

NEWSLETTER

No 86 - June 2023

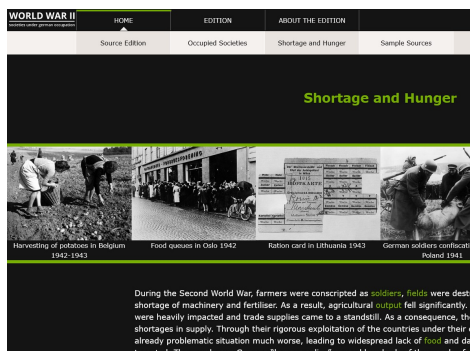


NEWS

'EN QUÊTE DU PASSÉ'

What did my grandparents do during World War II? In my village, were people arrested? Deported? Were there any hidden children? From 1 July to 3 September 2023, at the initiative of *Territoires de la Mémoire*, an exhibition offers tools provided by various scientific institutions to help you answer these questions.

► Read more



EHRI

Project EHRI-PP, funded by Horizon 2020, comes to an end: results and prospects.

► Read more



À vous d'écrire l'histoire !



'SOCIETIES UNDER GERMAN OCCUPATION. A SOURCE EDITION'

Discover a new portal to sources on World War II. The product of an international partnership, it offers a unique insight into the daily lives of millions of people in Nazi-occupied Europe, including Belgium.

► Read more





PUBLICATIONS



'PROVINCIEBESTUUR LIMBURG TIJDENS DE TWEEDE WERELDOORLOG'

The result of research carried out by CegeSoma on request from the *Limburgse Provinciaal Centrum voor Cultureel Erfgoed*, the book gives a political and institutional framework and focuses on food relief and protection against bombing, two main tasks of the provincial administration during WWII.

► [Read more](#)

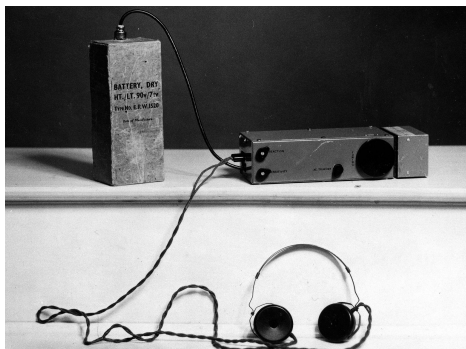
ALBUM AMICORUM

To mark Bruno De Wever's retirement from Ghent University, Lannoo Publishers will release at the end of September a collection of essays titled '*De publieke historicus. Bruno De Wever en zijn vak*'. This book can already be ordered.

► [Read more](#)



FOCUS ON THE COLLECTIONS



SPIES AND ESPIONAGE IN THE CEGESOMA LIBRARY

With our librarian, discover the first part (1914-1945) of a diptych showing the wealth of our collections on this topic.

► [Read more & watch the video](#)



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[Home](#) » [Event](#) » 'En quête du passé' (In search of the past)

'En quête du passé' (In search of the past)

A temporary exhibition organised by 'Les Territoires de la Mémoire'.

World War II [Exhibition](#)



À vous d'écrire l'histoire !



En quête du passé



La Cité Miroir - Place Xavier Neujean 22
4000 Liège



1 juillet 2023
> 3 septembre 2023



Gratuit

What did my grandmother do during the Second World War? What happened in my village? Were people deported? Were any children hidden? Were there any arrests? These are just some of the questions frequently asked by historians and institutions working on the history of World War II. There are a number of tools available to answer these questions, including sites, locations and publications. Unfortunately, all these tools are still poorly known to the public and to those seeking to understand their past. All too often, research still comes up against a wall of silence that needs to be deconstructed. A major challenge for anyone interested in public history!

To meet this challenge, Territoires de la Mémoire has launched a project entitled « *En quête du passé* » ("In search of the past").

What is it all about?

The initiative takes the form of an atypical exhibition opening in Liège on July 1. Atypical in the sense that the aim is not to present collections to the public, but rather documentary resources of all kinds, as well as biographical itineraries. These itineraries will be presented alongside a series of existing tools, all of which are essential milestones in tracing the thread of history and/or memory.

This initiative is the brainchild of Rebecca Bingen, a student librarian/documentalist working with the *Territoires de la Mémoire* team. In addition to the tools available on site, there will also be plenty of space for other scientific institutions invited to present their initiatives in this field. These include the *Arolsen Archives*, the War Heritage Institute, *Kazerne Dossin*, *IHOES* and many others! Cegesoma/State Archives will also be present. This will be an opportunity to highlight several of our initiatives, including the book coordinated by Fabrice Maerten "[Papy était-il un héros? Sur les traces des hommes et des femmes dans la Résistance pendant la Seconde Guerre mondiale](#)", as well as the www.belgiumwwii.be website and the [Wikibase Resistance project](#).

In short, a great opportunity to visit "*La Cité ardente*" this summer, and especially the *Cité Miroir*, where this free exhibition will be on display from July 1 to September 3, 2023. We're sure it will be a great help to budding researchers and others alike...

You can find all the practical information here



01/07/2023 - 10:00 to 03/09/2023 - 18:00

On June 28, at Wuppertal University, the portal 'Societies under German Occupation. A source edition.' was presented to the public. Realized under the direction of Tatjana Tönsmeier, professor at Wuppertal University, this portal, based on original and annotated sources, provides a unique insight into the daily lives of millions of inhabitants of Nazi-occupied Europe, including Belgium.

Aimed at researchers and students, the portal provides access to more than six hundred sources from all countries occupied by the German army from 1939 to 1945. For each

source, it displays a scan of the original, a transcription in the original language and a translation into English with annotations.

A rich resource palette

The portal offers a variety of sources which make the impact of the occupation on daily life tangible, such as material shortages and show how the various population groups dealt with this new reality. The portal thus takes the perspective of social history. In addition to sources classically used for this type of research such as ego documents, it displays many other resources. For example, there is an unofficial price index showing how quickly the prices of essential food items were rising and also articles from the clandestine press protesting the situation or minutes of interrogations of persons who violated the constantly evolving regulations.

Sources are presented in the original language and in English translation. This not only makes them usable for an international audience, but also facilitates comparison between different occupied territories. The portal is structured so that connections in time and space become immediately apparent. In addition to a module allowing the search for sources, there is also a module 'time and space' that allows an immediate view of sources of a given period from different geographical areas.

International scientific cooperation

The portal is partly the result of a longer running project coordinated by Prof. T. Tönsmeier (University of Wuppertal) and Prof. P. Haslinger (Herder Institut Marburg). A source edition was already published in book form in 2021 by Tatjana Tönsmeier and Peter Haslinger (eds.), 'Fighting Hunger, Dealing with Shortage. Everyday Life under Occupation in World War II Europe: A Source Edition', (History of Warfare vol 133), Boston, Brill, 2021, 2 vols. Incidentally, this publication was awarded "The Best Historical Materials published in 2021 and 2022" by the American Library Association / Best Historical Materials Committee.

The portal was created on the basis of intensive international scholarly cooperation. The sources were collected and annotated by researchers from the different countries covered by the portal. For Belgium, CegeSoma was the project partner. Dirk Luyten served as coordinator and was assisted for a while by Laurence Petrone. As for the other countries, in Belgium too, archival funds from different institutions had to be combined in order to get a good view of the daily life of different population groups during the Occupation. The new administrations and control services specific to the Occupation and Nazism obviously provided numerous sources, but company archives, for example, also proved particularly useful, as did, for Belgium, the final reports of social assistants who carried out their studies during the Occupation, a collection of which is kept in the National Archives.

| Discover [here](#) the sources in the portal and see exactly what possibilities and functionalities it has to offer.

Other news

[Album Amicorum for Bruno De Wever, vice chairman of our scientific committee](#)

[New publication 'Provinciebestuur Limburg tijdens de Tweede Wereldoorlog' \(The provincial government of Limburg during World War II\)](#)

The Horizon 2020 funded project EHRI PP comes to an end

Kunst voor das Reich.

THREE QUESTIONS TO ... Florence Matteazzi,

Belgium WWII – Quid novi ?

Young Historians 'class of 2022': a beautiful bloom

Helden van het Verzet. Dit zijn de namen.

'Cultures of spectacle' during WWI and WWII: new thematic issue of JBH

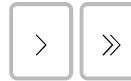
Two new inventories! 'Les Invalides Prévoyants' and 'Les Enfants de la Patrie/De Kinderen van het Vaderland'

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The Horizon 2020 funded project EHRI PP comes to an end



May 2023 marked the official end of the European Holocaust Research Infrastructure Preparatory Phase Project (EHRI PP) in which the Belgian State Archives - CegeSoma has been part of the consortium since the Project start in December 2019. The EHRI PP project concluded with a Final Event held at The Netherlands Royal Academy of Arts and

Sciences (KNAW) Het Trippenhuis on May 23rd.

The overarching aim of the EHRI PP project was to secure the long-term future of trans-national Holocaust research. Its main objectives were to undertake all the necessary legal, financial and strategic work to launch EHRI as a permanent distributed European Research Infrastructure Consortium (ERIC) that provides a stable, long-term services to the Holocaust research community by 2025.

Legal work

Within the EHRI PP project, CegeSoma has been particularly responsible of providing the future EHRI ERIC with all the legal and governance tools which involved, among others, selecting the most appropriate legal form for the future EHRI Research Infrastructure, developing an effective and durable governance structure, and drafting the key legal documents. The most important document that has been drafted under the leadership of CegeSoma are the Statutes, an integral part of the application for the future EHRI ERIC that will be submitted to the European Commission this summer. Moreover, and equally important Belgium also belongs to the first group of countries that support this application by signing the Memorandum of Understanding on the implementation and the establishment of an EHRI-ERIC. Another important EHRI PP objective for CegeSoma was to put the basis of the future EHRI ERIC Belgian node, this time together with Kazerne Dossin, the second Belgian partner in the EHRI PP Consortium. This happened during several workshops which finally grouped 10 institutions spread across Belgium and relevant for the Holocaust research, education and remembrance.

Finally, the Belgian State Archives – CegeSoma was also involved in the preparation of the application for the EHRI Implementation Phase project which has been submitted for funding to the European Commission in March this year. Should the outcome be positive the EHRI IP project should start by the end of 2023. If everything goes well, the EHRI-ERIC should be operational in January 2025, the 80th anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz.

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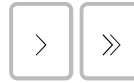
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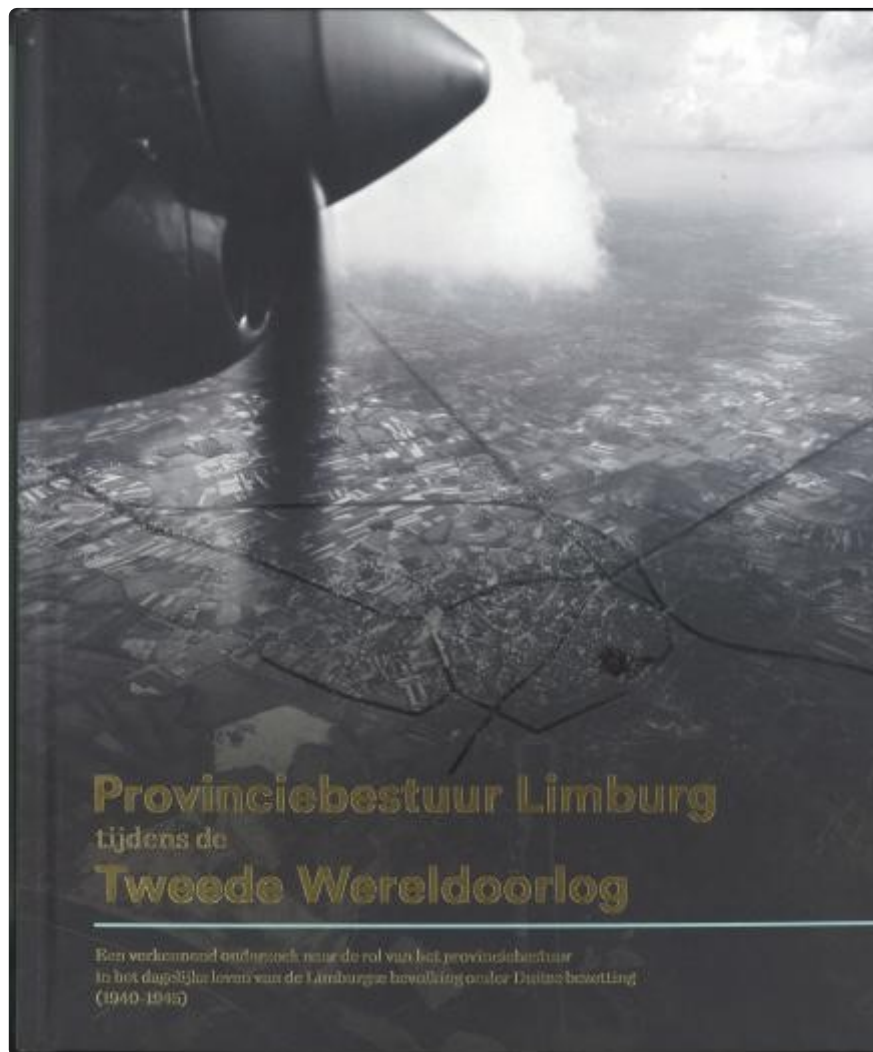
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New publication 'Provinciebestuur Limburg tijdens de Tweede Wereldoorlog' (The provincial government of Limburg during World War II)



On Monday, 26 June, the book '*Provinciebestuur Limburg tijdens de Tweede Wereldoorlog*' was presented in the former provincial council hall in Hasselt. It is the result of

research conducted by CegeSoma on behalf of the *Limburgse Provinciaal Centrum voor Cultureel Erfgoed (PCCE)*.

This project, which started in the summer of 2020, is the work of historian Aline Thomas, supported by Dirk Luyten and Nico Wouters. First, an older inventory of the Limburg provincial archive from WWII was updated. Then new source research was conducted on the history of the provincial administration during WWII. The book not only outlines the political-institutional framework but focuses especially on the many new activities with which the provincial government was burdened during WWII that had a direct impact on the daily life of the population: food relief and protection against air raids.

Food Relief

In particular, food relief was an important new task for the provincial government, which acted as the implementing agency of the new central institutions in Brussels, such as the *Nationale Landbouw- en Voedingscorporatie (NLVC/CNAA)*. The provincial government and especially the fourth directorate, which grew strongly during the occupation, had to help manage permanent shortages. It played a key role in surveying and monitoring livestock and crops and also tried to enforce the many regulations. The province tried to rationalize local rationing services by getting municipalities to cooperate, which was not always appreciated. Providing relief to miners proved to be a particular concern. The persistent problem of food shortages and impoverished populations left more room for charity. In the semi-official Winter Aid, the province also played an active role. But the New Order also saw an opportunity here to increase its influence on the population.

A separate chapter is devoted to the labor camp for Jews in Overpelt and the role of the provincial government in this enterprise.

Although this book is an exploratory study, it is one of the few research studies devoted to the provincial administration during the Occupation. The book not only offers leads for further research at the local level, but is hopefully a stimulus for other provinces to ask similar questions.

The book is written for the general public and richly illustrated, especially with photographs from the provincial archives. Priced at 25 euros, the book can be ordered from the *Provinciaal Centrum voor Cultureel Erfgoed* (pcce@limburg.be), from the Museum Liberation Garden in Leopoldsborg (contact@liberationgarden.be) or from bookstores.

Aline Thomas, Dirk Luyten & Nico Wouters, *Provinciebestuur Limburg tijdens WO II. Een verkennend onderzoek naar de rol van het provinciebestuur in het dagelijks leven van de Limburgse bevolking onder Duitse bezetting (1940-1944)*, Hasselt, 2023, 206 p.

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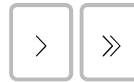
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Album Amicorum for Bruno De Wever, vice chairman of our scientific committee



On the occasion of Bruno De Wever's retirement from Ghent University, a book called [*De publieke historicus. Bruno De Wever en zijn vak*](#) will be published by Lannoo at the end of September. In this collection of essays, several colleagues examine De Wever's professional hobbies, with public history as a common thread.

Bruno De Wever was and is an important person for CegeSoma. He has been a member of our scientific committee for many years, and since 2016 he is vice president of what is called today CegeSoma's Specialized Scientific Committee. Fortunately, for the time being at least, there will be no goodbye to CegeSoma whatsoever. Despite his departure from UGent, Bruno De Wever will remain active within the CegeSoma committee for the next few years.

The book will be available for purchase at its presentation in Ghent on September 29. However, those who cannot be present that day can already order the book now : www.lannoo.be/nl/de-publieke-historicus

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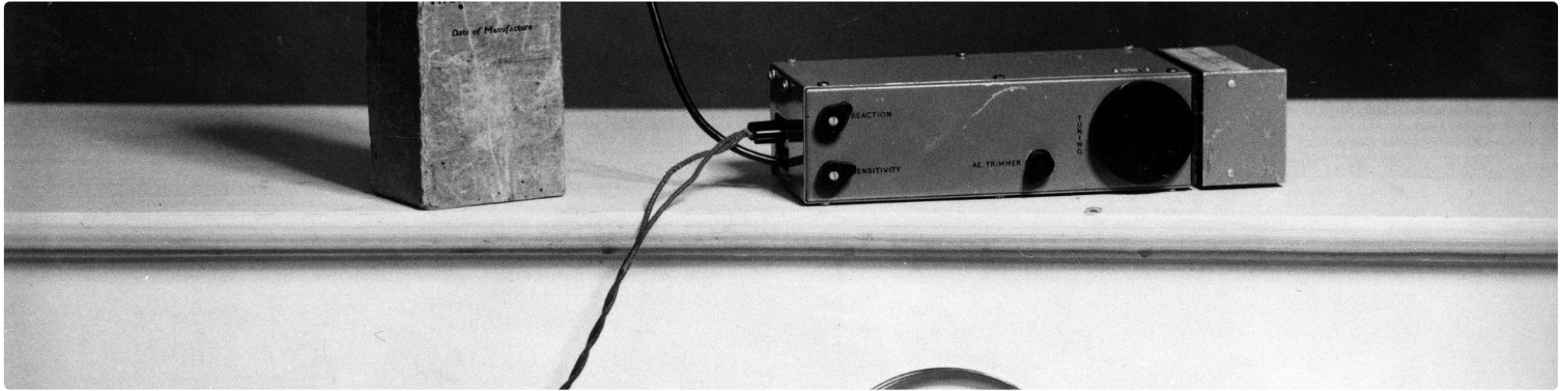
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Spies and espionage in the CegeSoma Library (1) : From the First to the Second World War

"Spies and espionage in the CegeSoma Library (1) : From the First to the Second World War". Under this title, we invite you to discover the fifteenth theme of our series 'The Librarian's Talks'. Each theme will be an opportunity to dive into our collections and will be illustrated by a video and a text complementing the information found there.

Watch the fifteenth video 'The Librarian's Talks: 15. Spies and espionage in the CegeSoma Library (1) : From the First to the Second World War'.

Espions et espionnage (1ère partie : 1914 -1945) - Spionne...

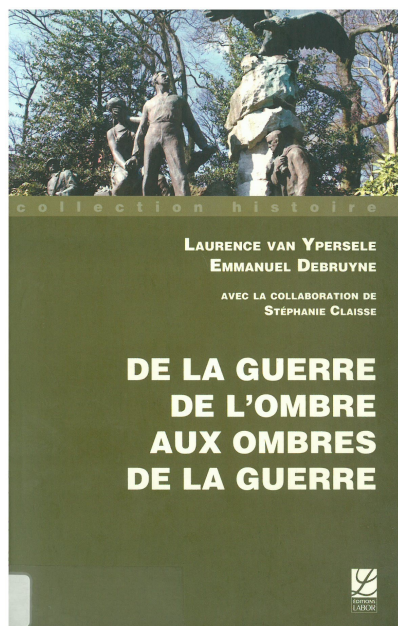


Espionage has probably existed since the dawn of time. Or rather, ever since a human community with a modicum of organization (from tribes and city-states to empires), aware not only of itself but also of its divisions and the antagonistic forces that threaten it, has felt the need to protect itself from the dangers of existence by discreetly seeking information from the Other, the potential or actual enemy. In short, espionage is quite simply a desire for information, for intelligence (today, rather than espionage, aren't we more modestly talking about "intelligence services"?), and the actions linked to this desire can be traced in the West as much in the Old Testament as in Homer's Iliad. The remote Orient is of course no exception: several passages in the celebrated Chinese Art of War make unabashed reference to it. On the other hand, attitudes changed - at least in theory - during the Christian Middle Ages, when feudal society at its height was steeped in chivalric ideals. The profession of spy, then, found itself rather discredited, likened to a form of disloyal combat, if not a kind of treason. This didn't prevent it from being practised bravely in times of need, but no one boasted about it, and it remained so practically until the secularization of states from the 17th to the 19th centuries. This rather negative state of mind towards the honourable guild of spies and other intelligence agents only began to change in the 19th century, with conflicts increasingly involving populations in mass wars (French Revolution, American Civil War, Franco-Prussian War of 1870-1871). Admittedly, the spy didn't become a hero overnight, but the lines began to shift, and from then on he was seen as an indispensable instrument of salvation, among others, for the national community. An instrument of salvation, by its very nature doomed to discretion, if not anonymity, and able to be adorned with the aura of an adventurer-which, in increasingly massified societies, can be seen as very attractive.

The colonial adventure further strengthened its role (albeit in a dotted line) on the world stage, with each major nation equipping itself with military attachés, as well as ethnographers, missionaries and geographers scattered around the globe, likely to play the role of discreet observers, or not, in the context of all-out rivalry between competing imperialisms.

Then came World War I, a new mass conflict, this time coupled with an industrial war involving the mobilization of all the energies of nations. And all the resources of espionage,

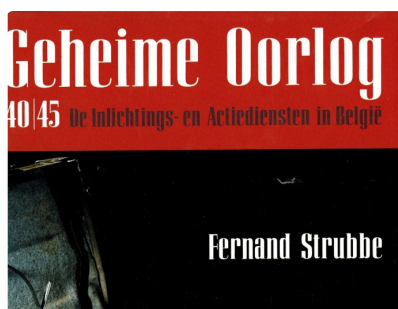
which led to its definitive revaluation... and the emergence of a number of fantasies linked to the practice of this profession. While agents of the Intelligence Service or the 'Second Bureau' applied themselves to tasks that were sometimes quite modest, obscure and yet indispensable (counting German military convoys bound for the front from such and such a railway station...), a number of widely-heroized characters ended up emerging into the public eye, sometimes posthumously or with little connection to reality. For a Lawrence of Arabia, there were so many Margaretha Geertruida Zelle! Even she managed to become the spy Mata Hari for posterity ... after the execution post and thanks to a well-executed media campaign. But her colleagues were not always so 'lucky'.



Nevertheless, more than one of them ended up as cult-figures, something that would have been inconceivable a generation earlier. And if their activity was not always in the public eye, it had lost its character bordering on dishonour. In a way, the Resistance exonerated espionage...when it was carried out by 'nationals', driven by feelings of the highest civic-mindedness (if possible). The process in question has been studied in detail by Laurence van Ypersele and Emmanuel Debruyne in their study *De la guerre de l'ombre aux ombres de la guerre* (2005). And yet, even while being that, and being what he was, he retained an element of ambiguity, as well as a strange, slightly disquieting aura.

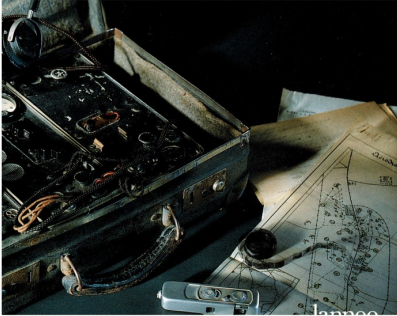
The Second World War naturally followed in the footsteps of the secret Great War, with ideology thrown in for good measure. British Military Intelligence had the opportunity to shine in all its facets in its fight against the German services, assisted, sometimes from afar, by American and Soviet counterparts, with a number of old hands (such as Walthère Dewé) not hesitating to "get back in the saddle" twenty years later to fight against the Nazified Reich. This time, they witnessed the blossoming of a whole series of pro-Allied intelligence and action networks, even if it meant clashing with German spies...or pro-Nazi Belgian spies. The infamous Prosper De Zitter is a fairly good model, and a formidably effective one at that.

intrepid hero whose image would become the stuff of literature, and what's more, the Cold War was on the horizon: in high places, his services would still be needed!



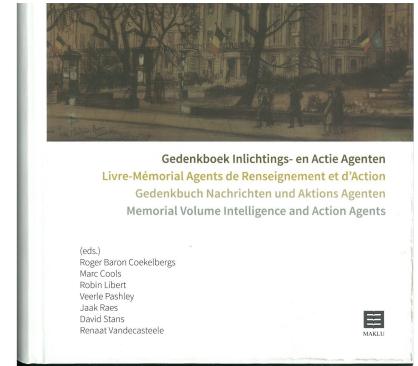
Given these circumstances, it's hardly surprising that espionage has had a very respectable place in CegeSoma's library: several hundred titles in our collections are devoted to this theme for both world wars. We'll just mention a few must-haves for this theme in its Belgian context: the ever-helpful Fernand Strubbe, *Geheime oorlog 40/45. De Inlichtings-en Actiediensten in België* -1992 (translated in 2000 as *Services secrets belges 1940-1945*) and the essential *Gedenkboek Inlichtings-en Actie Agenten* published in 2015 under the auspices of Roger Coekelbergs, who was "one of the house". And of course the excellent contribution by Emmanuel Debruyne entitled *La*





guerre secrète des espions belges, 1940-1944 (The Secret War of Belgian Spies, 1940-1944), fruit of his PhD (2008).

And then there's the Cold War period, with its rich harvest of titles. But that's another story, which we'll get to shortly.



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