle for Global Markets in the Era of World War II* (Cornell University Press, Ithaca and London 2010) John B. Hench describes how on the Allied side – and particularly in the United States – plans were forged throughout the war for ways of accelerating the liberation of Europe by using books as an instrument of propaganda. It would be good to see a major research effort into European book and newspaper publishing activities emanating from Berlin. A few cautious attempts have been made in this direction, e.g. Thomas Tavernaro's *Der Verlag Hitlers und der NSDAP. Die Franz Eher Nachfolger GmbH* (Wien, Edition Praesens, 2004) and, focusing more on National Socialist periodicals with European ambitions, Andreas Laska's doctoral thesis *Presse et Propaganda*

Allemandes en France Occupée: des Moniteurs officiels (1870-1871) à la Gazette des Ardennes (1914-1918) et à la Pariser Zeitung 1940-1944 (München, Herbert Utz Verlag-Wissenschaft, 2003) and Hans-Eugen Bühler in association with Edelgard Bühler, *Der Frontbuchhandel 1939-1945. Organisationen, Kompetenzen, Verlage, Bücher. Eine Dokumentation* (Frankfurt am Main, Büchhändler-Vereinigung GmbH, 2002), but the larger picture is missing because there are still not enough accessible national studies of the subject. It is our hope that with this theme issue of *Quaerendo* we have done something to redress the balance.

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