

CEGESOMA NEWSLETTER

NO 42 - DECEMBER 2018

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SITE BELGIUM WWII

You can now discover (and react to) the Blog which already has ten contributions where historians write about present-day topics and discussions related to the Second World War ! [\[MORE INFO\]](#)

http://www.cegesoma.be/cms/index_en.php?article=3822&pag0nbr=73&pagofs=0

INSPECTION OF THE COLLECTION

The CegeSoma reading room will be closed to the public between 7 and 18 January 2019 because of a general inspection of the library- and archival collections of the building in the Square de l'Aviation.

[\[MORE INFO\]](#) http://www.cegesoma.be/cms/index_en.php?article=3814

RESULTS OF THE CONTEST OF WW I ARCHIVES

The State Archives in Arlon have received the most votes ! [\[MORE INFO\]](#) <http://www.cegesoma.be>

/cms/index_en.php?article=3821&pag0nbr=73&pagofs=0

INVITATION

On 28 January 2019 there will be a unique musical spectacle at Bozar 'East West Street: A Song of Good and Evil', inspired by the book 'East West Street' by Philippe Sands, and on 29 January 2019 there is a conference with the author at the l'ULB. [\[MORE INFO\]](#) http://www.cegesoma.be/cms/index_en.php?article=3823

BOOK PRESENTATION

You are welcome at CegeSoma on 21 January 2019 to discover the latest publication (in French) by associated researcher Gerlinda Swillen 'La valise oubliée. Enfants de Guerre (1940-1945)'. [\[MORE INFO\]](#)

http://www.cegesoma.be/cms/index_en.php?article=3811



Welcome

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Belgium WWII, a reference website but also a blog!



Since a couple of weeks now, the website "Belgium WWII" is complemented by a [blog](#).

Indeed, it seemed crucial to us to be able to take part in the debates and controversies surrounding the Second World War by adding this option to the encyclopedic function of the website, and to present new projects or archival holdings that may incite new research or shed new light on older issues.



About a dozen articles from historians across the country are already available online.

They address some touchy issues, among which [the attitude of the Belgian railway company SNCB/NMBS during the occupation](#) for example. The Dutch authorities have recently decided to compensate Dutch victims and their heirs for the participation of the national railway company in the deportation of the Jews. But what about Belgium?

Nico Wouters reminds us that this issue – despite what several media outlets have falsely claimed – has already been addressed through research within the framework of "*La Belgique docile*" / "*Gewillig België*". He also underlines that this issue must be addressed in a broader perspective, with regard to the attitude of the Belgian authorities and the weakness of our democratic institutions in an authoritarian context.

A key aspect and benefit of this blog is that it allows us to contribute to the considerations about which place the Second World War and its commemoration should take within Belgian society today. Which progress was made with regard to historiography and to symbolism, expressed for example through toponymy? **Bruno De Wever** looks back on [the evolution of historiography in the past 30 years and presents recent research](#) while underlining the necessity to investigate the impact of the war through research at individual and family level. It is obvious that public interest in the war evolves and that the impact of remembrance or the absence thereof must be taken into account in future research.

With regard to toponymy, **Marnix Beyen** and **Chantal Kesteloot** remind us how much this aspect can be burdensome, either by being present or by being absent, as this is revelatory of the place that public authorities and municipalities want to allot to our past in the public space. Toponymy goes beyond the context of war actually, as a number of disputes about our colonial history has shown.

The blog also highlights research projects such as the one undertaken by historian **Michèle Corthals** who is writing a thesis about [women in the Resistance](#).

Delving into new archival holdings or making them more accessible also allows us to shed new light on certain issues and protagonists. In times when the relevance of provinces is questioned, **Bart Willems** underlines the richness of [the provincial archives of Antwerp with regard to the Second World War](#). They allow us to carry out research on fundamental topics such as mayor and aldermen nominations, public order and supplies, bombings – which were particularly numerous and deadly in this province – and issues related to repression.

[On the basis of a reflection about the concept of genocide, and why it is not used by Belgian tribunals both in the judgements of war criminals after 1945 and the "Rwanda" trial](#), **Ornella Rovetta** draws our attention to the rich archives processed within the framework of the "Jusinbelgium" project that are now accessible via the database "Legal Tools". This database makes international penal justice more accessible.

The importance of archives is central to **Geertje Elaut's** contribution, which fits in perfectly with the previous one. She addresses this question in the broader context of the issue of human rights ([Archief als wapen tegen straffeloosheid?](#)).

In short, the blog is conceived as a space for information and debate about all topics related to the history of the Second World War. Unlike the publications on the rest of the website, articles on the blog are only available in their original language in order to allow for a quicker publication.

Do you want to contribute? Feel free to send us your article.

Do you want to keep informed or to comment on articles? Check our blog regularly and leave comments via: belgiumwwii@arch.be. Get busy!

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From Tuesday to Friday
without interruption from 9 a.m.
to 4.30 p.m.

[Military History Museum WWI Press Retrievable Online](#)

[Third Public History Encounter at the CegeSoma](#)

[Double invitation CegeSoma by CIVA](#)

[FWO – 'Research Grant' for research about the civic purge](#)



DISCLAIMER

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Inventory of the collections in the CegeSoma depot

From Monday 7 January to Friday 18 January 2019, the CegeSoma will carry out a stock taking of its collections conserved at *Square de l'Aviation/Luchtvaartsquare*.



What does this operation imply?

During two weeks, our personnel will verify the integrity of our library and archive holdings.

This operation provides the opportunity to sort books and archives and to put those that were stored at the wrong place back where they belong and to identify items that are missing...

At the end of this operation, the reading room will re-open on Tuesday 22 January and we will be pleased to welcome you again and to provide you even better service!

During this operation, the reading room of the Archives Service for War Victims will remain accessible during its usual opening hours.

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The State Archives in Arlon win 'archives' competition about First World War

On the occasion of the centenary of the First World War Armistice, several State Archives repositories (among which CegeSoma) have selected one document from that period of time that best symbolizes the transition from war to peace.

The public then was able to choose from these documents the one they liked most via an online form on the State Archives website and on the CegeSoma website.



Photographs of German withdrawal and American soldiers in Arlon. State Archives in Arlon, Œuvre nationale des invalides de guerre (ONIG). Section Arlon-Virton (photos by Jos David, photographer in Arlon). (E/4/025), no. 5. © State Archives.

The photographs of the German withdrawal and the American soldiers in Arlon proposed by the State Archives in Arlon received most votes from the public.

The lucky winner of the drawing among the voters received a publication of his choice from the webshop of the State Archives.

For more information about the First World War :

- visit [the CegeSoma exhibition 'Brussels, November 1918. From War to Peace' at BELvue Museum until 6 January 2019](#);

or

- consult [the archives about the First World War conserved at the State Archives](#);

or

- view over [6,000 photographs about the First World War online](#);

or

- discover [the album about the centenary of the First World War](#) on the Facebook page of the State Archives.

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East West Street? A book, a play, and considerations ...

An event of the International Chair for the History of World War II – 2019 edition.

The CegeSoma is particularly pleased to be associated to the International Chair for the History of World War II (Baron Velge Prize) for an exceptional performance in Belgium of [East West Street: A Song of Good and Evil](#), an acclaimed piece inspired by Philippe Sands' book East West Street (Penguin/Randomhouse 2016).



Author and human rights lawyer Philippe Sands delves into his family history and explores the origins of genocide and crimes against humanity.

Focussing on the remarkable, connected stories of his grandfather and three key individuals in the Nuremberg Trials – Cambridge academic Hersch Lauterpacht, Polish prosecutor Raphael Lemkin, and Hitler's lawyer Hans Frank – the story brings us to the heart of the international criminal prosecution system.

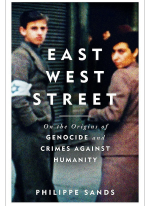
This personal exploration of the origins of modern justice is brought to life and narrated by Katja Rietmann and Philippe Sands, complemented by pictures from archives and accompanied by the music that connected the men, from Bach and Beethoven, to Rachmaninov and Leonard Cohen, interpreted by leading bass-baritone Laurent Naouri and renowned jazz pianist Guillaume de Chassy, and directed by one of Britain's leading young directors of opera, Nina Brazier.

This unique and exceptional performance will be staged at the Bozar chamber music hall (Hall M) on Monday 28 January 2019. Tickets are exceptionally available at € 10 (€ 5 for students).

The following day, on **Tuesday 29 January 2019**, Philippe Sands will hold a conference entitled "East West Street, then and now" **at 10.00 am at ULB, R42.4.502 (Solbosch Campus).**

Each year, the International Chair for the History of World War II awards the Baron Velge Prize to a researcher for his or her contribution to the history of this period.

This year, Philippe Sands is honoured both for his book East West Street and for the piece presented in Brussels on this occasion. In the past, this prize was already awarded to researchers such as Filippo Focardi, Timothy Snyder or Pawel Machcewicz, the dismissed director of the Museum of the Second World War in Gdansk.



Get your tickets for this exceptional performance now.

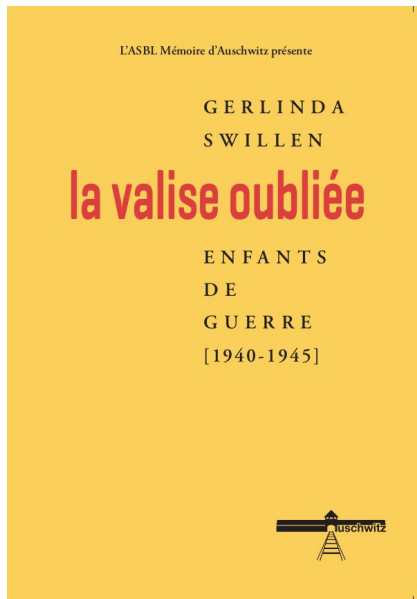
You can already discover East West Street, a fascinating publication that is a history book, a thriller and a testimony at the same time. It addresses issues such as chance, encounters, silence and the special nature of Lemberg in the 20th century.

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'La valise oubliée. Enfants de guerre (1940-1945)'. Interview of the author of the book, Gerlinda Swillen by Alain Colignon.

Touchy, sometimes difficult and often unknown, such is the history of children born from romances between Belgian women and Wehrmacht soldiers.

The CegeSoma (State Archives) and the Auschwitz Foundation – Remembrance of Auschwitz are pleased to invite you to the presentation of the latest book by Dr Gerlinda Swillen titled '*La valise oubliée. Enfants de guerre (1940-1945)*' * on the occasion of which the author will be interviewed by Alain Colignon.



The Auschwitz Foundation - Remembrance of Auschwitz contributes to the publication of scientific and pedagogical works to keep memory alive. This study intends to preserve the memory of children born of war by giving them a voice.

The stories of these lives in search for identity are riddled with heavy silence, animosity, and sometimes deep suffering.

These life stories are pieced together step by step, through conversations, discoveries of hidden letters, forgotten photographs... In almost all of these stories, the father is a deep mystery, a secret preciously guarded within the family.

Gerlinda Swillen was born in 1942 in Ostend. Her father was a Wehrmacht soldier and her mother a Belgian governess.

She has been a teacher for almost 40 years (1963-2002).

Today, she is associated researcher at CegeSoma/State Archives and scientific collaborator at *Vrije Universiteit Brussel (VUB)*.

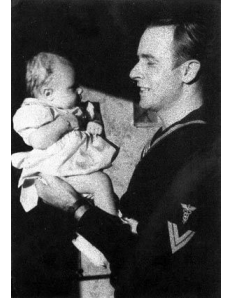
She is also the founder and former president of the Association of Belgian War Children (2008-2013).

Furthermore, she was the first spokeswoman of the Born Of War international network from 2009 to 2013.

In 2010, she acquired the German nationality, thereby becoming the first Belgian war child to be given this nationality.



'Elisabeth with the photo of her father', Fonds Elisabeth Erika Charlier : enfants de guerre, [1940-1945], photo n° 262519, © State Archives.



'With his father' Fonds Norbert Delanghe : enfants de guerre, [1940-1945], photo n° 261811, © State Archives.

In 2016, she was awarded a doctorate in History from *VUB* for her thesis about Belgian war children in WWII titled '*Verwekt door de Tweede Wereldoorlog. Oorlogskinderen op de as Brussel-Berlijn*'.

The author will be signing copies after the presentation of her latest publication. The book is on sale for € 15.00.

This conference (in French) will take place **in the conference room of CegeSoma on Monday 21 January 2019 at 2.30 p.m.** (Square de l'Aviation, 29 - 1070 Brussels).

Registration is required: asbl-vzw.cegesoma@arch.be or 02.556.92.11

Do not hesitate to bring other interested persons !

* This book is the translation of '*Koekoekskind. Verwekt door de oorlog (1940-1945)*' published by Meulenhof-Manteau in 2009.

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