

CEGESOMA NEWSLETTER

NO 54 - MARCH 2020

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CEGESOMA IN HOMEWORK MODUS

What are we currently doing ? What are the perspectives and ongoing projects currently occupying the team of CegeSoma ? [\[MORE INFO\]](https://new.cegesoma.be/en/news/cegesoma-times-telework%E2%80%A6)

EHRI

An additional funding from the Horizon2020 program for research and innovation to support the EHRI project (European Holocaust Research Infrastructure). [\[MORE INFO\]](https://new.cegesoma.be/en/project/green-light-ehri-3)

WORKSHOP

Looking back at a two-day workshop in CegeSoma on 12 and 13 March about 'cultures of spectacle' in occupied Belgium during the First- and the Second World War. [\[MORE INFO\]](https://www.cegesoma.be/en/event/cultures-spectacle-german-occupied-belgium)

HISTORIOGRAPHY

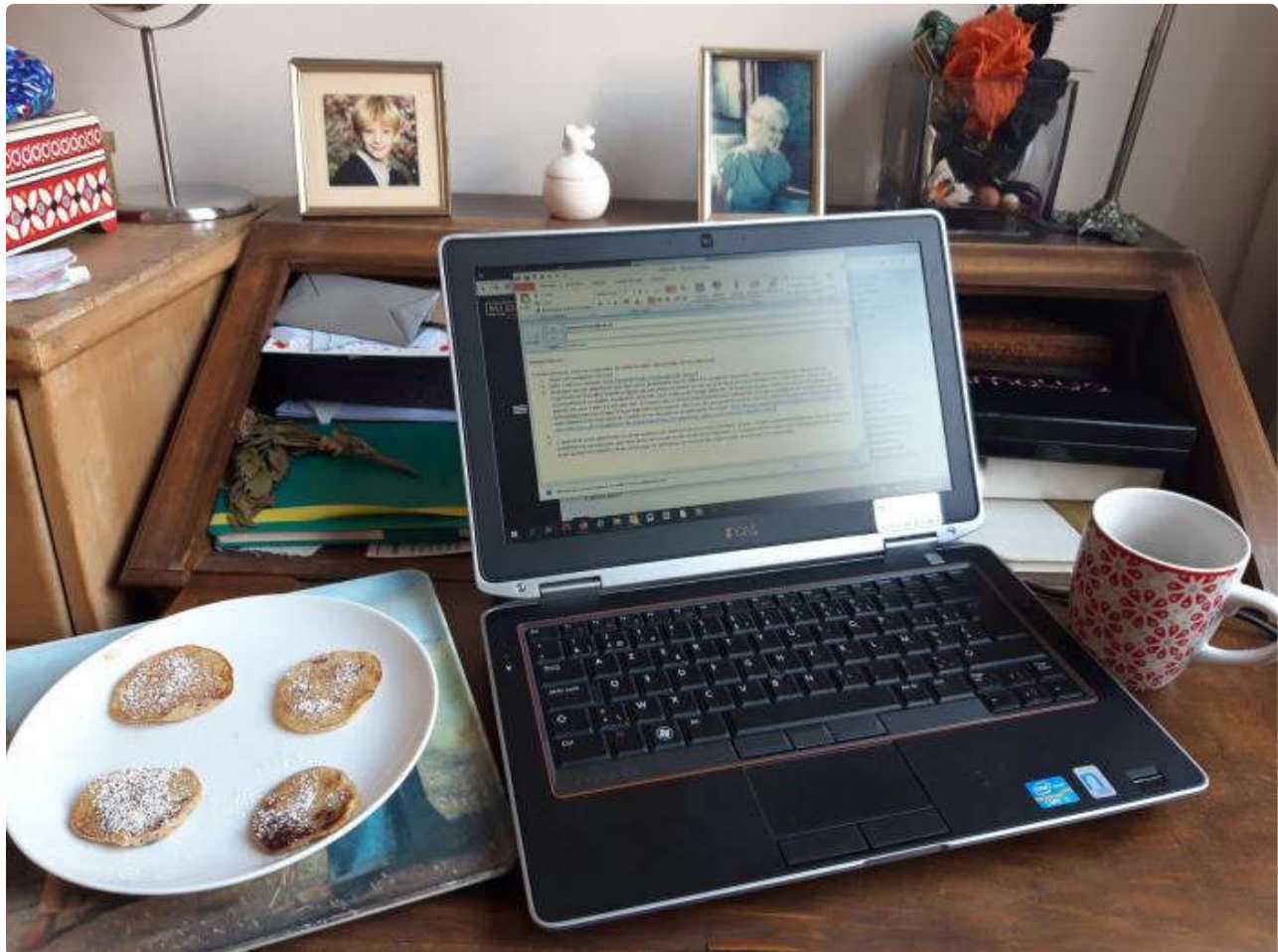
Has the history of the resistance been written in the same way in the north and south of the country before 1970 ? Discover the first contribution in a trilogy. [\[MORE INFO\]](https://www.cegesoma.be/en/resistance-belgium-partial-history-or-history-parts-first-part-duo-papers-historiography-resistance)

CORONA PANDEMIC

Extension of the measures of the State Archives in Belgium/CegeSoma in the fight against the spread of the Corona virus and the possibilities of online research. [\[MORE INFO\]](https://new.cegesoma.be/en/extension-measures-taken-state-archivescegesoma-prevent-spread-coronavirus)

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CegeSoma in times of telework...



In this period of confinement, with the reading room of CegeSoma closed to the public and the majority of our staff not physically present at our premises in Anderlecht, we have fully made the transition to a telework mode to continue our work. For some of our staff, this is a first while others already had this experience.

What are the current tasks and projects??

Some of these results are already available, some will be shortly:

- New articles and blog-contributions are added to our website [Belgium WWII](#) on a daily basis by a number of colleagues, and soon you can also discover a chronology of the Resistance;
- The [new website of CegeSoma](#) is gradually completed with new articles and new search aids. The most recent one is a [selective bibliography about the Resistance in Belgium from 1940 to 1944](#);
- With regard to publications, the guide '*Papy était-il un héros ? Sur les traces des hommes et des femmes dans la résistance pendant la Seconde Guerre mondiale*' to be published in May 2020 in French by Racine

and in Dutch by Lannoo, is being proofread. The proofs of the first issue of the [*Journal of Belgian History*](#) of 2020 are also being finalized.

- Our podcast '*Les transmissions*', a series of interviews made within the framework of the [Transmemo project](#) about inter-generational transmission of memories about the Second World War is in the final editing stage... Due to the closure of some necessary infrastructures, its finalisation is delayed. We will keep you informed when the radio broadcasting is scheduled.

Other current tasks are less visible to the public but not less crucial: correction of inventories, control of the number of photos per description in the Pallas system, translation of all sorts of texts (among others the inventory of the photo-collections 'United Kingdom' and 'Eastern Front', ...), crowdsourcing work on CegeSoma photos via [the platform 'Ugescrowd'](#), retro-conversion of inventories of photo-collections to the EAD format, quality control and conversion of scans of our archive holdings...

The current period also comes in handy for drafting reports, participating in phone or video conferences, preparing new research projects, making progress in the writing of articles and in the case of one specific colleague even a doctoral thesis about authoritative data, ...

Of course, we continue to respond to your inquiries. We also ensure continuity in the processing of photo orders and archive reproductions, provided the documents ordered are already available in digital format. When possible for our services, we can also exceptionally consider urgent questions for scanning on demand.

Please note: A number of events initially scheduled for the coming weeks and months are suspended until the authorities decide on the end of the confinement measures. This concerns among others two Public History Meetings: a first one about the commemoration of the genocide against the Tutsi in 1994 with Florence Rasmont and Ornella Rovetta, and a second one about the forgotten soldiers of the First World War with Dominiek Dendooven and Sophie De Schaepdrijver. Also suspended is the presentation of the research guide '*Papy était-il un héros ?*' by Fabrice Maerten, a guide in the same line as '*Papy était-il un nazi ? Sur les traces d'un passé de guerre*' that will help increase accessibility of the archives about the Resistance in Belgium.

... and one last suggestion: If you wish : feel free to join our community of over 2,000 followers on [Facebook](#) – with fresh news about [Belgium WWII](#) and new articles almost daily.

Take good care of yourself and your loved ones. As for us, we are very much looking forward to welcoming you again with the usual enthusiasm and professionalism at CegeSoma, which will hopefully be soon...

Other news

[Belgium WWII in times of confinement](#)

[Resistance in Belgium - partial history or history in parts? \(II\)](#)

[Discover the publications of CegeSoma or let others discover them...](#)

[CegeSoma Annual Report - 2019](#)

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

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Green light for EHRI-3



The European Commission announced that EHRI (European Holocaust Research Infrastructure) will receive new funding from the Research and Innovation *Programme Horizon2020* to sustain and further develop its main resources and services.

EHRI is currently already in the process of transforming from a project into a permanent body for international Holocaust research, through the 'preparatory phase funding'. With this new funding for EHRI-3, EHRI can maintain and expand its services and resources developed in the first two phases, such as the fellowships, training activities and the EHRI Portal. Over the next 4 years, EHRI will therefore follow two paths: transforming into a permanent infrastructure and continuing as a long-standing, active project.

New and improved services

Having both sources of funding is especially good news for our user community as it means that they can keep on using EHRI's new and improved services, while behind the scenes, the foundations for a durable organisation are being built .

The State Archives/CegeSoma were among the founders of the EHRI project and have been involved, together with *Kazerne Dossin*, both in the further development of services and resources during the third project phase and in the development of the permanent organisation. Within EHRI-3, the State Archives/CegeSoma contributes to different Work Packages: impact, innovation and sustainability (more specifically the legal aspects such as protection of privacy); further development of local research infrastructures and new research and archiving approaches.

Hidden sources

While the sources of most major Holocaust institutions are already integrated into the EHRI Portal, many valuable sources held by small local archives and micro-archives are currently hardly accessible - or are even inaccessible – to research communities. EHRI will develop protocols and tools in order to make these hidden sources accessible for Holocaust research.

New approaches, programmes and activities

In this third phase, EHRI will further enable new transnational and interdisciplinary approaches to the study of the Holocaust by developing innovative layers that connect thematically related but physically dispersed collections. It will greatly enhance its access provisions, and integrate new communities into its network: local research- and archive networks, universities, researchers working in closely related fields.

Later this year, EHRI will announce new programmes for its fellowships and training activities. The fellowships will enable foreign experts to carry out research in the collections of the State Archives/CegeSoma that are directly linked to international Holocaust research. A new interactive Online Course in Holocaust Studies and a MOOC (massive open online course) can be expected. Thanks to MOOC, a larger public can be reached.

Strengthening the community

In the next four years, EHRI will manage to expand and strengthen its community of partners, experts, scholars, archivists, digital humanists and others. New partners to the consortium will be the Center for Urban History of East Central Europe in Lviv, Ukraine, and the University of Thessaloniki.

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Cultures of Spectacle in German-occupied Belgium.

Parallels and Differences between the First and the Second World War.

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



Prior to the confinement, a workshop was held on 12 and 13 March at CegeSoma. It was organised by the Institute for Media Studies of *KULeuven* on the initiative of Roel Vande Winkel and Leen Engelen, in collaboration with CegeSoma/State Archives, and tackled the subject of the 'cultures of spectacle' in occupied Belgium during the First- and the Second World War. A [dozen of papers](#) were presented; unfortunately, due to the Coronavirus, a number of registered participants could not attend. Nevertheless, these two days were rich in discoveries and discussions.

The topics addressed, ranged from politics through the objectives of the occupier to the behaviour of the occupied population. In 1914-1918, the implementation of a cultural policy may have seemed as a strategy by the occupier to make the population forget about the circumstances of the invasion and the massacres of civilians. In 1940-1944, the ideological aspect was probably more pronounced and it translated into a massive influx of German works and productions, some of which could clearly be identified as "Nazi", while others could be categorised as belonging to the larger Germanic cultural heritage. In this regard, the German occupier

also took some local specificities into account by applying a different cultural policy to the French-speaking population and to the Flemish population.

Wars appear as both times of constraints but also of needs in terms of culture. Which cultural policies are carried out in this regard, and which types of spectacle take place? How to understand the attitude of the public? For example, during the First World War, some people attended shows in order to entertain themselves, others simply to keep warm. In both conflicts, the entertainment sector is subject to censorship; additionally, in 1940-1944, Jewish artists are excluded. For other artists, the wars provide opportunities: competition is no longer as strong and the need for entertainment is rising. Further analysis remains yet to be done however. Things were clearly evolving: While some people showed a kind of "patriotic restraint" during the first global conflict and did not attend spectacles, this moral stance - or "cultural demobilisation" as John Horne coined it - seemed to lose ground as from 1916. During the Second World War on the other hand, the first two years of occupation seemed to be more marked by some kind of acclimatisation - also culturally - than what would be the case later on.

Studying these "cultures of spectacles" also implies having a look at the infrastructures in which they are accommodated. At the time, Belgium counted hundreds of cinemas that also had neither the same type of audience, neither the same programme. Finally, cultures of spectacle take various forms of expression. We were not able to address all of them during these two days. For some of them sources are scarce. Nevertheless, interesting research opportunities could arise by looking at more popular cultures, that might have scared the ruling classes. Other research fields, about visual sources among others, still remain underexplored, as pointed out in the conclusion by Sophie de Schaepdrijver. The same is true for the issue of career strategies or the impact of the wars on both the entertainment sector and infrastructures, but also on long-term cultural policies. In short, a vast and promising area of research from which we hope to soon get first published results.

For now, we recommend you this website (<https://www.cinema-in-occupied-belgium.be/>) – to be launched soon – with some first new perspectives. This website will enable you to locate all cinemas active in Belgium during the Second World War and to find out which films were shown. To be continued!



12/03/2020 - 10:00 to 13/03/2020 - 16:30

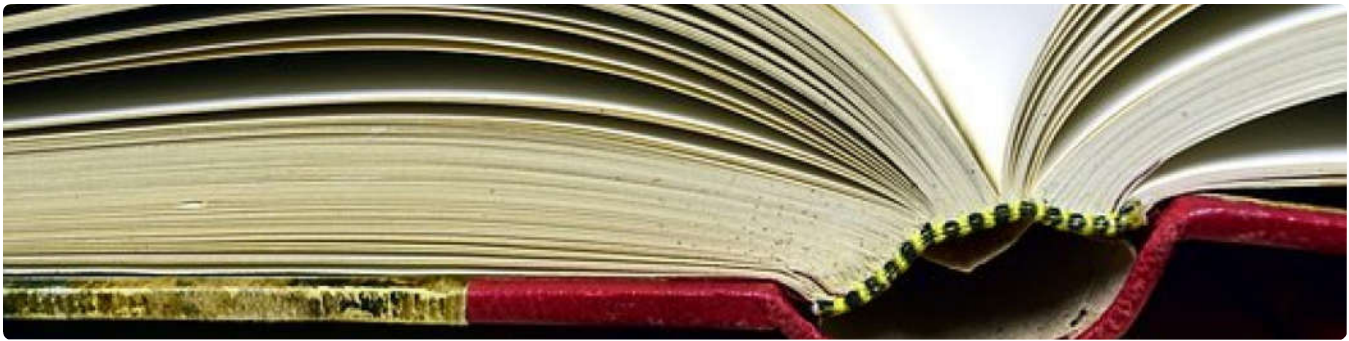
Partners



TAGS

[Cultural history](#)

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Resistance in Belgium - partial history or history in parts? First part of a duo of papers on the historiography of the Resistance in Belgium

One can quite easily observe that the books of History are not written with 'the same ink' in the North of the country and in the South. Indeed, regarding the historiography about the Resistance, it becomes clear that it is more numerous in the language of Molière than of Vondel... This discrepancy is currently being partly adjusted however. Still, it remains not less interesting to put this historiography of the Resistance (or Resistances) in perspective as well as its authors who, generation after generation, presented certain common features.

Their writing in some cases started prematurely, already under the occupation, by the resistance fighters themselves. After the Liberation, these writings took the form of books or press articles. They were often apologetic in nature, defending their own cause, deliberately or not, and propagated a healthy Belgian patriotism. Texts and authors that can be categorised as such are, for example, 'Mourir Debout' (1944) by Fernand Demany, 'Dans le Maquis' (1944) by Fernand Desonay, and - although a bit later - the small 'Panorama de la Résistance belge' (1948) by Camille Joset. The last one was a representative of the Christian community and expert on the matter, having been in the Resistance in 1914-1918 and having co-founded the radically pro-Belgian Mouvement National Belge (MNB) in 1940.

The very voluminous 'Livre d'Or de la Résistance', sponsored by the "Commission de l'Historique de la Résistance" under the aegis of the Ministry of National Defence stands out from the lot. Thanks to (or despite) such sponsorships, this Livre d'Or turned out to be much more of a qualitative bulk of documents than a glorifying hagiographical work. This bulk was collected and edited over four years by archivist-secretary Léopold Lejeune and published as-is in 1948, with all its conceptual limitations. But it had the merit of presenting the various aspects of the history of the Resistance in Belgium in a condensed manner. A supplementary note: As a former member of the MNB, Lejeune mainly focused on the underground movements that thrived at the time (MNB, AS, ...) and much less on those that "smelled like trouble" in these Cold War times (Front de l'Indépendance or Partisans Armés communistes)...

Despite these shortcomings, the Livre d'Or would remain an essential reference for at least two decades. In this time, a number of interesting additions - in historiographical terms - would nevertheless be penned by other former MNB members (who were still setting the tone in this field then). In this context, one can mention 'Le Passage de l'Iraty' (1962) by William Ugeux, and especially 'La résistance belge 1940-1945' (1968) by Henri Bernard. While the first work is autobiographical with a near-philosophical perspective, the second one is a quite sound synthesis work. Its author was a professor at the Royal Military Academy and a bright mind. Within this rather (and sometime very much) unanimous-patriotic collection, the work of a young American researcher named Kilpatrick Tanham stands out. This early work (1951) was initially a doctoral thesis about the Belgian Underground Movement, an external perspective detached from the internal context of Belgium with its sometimes alienating insinuations, and probably

represents the first true matter-of-factly - even "surgical" - approach to this topic.

Therefore, it is probably no coincidence that this work would only be translated into French after twenty years, under the auspices of ULB. We are then in the year 1971. At the time, in the very early 1970s, an actual scientific analysis of the Resistance phenomenon starts to emerge among Belgian researchers, as we will see later.

(To be continued in the next edition)

Alain Colignon

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