

Welcome to CEGESOMA/State Archives of Belgium

CEGESOMA, Centre for Historical Research and Documentation on War and Society, is the Belgian centre of excellence for the history of 20th century conflicts. It carries out research, organises public events and holds document collections. It is since 1 January 2016 the fourth Operational Directory of the State Archives. It is a platform for academic and public activities in Belgium and abroad, in particular with regard to the two World Wars.

Important notices

* Attention ! Since October, the email addresses of CegeSoma end on arch.be.

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JOURNAL OF BELGIAN HISTORY – “The Double Sized Issue of the JBH of 2017 has been published

With considerable delay, the double-sized issue (2-3) of 2017 has been published.

The “Bijdragen”/“Cahiers” (1970-1995) added to the digital archive of the JBH

The seventeen volumes of the journal '*Bijdragen tot de Geschiedenis van de Tweede Wereldoorlog*'/'*Cahiers d'histoire de la seconde guerre mondiale*' (1970-1995) have been added to the website of the *Journal of Belgian History (JBH)* (<http://www.journalbelgianhistory.be/en>). All articles are free and digitally accessible. This means that, for the first time, the digital archive of three related journals have been integrated: the old '*Bijdragen tot de Geschiedenis van de Tweede Wereldoorlog*'/'*Cahiers d'histoire de la seconde guerre mondiale*', the *Journal of Belgian History* (from 1969) and the '*Bijdragen tot de Eigentijdse Geschiedenis*'/'*Cahiers d'Histoire du Temps présent*' (BEG/CHTP, 1996-2011).

The broadcasting programmes of Radio Bruxelles and Zender Brussel digitally accessible in the reading room!

Wartime radio was a particularly efficient means of communication. News of the front, official or clandestine speeches, encrypted messages and propaganda broadcasts were communicated to the Belgian citizens on a daily basis. Many families hold memories of evenings gathered around the radio. The radio was a real tool of information and persuasion, used by the allies as well as the occupier. CegeSoma proposes to discover or rediscover the German radio production in Brussels during the Second World War!

In Enemy Territory. Experiences of Occupation; transfers, legacies (1914-1949)

Periods of commemoration often offer opportunities in the editorial field. But it must be said that these publications are not necessarily novel historiographical contributions. Where occupation is concerned, it must be concluded that it has been the subject of many studies. So, is there really nothing new to be discovered?

The commemorations of the 50th anniversary of the end of the Second World War.

The commemorations are ever-present in our society today. The centenary of the Great War, the bicentenary of the Battle of Waterloo, and of course the recent terrorist attacks were all themes for commemoration ceremonies. Commemorations are social perceptions that should be studied not only for their historical relevance, but for the way societies have behaved with respect to them. In other words, how and to which end does the present claim the past?

Inventory of the Archives of the The Royal National Federation of Veterans of the Piron Brigade

The memory of a legendary Belgian military unit finally accessible
When the activities of certain military units ceased after the German capitulation of May 1945, their members often felt the need to continue to reunite and keep the memories of their sacrifices alive. The acquisition and inventorization of archives of associations such as The Royal National Federation of Veterans of the Piron Brigade, are therefore particularly important to CegeSoma.

CegeSoma Embraces the Wikipedia Adventure

On 18 December, CegeSoma organized its first 'Wikipedia marathon'.
As everyone knows, Wikipedia is a multilingual online encyclopedia that is available to anyone who wishes to use it and correct it. The project is part of a bigger project: Wikimedia. Apart from the encyclopedia, there is also Wikisource for original documents, Wikidata for databases, Wikimedia Commons for photographs, Wikinews, Wiktionnaire etc.

CegeSoma is looking for families who want to participate in a new research project on family memories of resistance and collaboration

In the context of the latest project on family memories of resistance and collaboration in Belgium, which CegeSoma has started in cooperation with Ghent University and the UCL, we are looking for families who are willing to share their family history and their war memories.

IAP Justice and Populations finalized with a rich selection of publications

On 20 December 2017, CegeSoma organized the last event in the context of the IAP 'Justice and Populations': an international workshop on the research of IAP-collaborator Dr. Jan Julia Zurna with regard to the 'liberation murders' in the court district of Brussels.

Doctor Honoris causa day : Ever- ' Engaging Values, Education and Responsibilities : refugees and migration – the role of higher education'

The VUB organizes a Doctor Honoris causa day : Ever- ' Engaging Values, Education and Responsibilities : refugees and migration – the role of higher education' in: Flagey, Studio 4, 1050 Brussels on 29 November 2017.

The events will take place around the VUB's Doctor Honoris Causa, which will be awarded to two prominent individuals who have played a major role in the refugee situation in Europe: Dr Emma Bonino and the people of the Island of Lampedusa (represented by Dr Pietro Bartolo).

Registration deadline: 21 November 2017.

Gerlinda Swillen, Ph D in history at the VUB (2016) and associated researcher at the CegeSoma will speak of the necessity of an international statute for children born of war, begot by 'enemies' during actual and future conflicts.

EXHIBITION – 13 October: opening of the exhibition – Brussels, a safe haven?™

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This is a very contemporary exhibition as not a day goes by when the European politics of migration are not a topic in the media and elsewhere. This exhibition takes place in the centre of Brussels, a city home to 184 nationalities, and is the perfect opportunity to reflect on the present challenges we face in our society. The exhibition traces the immigrations routes from 1830 onwards via facts and personal witness accounts. It

also presents 16 contemporary witness accounts.

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Launching website Belgium WWII

Belgium WWII : Discover the new virtual platform on Belgium and its inhabitants during the Second World War !

On 27 September, in the presence of the press and a particularly large audience, Belgium WWII was launched.

Was Grandfather a Nazi? The first reactions after the launch

On 13 September 2017, the book "Was Grandfather a Nazi?" was presented in the conference room of CegeSoma, in the presence of a large audience of press and public. The conference room proved too small for the large audience who wished to be present.

International colloquium "In the Heart of the Great War" " Au Coeur de la Grande Guerre"

From 26 to 28 October, the brand new Mons Memorial Museum will host the international colloquium "In the Heart of the Great War" " Au Coeur de la Grande Guerre", organized in cooperation with CegeSoma. The colloquium focuses on the interaction between citizens and the military during the First World War.

'Papy Était-il un Nazi?' - Available at CegeSoma

This very important work, with the significant input from researchers from the National Archives and CegeSoma, is in the first place a research guide. The aim is to guide persons looking for concrete information on family members (parents, grandparents) who were victims of the repression after the Second World War, to archives where they can find this information.

CALL FOR PAPERS : "Thinking Sex after the Great War" - International conference, Brussels, 17-19 October 2018

On the joint initiative of Henk de Smaele (University of Antwerp) and the AVG-Carhif, an international conference entitled "Thinking Sex after the Great War" will be held end 2018 in Brussels. This conference aspires to evaluate the impact of the First World War on the representations and discourses on gender and sexuality. The main objective is to consider the way intellectuals, philosophers, sociologists, doctors, psychologists or academics have experienced the war, and the way this experience has influenced their own ideas on the relations between the sexes. Via these trajectories of intellectuals, an evaluation will be made as to how dominant or minority discourses were able to be strengthened, changed or emerged as a result of the war.

Deadline to send in a resume (400 words): 15 December 2017

Download the PDF for the call for papers here.

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RESEARCH - A festive presentation of ten years of research on justice

On Friday the 22nd of September, the Interuniversity Attraction Pool (IAP) *Justice & Populations* will present the final results of ten years of research on the history of the Belgian judiciary and justice system in the Palace of Academies in Brussels (by invitation only). The CegeSoma is an active member of this IAP and has facilitated several projects, including Jan Julia Zurn's doctoral and postdoctoral research and the justice-themed branch of the virtual platform BELGIUM WWII, which will be online as from September the 28th.

CONFERENCES - Public and Applied History on the Battlefield of Europe

The first conference of the Jean Monnet network Applied Contemporary European History was held in November 2016. The network's scope is to deal with difficult or controversial issues of European history such as wars or experiences of violence. The objective is to contribute to the construction of a shared European history.

Conferences will be organized in the course of 2017-2019. The first will be held in Jena from 7 to 9 November 2017. More info.

EXHIBITION “ Exile in Belgium, of Past and Present

On the occasion of World Refugee Day on 20 June, Katharina Austilat, a German ASF volunteer at CegeSoma has presented the result of her research on the experiences of refugees of past and present with 11 other volunteers. The young volunteers have presented these trajectories in an exhibition organized by the Jewish Museum of Belgium. Visitors were introduced to the intimate circumstances of the refugees and were able to discover the experience of their flight via a short film.

NEW PUBLICATION on Human Rights between 1914 and 1940

In May 2017, Laurence Petrone published her book (in Dutch) 'Democratie in Crisis. Een anatomie van de buitengerechtigde vrijheidsberoving in West-Europa (1914-1940)'. The book compares Belgium, France and the Netherlands and analyses how states can drift towards non-democratic, repressive measures under pressure of crisis and war.

Violence In 20th-Century European History - European Conference ACCESSIBLE ONLINE

Between 6 and 8 June 2017, the European Remembrance and Solidarity Network organized its eight conference in the Brussels Palace of the Academies. This conference, with CegeSoma as co-organizer, had 'Violence' as an umbrella theme. Almost the entire conference is now accessible online.

JOURNAL OF BELGIAN HISTORY “ The first 2017 issue is now available

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The contributions in the first 2017 issue of the *Journal of Belgian History* “ of which two in French, and two in Dutch “ again bear testimony to the thematic variety of present-day research on Belgian history.

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NEW MANAGEMENT for CegeSoma

On 1 May, Nico Wouters was appointed as the new head of CegeSoma (the fourth operational division of the Belgian State Archives). His appointment marks the end of a long transition period in which CegeSoma was headed by interim directors. From now onwards, the institution will be able to fully develop its mission as a centre of expertise in public history, research, and valorization regarding the history of the two world wars and other twentieth-century conflicts.

NEW RESEARCH PROJECT “ The transition from war to peace in Brussels, 1918

In the coming months, CegeSoma will investigate one of the most turbulent periods in Belgian history: the transition from war to peace at the end of the First World War. For the purpose of an exhibition for the BELvue Museum (2018), we will focus on the last months of the German occupation in Brussels, as well as on the troubled societal context of the months surrounding the liberation. Furthermore, we want to retrace how the Belgian polity underwent crucial democratic reforms during this period. The daily life of the inhabitants of the Belgian capital - which was characterized by a peculiar combination of joy and grief - will be a prominent theme in the upcoming exhibition.

TRANSMEMO: New Research on the Memory of Collaboration and Resistance during the Second World War

In September 2017, the new research project TRANSMEMO will be launched. The project will examine the way in which memories of resistance and collaboration during the Second World War in Belgium were passed on from parents to children and grandchildren.

ARCHIVES – UGESCO project : High-quality Spatial-temporal Metadata for the Digitised Collections

On 1 April, CegeSoma, in coordination with a multidisciplinary team (Ghent University, Universit  Libre de Bruxelles, and KU Leuven), launched the UGESCO project (Upscaling the Geo-temporal Enrichment, Exploration and Exploitation of Scientific Collections). UGESCO is dedicated to improving the quality of geo-temporal metadata of digitized audiovisual collections.

ARCHIVES - Join our Team of Volunteers!

Are you retired and passionate by the history of Belgium? Or are you a student or recently graduate looking for useful experience to strengthen your cv? Do you have a heart for volunteering? The CegeSoma is looking for new volunteers to complement the existing team and offers you the opportunity to explore archives that are often closed to the public and to strengthen your archival competencies. Please contact: cegesoma@cegesoma.be or 02/556 92 11.

DIGITAL CATALOGUES - 3 tips to find more sources and references

The consultation of the digital catalogues of institutions such as the Royal Library, the State Archives and CegeSoma* is one of the first steps researchers take to reach an understanding of our history. Therefore, we give you three tips to find more references and digital sources in the catalogues of these institutions.

IAP Project – Murders during the Liberation and the Belgian Judiciary: the Case of Brussels – Multiform violence against collaborators

Everywhere in Europe, governments and citizens dealt with collaborators after the liberation in 1944-1945. This was done through legal institutional means by courts, but also in a more spontaneous and violent ways by members of resistance groups and citizens. In Belgium as well, real and alleged collaborators were taken prisoner, molested and in some cases murdered. There was also more symbolic violence: household goods were destroyed and homes were plastered with slogans. This street violence was a reaction against the many years of occupation, but it is today, and in some cases also at the time, considered unjust (and illegal).

NEW - Few changes made on our website to help you access our catalogues in an easier way

Dear users, the MADDLAIN research project is still being finalised but the CegeSoma is already applying a few of its outcomes to better meet your digital needs. A few changes were made to help you access our catalogues in an easier way.

The Cahiers d'histoire du temps pr sent and numerous other publications of CegeSoma at give-away prices

For a modest sum, it is still possible to acquire the majority of the *CHTP-BEG* as well as several studies and work instruments on Belgian 20th century history.

A Number of Periodicals Temporarily Unavailable

A number of periodicals published between 1940 and 1944 is momentarily being digitised by an outside firm and therefore momentarily inaccessible. If you wish to consult a periodical published between 1940 and 1944, it is advisable to contact Kathleen Vandenberghe beforehand to make sure it is available.
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Les "Journaux de Guerre"

This weekly periodical is unique in that it relates the history of the two World Wars and the interwar period through the press of these periods.