

CEGESOMA - State Archives

NEWSLETTER

No 111 - March 2026



NEWS

READING ROOM

The reading room at CegeSoma and the Archives Service for War Victims will be closed on Tuesday, 7 April and Thursday, 9 April 2026 due to staff shortages. We appreciate your understanding. To find out where and how to access our collections, visit our website.

[► Read More](#)

CEGESOMA IS NOW ON INSTAGRAM!

This new platform allows us to share our news, projects, and what's happening behind the scenes at CegeSoma. We invite you to check it out and follow us: <https://www.instagram.com/cegesoma.be/> See you on Instagram!

WEERAL WO2?!

Nico Wouters (CegeSoma/State Archives) and Koen Aerts (UGent, Archiefpunt) have launched a new bimonthly podcast series in Dutch offering a critical look at the history of World War II and our collective memory. The first episode is now online!

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ON THE AGENDA

Dag van de Nieuwste Geschiedenis 2026 Journée de l'Histoire Contemporaine

Ctrl-Alt-History:

(Digital) Humanities meets AI

Woensdag 29 April
Mercredi 29 Avril

University of Antwerp, Stadscampus
Convention Center Hof van Liere
Prinsstraat 13, 2000 Antwerpen

Keynote speaker: **Frédéric Clavert** 6 panels, 2 workshops
Receptie / Réception: 18h

Registratie / Inscription:
Deadline: 22/04/2026

BVNG-lid / Membre ABHC: Gratis / Gratuit
Studenten / Etudiants: €10
Niet-lid / Non-membre: €25

Contact: info@contemporaines.be

CTRL-ALT-HISTORY: (DIGITAL) HUMANITIES MEETS AI

Join us on 29 April 2026 at the University of Antwerp for the Day of Contemporary History, focusing on the opportunities, risks, and challenges of AI for (Belgian) historical research, heritage management, and education.

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PUBLICATION

GERMAN POW CAMPS

Check out the inventory of the Georges Lebrun collection on the living conditions of Belgian and Allied soldiers in German prisoner-of-war camps during World War II.

► [Read More](#)



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Exceptional closure of the reading room



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Other news

[Inventory of the Georges Lebrun Collection on living conditions for Belgian and Allied soldiers in German POW camps during World War II](#)

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Weeral WO2?! A new podcast series on World War II.



From 25 March 2026, Nico Wouters and Koen Aerts will launch a bimonthly podcast series in Dutch offering a critical look at the history of Second World War and our collective memory.

While memories fade, this podcast goes back to the facts and original sources. The main question is: as a society, what meaning do we want assign to this key event in our history today?

The first episode asks: 'Was the resistance in Flanders really weaker than in French-speaking Belgium, and why?' In the following episodes, the series discusses whether the repression was truly anti-Flemish and if 8 May should become a public holiday; it also examines the history and portrayal of the 20th Jewish convoy and includes an interview with author Tom Lanoye about his novel 'De Draaischijf'.



Weeral WO2?! is a podcast created by Nico Wouters, Koen Aerts, and Roel Daenen, in collaboration with the Faculty of Arts and Philosophy at Ghent University, with support from Archiefpunt, Cegesoma (State



Archives of Belgium), and FARO, the Flemish support center for cultural heritage.

Weeral WO2?! is available on Spotify, Apple Podcast and at www.weeralwo2.be

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Ctrl-Alt-History: (Digital) Humanities meets AI

Contemporary History Day 2026

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Ctrl-Alt-History:

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Verantwoordelijk uitgever | Editeur responsable: BVNG-ABHC

BVNG **ABHC** **University of Antwerp** **Vlaanderen verbeeldt werk**

Registration for Contemporary History Day 2026 now open!

Following the BELvue Museum, which hosted the Contemporary History Day two years ago around the theme “On the Margins of History,” this year’s edition will take place at the **University of Antwerp** on **Wednesday, 29 April 2026**. The aim of this study day is to bring together the various participants to reflect collectively on a pressing issue in contemporary history. This year’s theme, “**Ctrl-Alt-History: (Digital) Humanities meets AI**,” was chosen to encourage discussion on **artificial intelligence (AI)** and **digital tools**.

In the last couple of years, Artificial Intelligence (AI) has become a central reference point and even buzzword within (digital) humanities. In almost every research proposal at universities and archives, the AI possibilities and capabilities are (over)emphasized, while those same institutions struggle with its limitations and pitfalls, not in the least with the environmental consequences of its widespread use. AI impacts how research is understood, conducted, valorised, and funded. Its fast-changing abundance of digital tools—from text analysis and image recognition to generative applications—is quickly altering the way historians, archivists, and teachers deal with the past and translate it to the present.

Yet, no substantial debate has taken place on a national level to understand how these processes affect our fields, professions, and society. This 2026 edition of the **Contemporary History Day**, organised by the **Belgische Vereniging voor Nieuwste Geschiedenis – Association belge d'Histoire contemporaine BVNG-ABHC** and the **University of Antwerp**, aims to focus on the use of AI in (Belgian) historical research, heritage management, and education, and to provide a forum for exploring the opportunities, risks, and challenges of AI within the Belgian

historical landscape

You will find here the schedule for the day and all the practical information.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact us at the following email address info@contemporanea.be



29/04/2026 - 08:30 to 19:00

PRACTICAL INFORMATION

Where : University of Antwerp - Stadscampus - Convention Center Hof van Liere - Prinsstraat 13 - 2000 Antwerpen

When : Wednesday 29 April 2026 - from 8:30 am to 7:00 pm

Registration fees: Free for members of the Belgian Association for Contemporary History, €10 for students, and €25 for non-members.

You may register **until 22 April 2026 latest** via the 'Registration form' link below. Once you have paid the registration fee, your completed form will act as your reservation.

Main language

Dutch

English

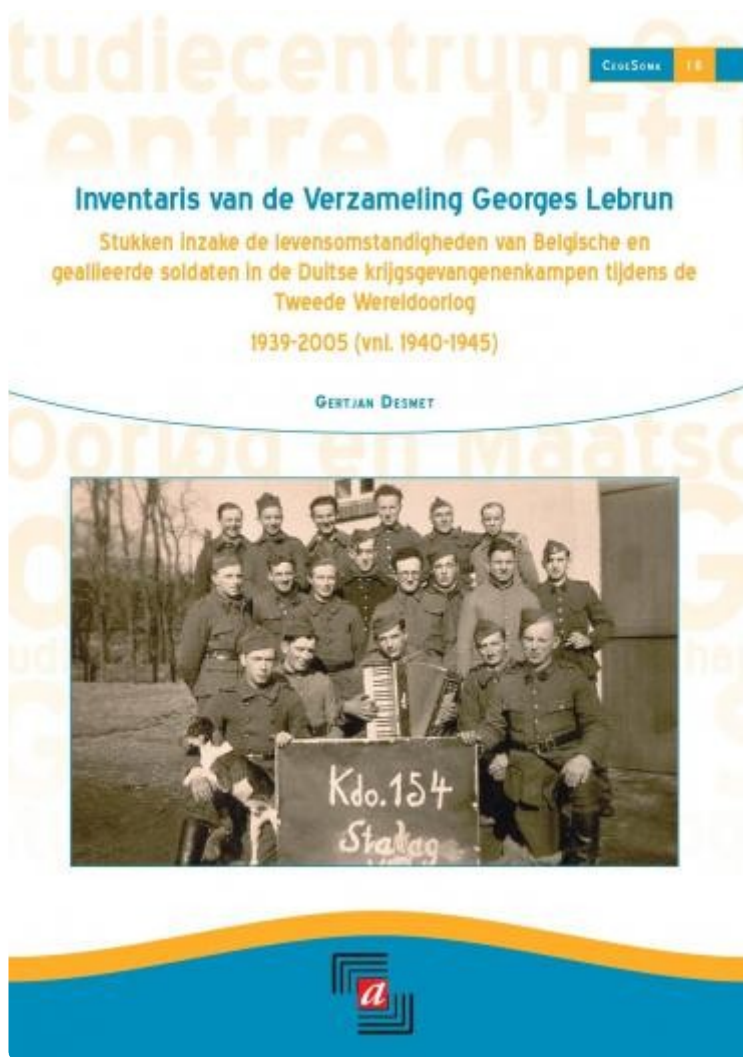
French

REGISTRATION FORM

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Inventory of the Georges Lebrun Collection on living conditions for Belgian and Allied soldiers in German POW camps during World War II



In 2023, Georges Lebrun donated to CegeSoma a remarkable collection of archival materials from German prisoner-of-war camps during World War II. To build this collection, he drew data from '*Le grand livre d'or du prisonnier de guerre belge, 1940-1945*' then contacted former prisoners of war and their families, primarily in Flemish and Walloon Brabant, asking if they still possessed any archives he could obtain.

This collection consists almost exclusively of items documenting the experiences of Belgian prisoners of war, primarily French-speaking, but also French, Polish, and Yugoslav. Most of the materials consist of correspondence received by the prisoners themselves and letters they wrote to their wives, other family members, relatives, and friends. The collection also includes some five hundred photographs taken in POW camps: group portraits, as well as scenes of sporting and cultural life in the camps. Finally, it also contains, to a lesser extent, items such as ration cards, identity documents, notes, certificates, etc.

These documents shed very interesting light on living conditions in German POW camps.

The inventory compiled by Gertjan Desmet (Inventaris van de Verzameling Georges Lebrun. Stukken inzake de levensomstandigheden van Belgische en geallieerde soldaten in de Duitse krijgsgevangenenkampen tijdens de Tweede Wereldoorlog, Brussels, 2026) is accessible online via [AGATHA](#) and [can also be downloaded for free in PDF format](#).

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