

CEGESOMA NEWSLETTER

NO 51 - DECEMBER 2019

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WEBSITE OF CEGESOMA

Discover our new website ! Structured around three themes, with a more user-friendly access to our rich collections [\[MORE INFO\]](#) (<https://www.cegesoma.be/en/news/cegesoma-site-has-new-look>)

JOURNAL OF BELGIAN HISTORY

A new double thematic issue about 75 years of history of the Second World War in Belgium. [\[MORE INFO\]](#)
(<https://www.cegesoma.be/en/news/anniversary-issue-rbhc-75-years-second-world-war-history>)

YOUNG HISTORIANS CONFERENCE

We look back at the contributions presented during this rich conference. [\[MORE INFO\]](#)
(<https://www.cegesoma.be/en/event/conference-%E2%80%98young-historians%E2%80%99-2018-2019>)

THE BELGIUM WWII SITE AND ITS BLOG

Discover the many new articles and contributions about history and about current debates. [\[MORE INFO\]](#)
(<https://www.cegesoma.be/en/news/belgium-wwii-new-content-our-blog-and-our-website>)

CONFERENCE IN THE SENATE

A first round-up of the CegeSoma conference on 10 December 2019. [\[MORE INFO\]](#)
(<https://www.cegesoma.be/en/event/study-day-occasion-50th-anniversary-cegesoma-and-75th-anniversary-liberation>)

CLOSING DAYS AT THE END OF THE YEAR

An overview of the closing days of the reading room and CegeSoma. [\[MORE INFO\]](#)
(<https://www.cegesoma.be/en/news/24122019-exceptional-closure-reading-room>)

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The Cegesoma site has a new look!

A new site, but what has changed?



After operating for several years with a classic website, CegeSoma has decided to convert it into a new, more user-friendly and dynamic site based on three distinct themes: World War I, World War II and War & Society.

In addition to this new focus, the new site concentrates on the richness of the institution's archival collections, interviews and images without forgetting the other sites that promote and display the collections of CegeSoma and the State Archives.

Through this change, we hope to offer more personalized support for those visiting the site in responding to their questions and permitting them to discover and rediscover the archives of Cegesoma.

The web address has not changed : <https://www.cegesoma.be/>

You will soon be able to find a form on the site that will allow you to give us feedback and comments in regard to navigation.

Enjoy your research !

Other news

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[Anniversary issue of the RBHC on 75 years of the Second World War history](#)

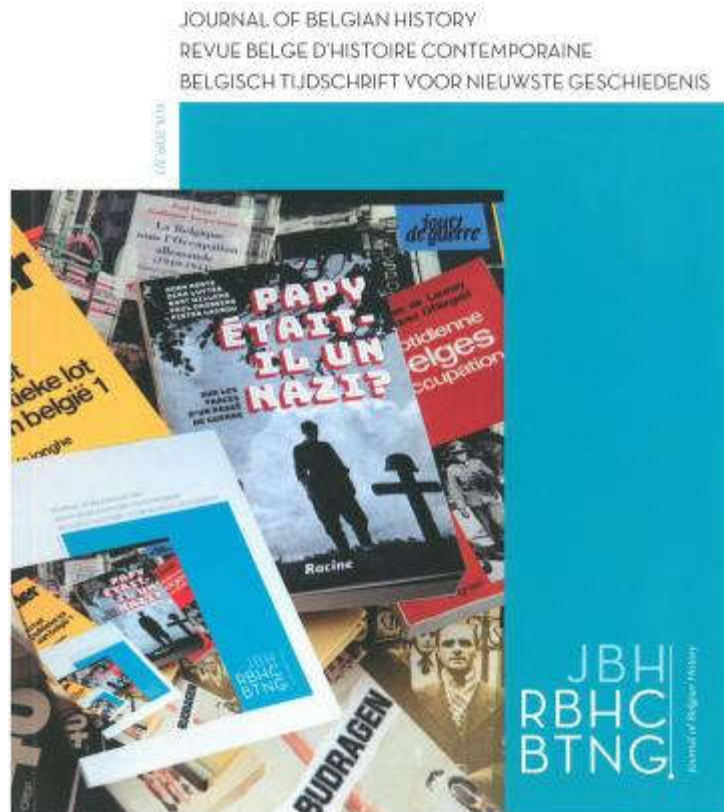
[Belgium WWII: New content on our blog and our website](#)

Focus on the Resistance

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Anniversary issue of the RBHC on 75 years of the Second World War history



The new (double) issue of the Journal of Belgian History (JBH) was released to the public on December 10, 2019, during an anniversary conference in the Belgian Senate.

No less than three anniversaries coincide with this new publication : the 50th anniversary of the JBH, the 50th anniversary of the Centre for War and Contemporary Society (CegeSoma), and the 75th anniversary of the Liberation of Belgium. We therefore didn't have to look far to find the central theme of this issue : 75 years of history of the Second World War in Belgium.

This publication contains sixteen contributions written by twenty-one authors (in Dutch, French and English), and it draws up a critical overview of the historiography of the Second World War in Belgium. How did this historiography establish itself, where are we today, and what are the future challenges?

Many colleagues from the State Archives authored contributions. Nico Wouters (CegeSoma) drafted the introductory article on 75 years of historiography. Dirk Luyten (CegeSoma) examined the historiography of economic collaboration (and its repression). Several contributions scrutinize the archives: Filip Strubbe (State Archives) discusses the archives of the National Corporation for Agriculture and Food, Pierre-Alain Tallier (State Archives / ARA2) focuses on the archives on damages of the war, Michaël Amara (State Archives) deals with the archives on the administrative cleansing, and the trio composed of Gertjan Desmet (CegeSoma), Geertje Elaut (State Archives) and Johannes Van de Walle (ARA2) concentrate on the archives of military justice. Other colleagues took a critical look at other aspects of the story: Alain Colignon (CegeSoma) took stock of the institution's library collection, Florence Gillet (CegeSoma) examines the digitalization of the archives, Chantal Kesteloot (CegeSoma) reviews the commemorations of 1994-1995, and Fabrice Maerten (CegeSoma) focuses on oral history. Luis Angel Bernardo y Garcia (ARA2) and Benoît Majerus (University of Luxembourg) reflect on the links between the First World War and the Second World War.

The journal also focusses on the history of CegeSoma itself, through two remarkable contributions dedicated to two of its former directors. Peter Romijn (NIOD) and Bruno De Wever (UGent) interviewed Rudi Van Doorslaer. Martin Conway and Pieter Lagrou offer an overview of José Gotovitch's career. The issue further also includes several personal reflections of external academics, such as those of Marnix Beyen (UAntwerpen), Cécile Vast (The Museum of Resistance and Deportation in Besançon, France), Ismee Tames and Peter Romijn (both from NIOD, Amsterdam).

The core of this anniversary issue lies with the debate section and contributions in the form of reflective essays. Academics do not shy away from adopting sometimes provocative or self-critical personal positions. 75 years after the liberation, the history of the Second World War remains pertinent in Belgium. This issue will surely continue to serve as a basis for further debates in the forthcoming years.

This edition is available for € 25.00, and can be ordered by e-mail at hilde.keppens@arch.be. For additional information on the RBHC: www.journalbelgianhistory.be

Other news

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Conference of 'Young historians' 2018-2019

A rich edition

[World War I](#) [World War II](#) [Colloquium](#)



Each year, CegeSoma (State Archives) organises a conference for recently graduated historians in which they are given the opportunity to present their MA-research. The topics are in line with the key-themes of CegeSoma : the First World War and the Second World War. The conference is open to the public : students, researchers, journalists, amateur historians etc.

On 28 November 2019, some twenty students from different Belgian universities were selected based on the quality of their master's thesis. Our colleagues [Pierre-Alain Tallier](#), [Dirk Luyten](#), [Geneviève Warland](#) and [Bart Willems](#) moderated the debates. Attached, you can find the summaries of the papers presented.

The morning session was dedicated to the First World War:

Célestine HOTELET presented a paper about [the reconstruction of the city-centre of Namur after the war](#), Gilles DE BEUCKELAER analysed [the committees for refugee children in Tilburg during the First World War](#), Benjamin BRULARD revisited [the history of the Spanish Influenza in occupied Belgium](#), Linde GOOSSENS drew

[a portrait of the city of Ypres in the wake of the war](#) and Arnaud SOUDRON examined [the phenomenon of prostitution in Charleroi](#).

Charles LUX presented [the context of the prosecution of German war criminals in Belgium after 1945](#), Aline THOMAS recorded [the traces of the war in public space at Roulers](#), Cécilia WANEKEM put [the stakes of a recognition of the Armenian genocide into perspective](#) and Robin VAN DAMME dove into [the history of the Brialmont forts in Liège from 1888 to 1940](#).

The afternoon session was dedicated to the Second World War:

Kobe DE GEYTER presented a paper about [Belgians fleeing to Portugal](#), Hannah FLUIT gave a lecture about [the national revolution and food shortages in France under the Vichy regime](#), Louis FORTEMPS and Vincent GABRIEL explained the role of [Geheime Feldpolizei - Gruppe 530](#) and [Geheime Feldpolizei - Gruppe 648](#) respectively, and Emmanuel VERMEIRE analysed [the role of the Secret Army in Groot-Oosterzele](#).

Juliette LINARD DE GUERTECHIN described [the manner in which children of war prisoners have experienced the separation from their fathers](#), Géromine POULAIN presented the results of her research into [the social and medical care for agents of the Intelligence and Action Service after the war](#), and Maurane BAERT revisited [the war commemoration environments in Beerse, Merksplas and Rijkevorsel](#). To conclude, Charlène CRAHAY presented her study of [how imprisoned collaborators were treated in the immediate aftermath of the war](#).

All of these papers illustrate the rich potential for new research about both World Wars, often based on numerous archive holdings only recently available for research.



28/11/2019 - 09:15 to 17:30

TAGS

[Local history](#) [Childhood](#) [Everyday life](#) [Commemorations](#) [Social history](#) [Resistance](#)
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Belgium WWII: New content on our blog and our website



Launched in September 2017, our website www.belgiumwwii.be continues to cogently serve our mission: making reliable historical information available to the broader public in a clear and accessible manner. Mission accomplished: more than 14,000 people visited the website in November 2019 !

The articles are authored by historians from all universities of the country. The articles on the website are in French or Dutch. They are peer reviewed by other historians prior to online publication. The articles on the blog however, are not translated. The opinions expressed in these texts, are the responsibility of the respective authors. As such they provoke further debate - so feel free to join in and take part.

The initial articles were mainly about collaboration and post-war repression on the one hand and the judiciary on the other hand. They were then complemented by the history of the resistance and key military aspects. Among the those recently made available online, some articles were about [the Battle of the Bulge](#) by Alain Colignon, and about [the Irish Brigades](#) and [military strategies](#) by professor Jean-Michel Sterkendries. In a couple of days, an article penned by Dirk Luyten will look back on the major challenges of the Social Pact adopted in December 1944. More articles will be published in 2020.

Since September 2018, we also have a blog. The aim is to focus on societal debates about the history and legacy of the Second World War. Thirty-nine contributions are now already online. Click on "[blog](#)" to view them.

They are listed in inverse chronological order: the latest articles are displayed at the top of the list and the earliest ones at the bottom. Historian Babette Weyns has authored several articles in response to the series "Kinderen van het Verzet" (Children of the Resistance). Nico Wouters proposes a series of interesting reflexions about the role of historians in society, remembrance education, and the place of emotions in History. Florence Rasmont looks back on a topic that was more extensively covered by the media recently: the historiography of French-speaking Belgium and the deployment of Walloons to the Eastern Front. Further articles are about the new exhibition rooms of the Museum of the Armed Forces (Wannes Devos) and the memory of the Resistance in French-speaking Belgium (Chantal Kesteloot).

In short, this is a cutting-edge website about the history and legacy of WWII, that is constantly updated. If you wish to keep up with the latest developments and articles published online, feel free to follow us on the CegeSoma Facebook page.

Chantal Kesteloot

Other news

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Study day on the occasion of the 50th anniversary of CegeSoma and the 75th anniversary of the Liberation

'The legacy of the Second World War in Belgium. A future for history?'

[War and Society](#) [World War II](#) [Colloquium](#)



On December 10, 2019, 200 people attended the study day at the Senate on the occasion of the 50th anniversary of the Centre for War and Contemporary Society (CegeSoma – State Archives).

Nico Wouters (head of CegeSoma) gave a five-point overview of 75 years of history and presented the thematic 'anniversary edition' of the Belgian Review of Contemporary History. His presentation was followed by two international perspectives, one from the Netherlands and the other from France: Ismee Tames (NIOD-Amsterdam) spoke about the complex triangular relationship between research, the public and the media and Cécile Vast (Museum of Resistance and Deportation of Besançon) spoke about the importance of archives resulting from research.

In the afternoon, Dirk Luyten moderated the panel discussion on the relationship between research and sources with guests Bruno De Wever (UGent), Pierre-Alain Tallier (State Archives), Pieter Lagrou (ULB) and Sophie De Schaepdrijver (Penn State University). Overall conclusion: there is still a lot of work to be done!

The second panel discussion, moderated by Chantal Kesteloot, was devoted to public history. José Gotovitch (former director of CegeSoma), Franky Bostyn (War Heritage Institute), Koen Aerts (UGent) and Anne Roekens (UNamur) discussed, among other aspects, the role of emotion in history and the tensions between commemoration and history.

The plenary debate with the many participants was far too short and showed the diversity of the issues. The speeches focused in particular on the many gaps in research, but also on the tensions between memory (and the duty to remember) and history. Karel Velle (Director General of the State Archives) underlined at the end of the day the many perspectives for the future.

And now...?

The last word has not yet been said. The time for debate was too short. In the coming weeks and months, we will review the results of this study day: through the publication of certain presentations, a photo report, reflections on the blog www.belgiumwwii.be and new activities. You can already find [the thematic anniversary edition of the RBHC \(No. 2-3 of 2019\)](#). It includes sixteen texts by 21 authors about 75 years of history of the Second World War in Belgium.



10/12/2019 - 09:15 to 17:00

Main language

Dutch
French

RELATED LINKS

[The program of the day](#)

TAGS

[Commemorations](#) [Liberation](#) [Transnationalism](#) [Public history](#) [Memories](#) [Archives](#) [Media](#)

[Public debate](#)

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