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CEGESOMA - State Archives

NEWSLETTER

No 67 - June 2021



NEWS

VISITING THE READING ROOM & THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

From now on you can book your place in our reading room more easily via the reservation system of the State Archives.

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RESISTANCE IN FRANCOPHONE BELGIUM AND FLANDERS

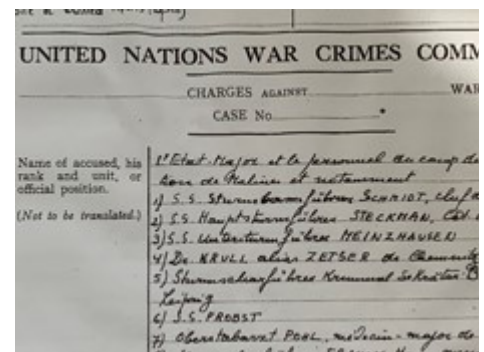
Two specialists, Nico Wouters and Fabrice Maerten, look at some of the differences and similarities between the resistance in the north and south of the country.

► [Read more & watch the videos](#)

BELGIUM WWII

A series of new articles about the provincial governors, Justice, diplomacy and specific important events... as well as reflections about Zedelgem and Frantz Van Dorpe that show the ongoing societal interest of the Second World War.

► [Read more](#)



MOVING OUR ARCHIVAL COLLECTIONS

Stay up-to-date about the moving of our archival collections.

► [Read more](#)

FOCUS ON THE COLLECTIONS

WORKS ABOUT CONCENTRATION CAMPS IN OUR LIBRARY COLLECTION

Discover some of the important works in our collection about this complex subject.

► [Read more & watch the video](#)



AGENDA



STUDY DAY ADOCHS

The program of the study day 'Image & Data Processing in the Cultural Heritage Sector' on 14 September is online and you can register now.

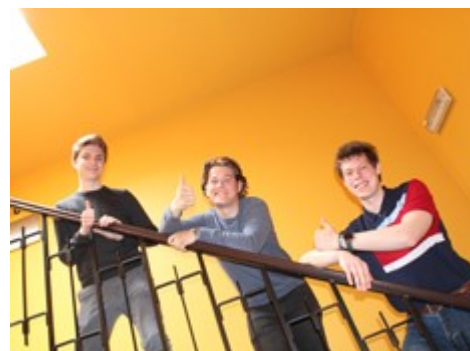
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THEY CHOSE CEGESOMA - STATE ARCHIVES

MAXIMILIAN, FLORIAN & MATTHIAS

Looking back at the experiences of three young Austrian and German volunteers who worked at CegeSoma for a year.

► [Watch the video](#)



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The Resistance in Belgium: a debate



On the occasion of Heritage Day on 24 April 2021, the Peace Center of the city of Antwerp invited Nico Wouters to give a lecture on the Resistance during WWII in and around the city of Antwerp. You can see the entire lecture [here](#).

This lecture opens an interesting debate on the differences between the resistance in French-speaking Belgium and Flanders. CegeSoma therefore launches a series of short films in which resistance expert [Fabrice Maerten](#) (author of « [Was Grandpa a Hero?](#) ») responds to some of the theses made by [Nico Wouters](#).

To find out more, watch the debate of these two experts below.

Regards croisés sur la résistance en Belgique. Het verzet in...



In this lecture Nico Wouters mainly focuses on the development of several large armed resistance organizations: the Belgian Legion (later Secret Army), the Independence Front and the White Brigade/Fidelio. He also briefly mentions organizations such as the Zéro intelligence service, the Socrate organization (which provided help to people in hiding), Group G, the resistance in the trade unions of enterprises located in and around the port of Antwerp the trade union resistance in Antwerp and the "crossroads" of resistance organizations at the Colonial University in Antwerp.

In his lecture, Nico Wouters also comes to some general theses about the resistance in Flanders, which was significantly weaker than in French-speaking Belgium. Without denying that big difference, he does want to nuance it. He argues for research from the "bottom up," at the regional or urban level. This kind of research maps out the role of individuals and it places organized resistance in a concrete social context. It can perhaps help nuance the dominant vision of a weak resistance in Flanders. For example, the Greater Antwerp area was an extremely dangerous environment for the resistance. The metropolitan political and economic elite was in a policy of cooperation with the German occupiers from 1940 onwards. The resistance was able to penetrate sectors and services where collaborators and German agents were also present. The Antwerp resistance - possibly even more so than in other major cities - had to exercise a special kind of restraint and caution. The situation in Antwerp may help explain why the armed resistance in Flanders was not always eager to recruit many people, or more reticent in the use of overt violence such as attacks.

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Belgium WWII, from governors to post-war justice

Requisitoire de l'Etat (après)

UNITED NATIONS WAR CRIMES COMMISSION

CHARGES AGAINST..... WAR CRIMINALS

CASE No.....*

Name of accused, his rank and unit, or official position. (Not to be translated.)	
	L'Etat-Major et le personnel du camp de concentration de Malines et notamment
	1) S.S. Sturmsturmführer SCHMIDT, chef de camp
	2) S.S. Hauptsturmführer STECKMAN, Cdt en second
	3) S.S. Untersturmführer HEINZHAUSEN
	4) Dr KRULL alias ZETSER de Chemnitz
	5) Sturmscharführer Kriminal Sekretär BODEN de Leipzig
	6) S.S. PROBST
	7) Oberstabsarzt POHL, médecin-major de la Wehrmacht
	8) Sturmscharführer FRANK Hans, successeur de Schmidt

As the summer holidays approach, the Belgium WWII website offers you a series of new features that will allow you to discover various aspects of the history of Belgium during the Second World War.

Provincial governors, a little-known but essential cog in the wheel

The provincial governors are among the little-known administrative and political cogs of the Belgian administration. During the occupation, however, these positions were coveted by the New Order formations as they sought to come to power. Several portraits of governors are now online: [Georges Devos](#), [Jan Grauls](#), [Georges Petit](#), [Antoine Leroy](#), [Jozef Lysens](#), [Albert Houtart](#). The list is far from being closed: others will follow...!

Volunteers on the Eastern Front

On several occasions, the question of [volunteers'](#) involvement with Nazi Germany on the Eastern Front has been the subject of news debate. Who were they? Why did they leave? What do we know exactly about their involvement locally? In a new entry, Nico Wouters reviews what we know about these volunteers.

Significant events

The Belgium WWII website also looks back at several events that marked the history of the occupation and its aftermath. In April 1941, what could be described as Antwerp's "[Kristallnacht](#)" took place, although there were no deaths recorded. A month later, several thousand workers crossed their arms, an unprecedented phenomenon known as the "[Strike of the 100,000](#)". Following the Wehrmacht's invasion of the Soviet Union on 22 June 1941, the occupying forces launched "[Operation Sonnenwende](#)", during which 400 people were arrested. They were mainly communists but also some socialists and Trotskyist militants. Among them was [René Delbrouck](#), a member of parliament from Liège, who died in Neuengamme on 20 June 1942. The site also looks back at the 75th anniversary of [the destruction of the Yser Tower](#), an act probably committed by former resistance fighters but whose perpetrators were never found.

The diplomatic section

Until now, diplomatic history was hardly present on the site. Little by little, this aspect will also be addressed. At this stage, three contributions already offer an interesting look at the subject: the figure of [Paul-Henri Spaak](#) is the subject of a comprehensive presentation, together with that of [Emile de Cartier de Marchienne](#), "the rock who saved the Belgian government" and who played an important role both in the presence of Belgian ministers in London and in the response to the famous [instructions sent from Bern](#) by Count Louis d'Ursel to Belgian diplomats, a key element in the dispute between [Leopold III](#) and [the Belgian government in London](#).

When justice takes over...

Finally, several contributions open up the complex aspect of post-war justice, starting with the setting up of [the War Crimes Commission](#), but also with a closer analysis of two important trials: that of the [GFP 530](#) and that of the [Sipo SD of Charleroi](#). In the first case, thirteen German agents of the [Geheime Feldpolizei](#) were convicted before the Brussels military court. The second was a landmark case because, at the end of the appeal procedures, article 118 bis was found to be inapplicable to military personnel and civil servants of "enemy" nationality acting at the time of the events on behalf of the Occupying Power.

Zedelgem, Frantz Van Dorpe... news of the Second World War

But the Belgium WWII website is also an opportunity to stimulate reflection on current issues. We come back to the controversy related to the presence of a [monument](#) in honor of Latvian prisoners of war on the municipality of Zedelgem and also to the past of [Frantz Van Dorpe](#), politician, resistance fighter but also... anti-Semite.

Chantal Kesteloot

Other news

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Moving of archive collections: important message for visitors

Because of the closure of our repository in the Belgrade Street (Forest), some important removal operations will gradually take place in 2021. Large parts of CegeSoma's archives collections will move to other repositories of the State Archives in Brussels. The public law archives of government administrations (including the archives of the Intelligence and Action Services) will move to the General State Archives in the Ruisbroek Street. Archives formed by the military courts (including records of convictions) as well as private archives (personal archives, archives of resistance groups) are transferred to the National Archives 2 - Joseph Cuvelier repository (AGR2) in the Hopstraat/Rue du Houblon. The exact timing will be communicated gradually.

This will of course have consequences for consultation and accessibility. We will evolve towards a situation where eventually only the library (books, magazines, brochures, newspapers, illegal press, newspaper clippings), the photo and audiovisual collections, and the archives formed by CegeSoma will be available for consultation in our reading room at the Aviation Square. CegeSoma will continue to manage its archives collections stored in the AGR2. It is therefore very important to consult our website before your visit to see where and when which archives can be consulted.

Please note - in order to consult these documents, please follow these steps:

1. Send a message to cegesoma@arch.be mentioning the fonds/inventory numbers you wish to consult.
2. You will receive an e-mail confirmation when the documents are reserved for you. Reservations will be retrieved twice a week.
3. Make an appointment in the reading room of [AGR2](#) by sending a message to agr_ar_2@arch.be.

! Due to their relocation, AA1-AA1332 will be temporarily unavailable from August to October.

! The fonds AA1334-AA2518 have been moved and are available for consultation in the reading room of [AGR2](#).

Due to processing (e.g. in the context of the Wikibase project) some files will have to remain in the Aviation Square for the time being, partially or fully.

The files that will remain integral in the Aviation Square for the time being are:

- AA585 Archives Devisenschutzkommando
- AA616 Archives of Hervé Close, 'liquidator' of the Mill group (MNB)
- AA1089 Archives linked to the liquidation of the intelligence service Portemine and its escape affiliate Eva (1941-1944)
- AA1134 Partial archives of and about the Nola action service (1942-1944)
- AA1217 Church and clergy survey during the occupation. 1st part.
- AA1218 Church and clergy survey during the occupation. 2nd part.
- AA1553 Archives of the Union nationale des mères et femmes de fusillés et prisonniers politiques décédés

- AA1673 Archives of the Amicale des Prisonniers Politiques, survivors of the September 3, 1944 convoy (the so-called 'ghost train'). 1st part.
- AA1853 Archives of the National Union of the Clandestine Press. 2nd part.
- AA1859 Recognition files of the National Royalist Movement (MNR)
- AA1881 OMBR recognition files
- AA2006 Personal files of members of the armed resistance movement Les Insoumis
- AA2512 Records of the Hotton service and its fraternity
- 3120 SGRS-S/A. Independence Front (FI) 40/44. Patriotic Militias
- 3121 Records of the resistance movement Les Affranchis. Recognition files

The following files will remain at Aviation Square only partially for the time being. These are mainly series of individual files, member lists and the like:

- AA976 Archives related to the 'liquidation' of the resistance movement Les Affranchis in the immediate post-war period
- AA977 Archives related to the 'liquidation' of the so-called Group G (Groupe général de Sabotage de Belgique) after World War II
- AA1048 Archives related to the liquidation of the D service
- AA1056 Archives of the National Union of the Clandestine Press (UNPC). Part 1.
- AA1105 Partial archives of the Tégal intelligence service (1940-1944)
- AA1135 Archives of and about the Luc-Marc intelligence service, "couriers »
- AA1333 Files of the Intelligence and Action Services (SRA) of the State Security Service
- AA2127 Archives of Independence Front
- AA2495 Records of the armed resistance movement Witte Brigade (Fidelio)

The archives formed by CegeSoma itself, such as AA2268 fund (CegeSoma. Interviews conducted by the researchers. Transcriptions), remain as mentioned in the Aviation Square and can therefore be consulted there.

[The list here](#) provides an overview of the archives that have been moved and where they are currently located. It will be updated after each transfer. Via their title and former call number in Pallas, you can see which collections have been transferred to the Archives générales du Royaume 1 (AGR1) or to the Archives générales du Royaume 2 - Dépôt Joseph Cuvelier (AGR2). Documents can be provisionally requested from AGR1 and AGR2 on the basis of their Pallas "call number" (number "AA").

For specific questions about accessibility : cegesoma@arch.be

Needless to say, we remain very happy to answer all your historical and archival-related questions. And, of course, you can still contact us [if you wish to donate archival materials to CegeSoma](#).

Also check Facebook, YouTube and the newsletter for updates!



'Concentration camp literature'... in the CegeSoma Library

'Concentration camp literature'... in the CegeSoma Library ... Under this title, we invite you to discover the sixth theme of our series 'The Librarian's talks'. Each theme will be the occasion to dive into our collections and will be illustrated by a video and a text to complete the information contained therein.

Watch the sixth episode of our video series 'The Librarian's Talks: 6. 'Concentration camp literature'... in the CegeSoma Library

Témoignages concentrationnaires - 2e Guerre mondiale/ G...



Given the "totalitarian" nature of Nazism and its extremely brutal modus operandi, which accumulated hostile elements as if for pleasure, places of detention and other "concentration camps" intended to accommodate the political enemies of the regime flourished across the Rhine from 1933 to 1945.



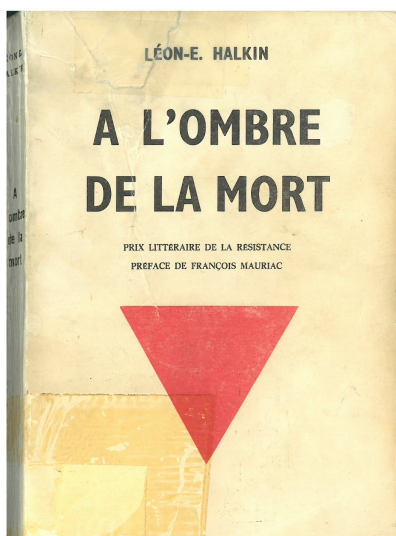
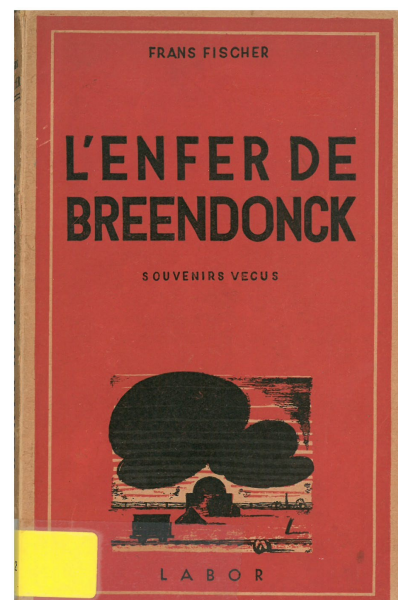
From the summer of 1940...and especially from the summer of 1941, the Belgian "political prisoners" multiplied, first filling the "German sections" of the country's prisons as well as the sinister forts of Breendonk and Huy, but also the cells of the various German police or parapolic departments, while waiting to be transferred and lost into the "night and fog" of the Third Reich's concentration system. Although the exact number of these "non-racial" deportees is not known, the status of "political prisoner" was officially granted to 41,257 people in Belgium, and among them nearly 14,000 deaths were recorded.

Some of the survivors - a rather small number - felt the need to write down the story of their tragic journey behind barbed wire, and their published testimonies can mostly be found in the CegeSoma's collections.



The first testimonies of "concentrationaries" are published quite early, from the autumn of 1944, and in general they are the work of former Breendonk inmates released by

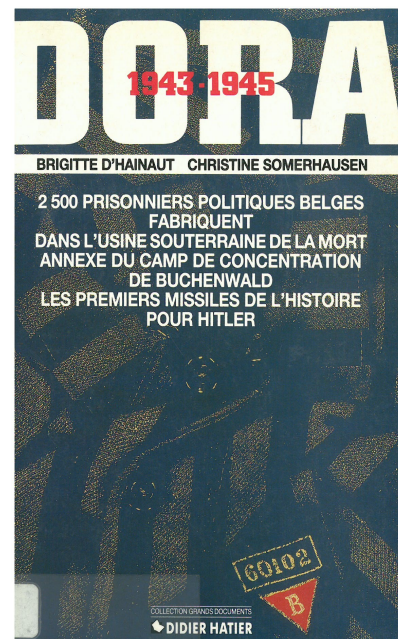
the enemy and present in Belgium at the Liberation, whether it be Frans Fischer (*L'enfer de Breendonck*-1944), Boris Solonevitch (*Breendonck, camp de tortures et de mort*-1944) or Victor Trido (*Breendonck, camp du silence, de la mort et du crime*-1944). All these works, generally written in French at the beginning, were translated into Dutch. Then, a little later, after the collapse of Hitler's Reich, we see different books appear, testimonies of former "political" prisoners either from Dachau, or Buchenwald (long considered the most terrible and best known camp...), Ravensbrück, etc.



We can mention here the rather exemplary writings of Omer Habaru (*Les triangles rouges*-1946) or those, a little later but brilliant in every sense of the term, by Léon-Ernest Halkin (*A l'ombre de la mort*-1947). This type of testimonial literature, sometimes with militant intentions ("Never again!"), will long persist in the wake of associations of "old-timers" (such as R. Buelens, with *De concentratiekampen en de gedetineerden*-1970, published by the Nationale Confederatie den Politieke Gevangenen).

A generation later, there will appear more scientific approaches to the concentration camp phenomenon (but not always without underlying political intentions) such as those of Daniel Rochette and Jean-Marcel Van Hamme

(*Les Belges à Buchenwald et dans ses commandos extérieurs*, 1976) or Christine Somerhausen and Brigitte d'Hainaut (*Dora 1943-1945*-1991).



Finally, in the 1990s, we see the emergence of purely scientific contributions, the process of historicization of the concentration camp phenomenon being at that time in the process of completion. The works of Patrick Nefors (*Breendonk, 1940-1945. De geschiedenis*-2004, with a French language edition published by Racine in 2005) or by Gie van den Berghe (*Getuigen. Een case-study over ego-documenten. Bibliografie van ego-documenten over de nationaal-socialistische kampen en gevangnissen, geschreven of getekend...*-1995).

It should be pointed out that not all of the life stories of these very special prisoners have been published: a certain number of them are listed in our

sub-section "Personal Diaries" and are perhaps waiting for a valiant historian to bring them to light and - who knows - to make them available to the "general educated public", with the necessary critical apparatus.

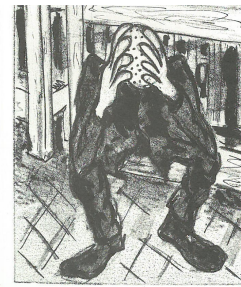
VERGEGEN EN VERGEGENEN VAN DE GESCHIEDENIS
VAN DE TWEEDE WERELDOORLOG

Gie van den Berghe
Getuigen DEEL I

BEELDIGE BIBLIOPRAFIE OVER DE NAZI-KAMPEN



Researchers tempted by this problematic, but still uninitiated, can usefully refer to number 14-15 of the series Jours de guerre, entitled Jours barbelés. It presents a good synthesis of a question that has until now been addressed mostly from a Francophone perspective...



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ADOCHS study day: Register now!

Image & Data Processing in the Cultural Heritage Sector (14.09.21)

ADOCHS ONLINE STUDY DAY

IMAGE & DATA PROCESSING IN THE CULTURAL HERITAGE SECTOR



On Tuesday 14 September 2021, the [ADOCHS](#) project (*Auditing Digitalization Outputs in the Cultural Heritage Sector*) organises an international study day on **Image & Data Processing in the Cultural Heritage Sector**. This event shall shed light on the project results to **improve quality of the files produced in the context of heritage digitisation**, but also on the perspectives opened by artificial intelligence in the cultural heritage sector.

This study day will also be held in English and provide the opportunity to **open a dialogue between researchers and professionals** on experiences and achievements in professional environments close to our own.

Do you wish to participate in the event?

The [programme](#) is available online and [registration](#) (fro free) starts now!

Researchers and professionals from libraries, archives and museums are also [invited to present their ideas, reflections and projects](#) to improve the digital valorisation of the collections within the *Posters de l'après-midi* session.

[At this link](#) you find all information necessary for submitting your paper ([until 31 july 2021 at the latest](#)).

Other news

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111 vues • 24 juin 2021



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PARTAGER

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102 abonnés

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Ervaring van drie jonge Duitse en Oostenrijkse vrijwilligers bij het CegeSoma in 2020-2021.

PLUS

