

CEGESOMA NEWSLETTER

NO 55 - APRIL 2020

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ANNUAL REPORT

Through the overview of the activities of CegeSoma in 2019 you can discover what we were able to do in this festive year with three historical anniversaries. [\[MORE INFO\]](https://www.cegesoma.be/en/news/cegesoma-annual-report-2019) (<https://www.cegesoma.be/en/news/cegesoma-annual-report-2019>)

JBH

Two new issues of the Journal of Belgian History are currently in preparation. [\[MORE INFO\]](https://www.cegesoma.be/en/publication/new-issues-journal-belgian-history) (<https://www.cegesoma.be/en/publication/new-issues-journal-belgian-history>)

PUBLICATIONS FOR SALE IN CEGESOMA

Through the page 'publications' of our website, you can find both books and the series 'Journaux de Guerres/Oorlogskranten' to complete your collection. [\[MORE INFO\]](https://www.cegesoma.be/en/news/discover-publications-cegesoma-or-let-others-discover-them) (<https://www.cegesoma.be/en/news/discover-publications-cegesoma-or-let-others-discover-them>)

HISTORIOGRAPHY

Discover the second part of the 'diptych' about the historiography of the resistance in Belgium : from the 1970s onwards, a new wave of publications and research is launched. [\[MORE INFO\]](https://www.cegesoma.be/en/news/resistance-belgium-partial-history-or-history-parts-ii) (<https://www.cegesoma.be/en/news/resistance-belgium-partial-history-or-history-parts-ii>)

BELGIUM WWII

Discover a timeline and new contributions about the resistance, military history and the difficult access to classified archives and follow the Facebook page of CegeSoma to read about the headlines of the Spring of 1945. [\[MORE INFO\]](https://www.cegesoma.be/en/news/belgium-wwii-times-confinement) (<https://www.cegesoma.be/en/news/belgium-wwii-times-confinement>)

BOOK PUBLICATION

'Nulpunt 1945. De Lage Landen een mensenleven later' : 15 specialists reflect on the consequences and the impact of the Second World War on contemporary society. [\[MORE INFO\]](https://www.cegesoma.be/en/publication/nulpunt-1945) (<https://www.cegesoma.be/en/publication/nulpunt-1945>)

COVID-19 PANDEMIC

An extension of the measures of the State Archives in Belgium/CegeSoma in the fight against the Coronavirus with a reminder of the possibilities for online research and how to pose urgent questions. [\[MORE INFO\]](https://www.cegesoma.be/en/extension-measures-taken-state-archives-cegesoma-prevent-spread-coronavirus) (<https://www.cegesoma.be/en/extension-measures-taken-state-archives-cegesoma-prevent-spread-coronavirus>)

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CegeSoma Annual Report - 2019



If you would like an overview of the activities, publications, projects and research carried out at CegeSoma / State Archives in 2019 and some figures, please consult [our Annual Report 2019](#) !

Other news

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

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New issues of the Journal of Belgian History

[War and Society](#) [World War I](#) [World War II](#) [Magazine](#)



The first 2020 issue of the Journal of Belgian History is currently at the printer. It contains four articles, by Florentin Dawagne about prison policies with regard to the punishment of 'incivism' in Mons and Charleroi after the First World War (in French), by Guy Bud on European presence in the Belgian Congo and Ruanda-Urundi during World War II (in English), by Elie Teicher on the activities in Latin America (as well as the ideological development) of the left-wing writer Conrad Detrez (in French) and finally by Xavier Dabe on the Belgian government crisis of 1965 (in English) . The issue also includes a position paper published in our 'debate section' of Christoph Brüll & Geneviève Warland. They come back to the controversial and disputed book *Schuldfragen* by the German historian Ulrich Keller about the massacres of Belgian civilians during the German invasion of the First World War. Furthermore, this issue also includes reviews and summaries of new doctoral research. Depending on any potential delays because of the current exceptional situation, this issue should normally be published in May 2020.

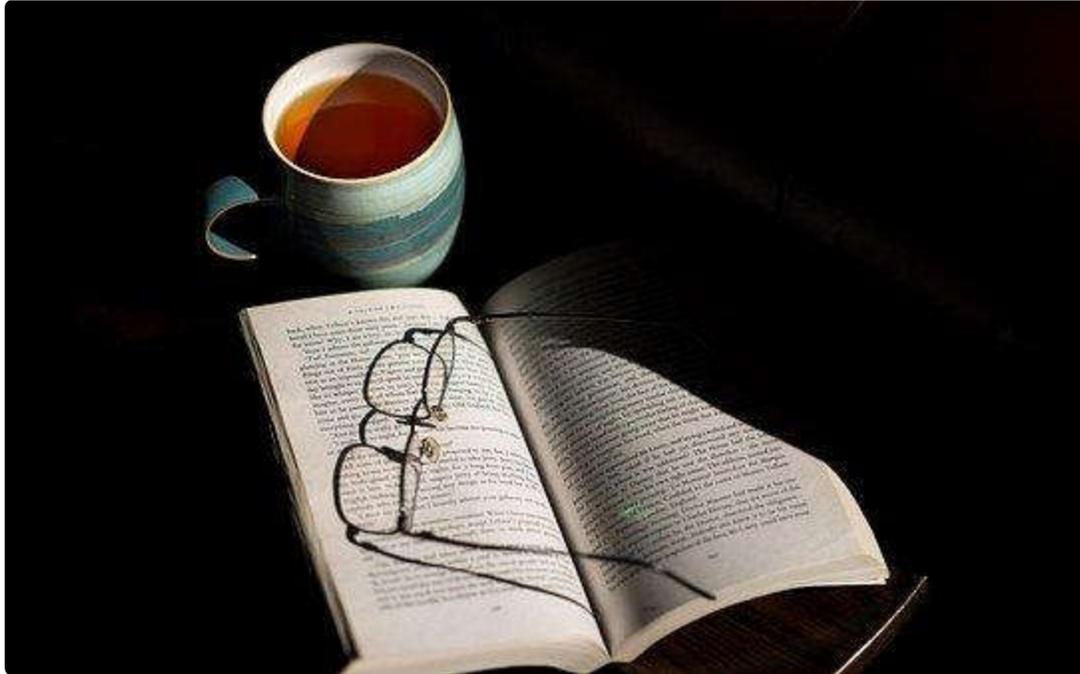
Meanwhile, the next issue is also in full preparation. This second issue of 2020 will be published shortly after the Summer and will have four articles: by Thomas Briamont (*La Belgique face à la question allemande pendant la seconds crise de Berlin (1958-1961)*), by Dominique De Groen and Antoon Vrints (*Nationale identificatie in armenbrieven uit bezet België, 1914-1918*), by Stan Pannier & Frank Caestecker (*Pioniers in het consumptiekrediet tijdens de Belle Epoque*) and Simon Watteyne (*Le coût de la première guerre scolaire et les débats des «Graux impôts» (1878-1884)*).

Be sure to keep an eye out for updates on our sites (www.journalbelgianhistory.be and www.cegesoma.be). For further information about ordering these issues, you can also contact Hilde Keppens (hilde.keppens@arch.be).

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Why not turn these times of lockdown to a good account and start reading works about the First and the Second World War in Belgium? Please yourself or others... Our publication stocks perhaps hold something you might be interested in - just place an order... Some publications are fresh from the press, others are less recent. In any case, this is the perfect time to update your personal library at a modest price...

In addition to our publications, we remind you of our war newspaper collections (1914-1918, interwar period, 1940-1945 and early Cold War) that you can also order at a reduced price per collection or per issue according to your fields of interest. Simply go to "[publications](#)" and make your choice. There are two filters to help you chose: 'Type' of publication (book, newspaper, conference proceedings, ...) and 'Theme' (period of time).

Please note: not all publications listed can be bought at CegeSoma. Only those with an "order" button are available through our CegeSoma order form.

Enjoy your discoveries and have a good read!

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

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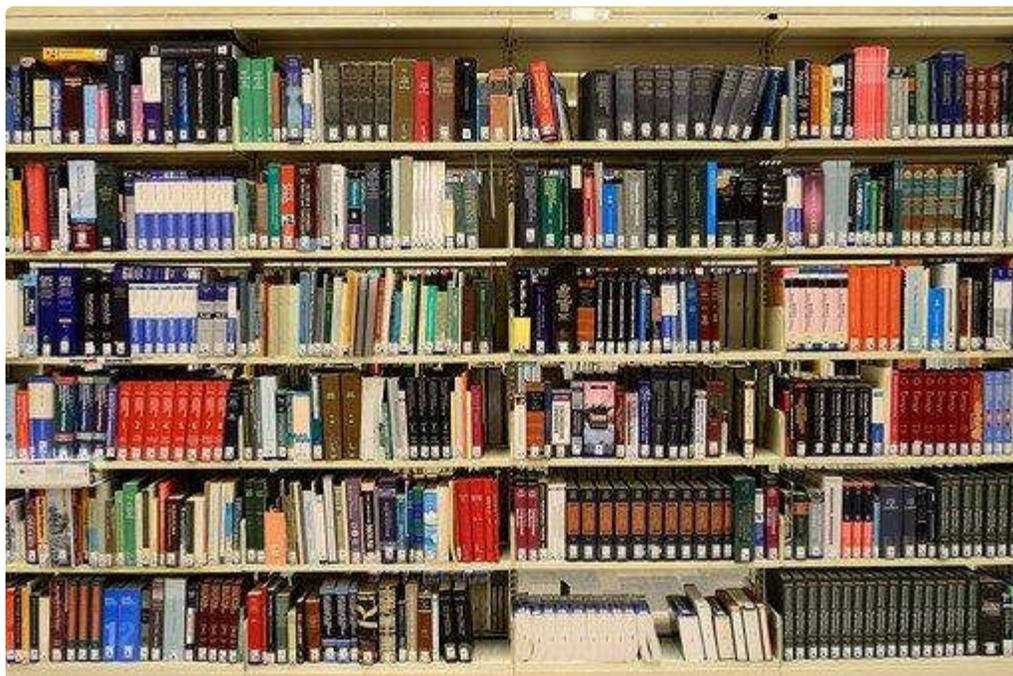
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Resistance in Belgium - partial history or history in parts? (II)

Second part of a duo of papers on the historiography of the Resistance in Belgium



As we've seen previously, the first generation of historians studying the Resistance were "contemporary witnesses and protagonists", with the exception of American researcher George K. Tanham. Although these works were quite interesting from a psychological and factual point of view, they had a serious bias: With a quiet conscience, their authors often argued pro domo, did not shy away from polemics and presented themselves as paragons of patriotism... while providing no explanation whatsoever of the conditions that led to the emergence of the Resistance phenomenon. As time passed and a certain serenity returned, this type of literature lost the essence of its glorifying character or show of bravery and became more sober; it included reflections about the time of the resistance (William Ugeux, Léon-Ernest Halkin) or even opted for a more scientific approach of the subject (Henri Bernard).

From 1970 onwards a fresh set of works about this subject, penned by "war children" born between 1940 and 1960, came to the fore. At the time, the historiographical Zeitgeist preferred works centred around social, economic and political aspects, and history was meant to be "structural".

Is it even necessary to remind the reader ? The work *L'an 40* by José Gotovitch and Jules Gérard-Libois (1971) would set the tone for a new wave of research into the subject. But let us put this into context. With Belgium being the country it is and with a limited number of historians studying contemporary history, this wave was rather a ripple indeed: Just as in the previous decades, the Resistance was no major preoccupation of society in the years 1970-1990. For most people, this era belonged to the past and became a marginal part of history,

mostly confined to the small veteran community. Furthermore, the works produced in this field are often developed in the shadow of the very recently established centre for the historical study about the Second World War "Centre de Recherches et d'Etudes Historiques de la Seconde Guerre mondiale" (CREHSGM -1967-1969), where a researcher, José Gotovitch, took pleasure in thriving, together with a number of colleagues (and friends nevertheless), who felt concerned - for various reasons - about the issues this period of time posed.

One thing was new however: little by little, qualitative studies were authored in Dutch. For example: *De vijand te lijf* (1974) by Frans Selleslagh and Willem C. Meyers, *Het Verzet* (1988) by Etienne Verhoeyen and Rudi Van Doorslaer and, later, *Geheime Oorlog. De Inlichtings - en Actie - diensten in België* (1992) by Fernand Strubbe. Yet, one cannot claim these works had great success in the North of the country...

As for José Gotovitch, he continued his research in a field that was dear to him, successfully defending his doctoral thesis about the communists during the Second World War, which was published under a new title in 1992 and is a masterpiece of political erudition: *Du Rouge au Tricolore. Les Communistes belges de 1939 à 1944*. Almost at the same time (1991) but on a wholly different note, Victor Marquet also finished his voluminous *Contribution à l'histoire de l'Armée Secrète 1940-1944*.

In these years, a lot of universities promoted research and Master's theses - that were independent of the CREHSGM yet connected to it - about the resistance at local or regional level. The works carried out under the supervision of professors Stengers, Lory and Balace are particularly remarkable. In a sense, the book by Pierre Jacquet (*Brabant wallon 1940-1944. Occupation et résistance* - 1989) is a neat example thereof.

In addition to these works that were made available in libraries as books for the general public, one can also mention a quite discrete but indispensable piece of work, namely the *Guide de la presse clandestine de Belgique* (1991) by Dirk Martin, Etienne Josse, Y. Hostie and Jacques Wynants, submitted to CREHSGM which became CEGESOMA in 1997: a solid sketch of the history of the Resistance press (*Histoire de la presse résistante*) - history that yet remains to be fully written.

The research community of the Centre still counted a number of seasoned historians of the Resistance - professionals or well-organised amateurs. Let us mention two names as examples: First, the prolific Francis Balace, well-known in the historians' microcosm thanks to his plethora of works on "right-wing" resistance and an in-depth study of the Resistance in Liège (*Aspect de la Résistance en province de Liège*, 1994); second, Etienne Verhoeyen, a righteous researcher from the Flemish public broadcaster V.R.T. with profound knowledge of the "Services de Renseignement et d'Action" from their beginnings until the turbulent times of the Cold War. The latter has also made an innovative contribution to historiography with his work *België Bezet 1940-1944* (1993), which is in the same spirit as *L'An 40*, about the relations between the exiled "Londoners" and the Resistance. This book was translated into French (*La Belgique occupée. De l'an 40 à la Libération* - 1994), as was the work by Fernand Strubbe (*Services secrets belges 1940-1945* - 1997).

For the sake of completeness - if that is even possible - let us mention two researchers from the field of social and economic history or social and political history from Louvain-la-Neuve, namely Fabrice Maerten (*Du murmure au grondement. La Résistance politique et idéologique dans la province de Hainaut pendant la*

seconde guerre mondiale – 1999) and Emmanuel Debruyne (*La guerre secrète des espions belges 1940-1944* – 2008).

But let us also not lose track of two major tendencies: The first one is the collapse of “memory studies”. Which traces has the memory of the Resistance left within Belgian society? This is an issue about monuments, places, street names (research and publications by Bruno Benvindo, Chantal Kesteloot, Marnix Beyen...) but also about resistance organisations in postwar Belgium (Babette Weyns), and the phenomenon can also be studied from the generational point of view (Koen Aerts, Florence Rasmont). The second is the interest in the history of the Resistance currently rising in Flanders. The topic is studied at local level (Karolien Steen, Bruno De Wever) and with regard to remembrance (Nico Wouters, Bruno De Wever and Koen Aerts).

Before we round off this very fractional overview, let us highlight two future publications. The first one is imminent. It is the archival source guide for the history of the Resistance, developed by Fabrice Maerten, which will enable researchers – there is no doubt about that – to discover many unknown or lesser known resources. The second is still in progress and scheduled for 2021: the *Revue belge d'Histoire contemporaine* will publish a thematic issue about various aspects of the history of the Resistance.

Finally, don't forget to browse through the many useful articles about the history of the Resistance on our website “Belgium WWII”.

Alain Colignon

Other news

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Belgium WWII in times of confinement



Since 17 March, CegeSoma – just as everyone else – is affected by the confinement. However, this is an opportunity to breathe new life into our website "[Belgium WWII](#)".

As announced earlier, the Resistance is now the central topic of the new articles published online. These articles are about underground journals (La Voix des Belges, Churchill Gazette, Morgenrood, De Vrijshutter, etc.), biographies of resistance fighters (Marcel Franckson, Youra Livschitz, Constant Martiny, etc.) but also large organisations and networks (such as *Front de l'Indépendance*, *Groupe G*, *Mouvement national belge*, etc.). Other texts deal with military history (the state of the Belgian army in 1940, the issue of war prisoners, ...). A significant number of these articles were penned by two researchers of CegeSoma who are experts in this field: Alain Colignon and Fabrice Maerten. The blog provides thought-provoking reflexions by Pierre-Alain Tallier and Delphine Lauwers about the necessity to adapt the current legislation to allow access to classified documents. These reflections are useful and necessary, even in times of confinement... Or to put it in their own words: "When thinking about it, and without looking for artificial waypoints, the difficult period we are currently living through highlights the importance of access to information every day, especially access to sensitive information. Spreading disinformation and withholding information often denotes a private appropriation of the exercise of power."

If you would like to discover the latest articles, simply visit the home page of the website, click on the line below “explorer” to show two titles: the first one indicates the latest article made available online, the second one refers to the text on the blog. By clicking on “en savoir plus” (read more), you can access the article whose title is mentioned above. If you wish to discover all the latest additions, click on the arrow below the title to scroll through the titles.

New feature: Chronicle of the Resistance Our chronicle can be found under the heading “événements” (events). It is constantly updated. About one hundred events related to the Resistance are listed. Activate the “résistance” filter and then click “retour” (return) to only show events about this topic. The rest of the chronology is about the history of collaboration and justice, which were the two main topic fields made available online in 2017 and 2018.

Feel free to send us your comments and suggestions. The content of the website can be updated at any time.

In addition to the articles on the website www.belgiumwwii.be, we also have published posts on [Facebook](#) about the events that took place 75 years ago. Without confinement, the current period would indeed have been marked by the commemorations of the 75th anniversary of the end of the war on the European front. We have highlighted a number of events that took place in spring 1945: For instance, the liberation of the camps of Buchenwald and Ravensbrück, the return of war prisoners, fashion in this period marked by rationing, ‘moral’ advice given to young Belgian girls, and the decisive role of Antwerp X in the fight against the V1 and V2 rockets, etc.

Other news

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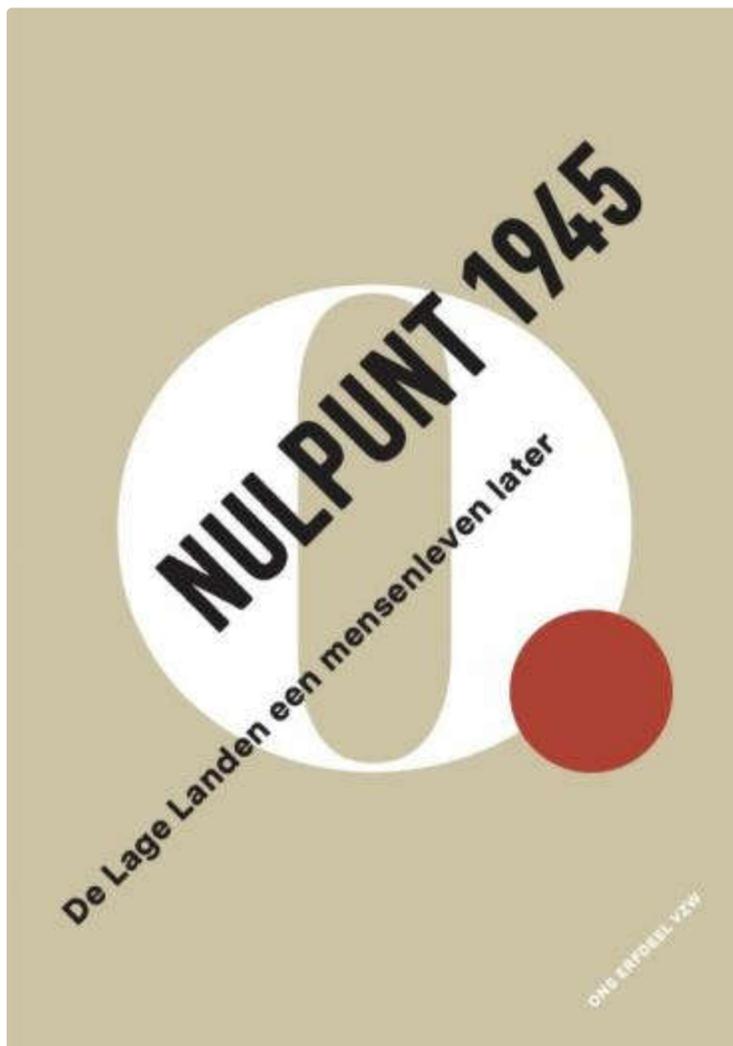
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"Nulpunt 1945"

A new book about the heritage of the Second World War

[World War II](#) [Book](#)



The book *"Nulpunt 1945. De Lage Landen een mensenleven later"* (Zero-point 1945. The Low Countries a lifetime later) was just published by Ons Erfdeel. Some 15 renowned experts from Belgium and the Netherlands reflect on the relevance and consequences of the Second World War for our life today.

The book contains essays about social security, economic developments after 1945, decolonisation, human rights, European integration and NATO. Of course, the memory of the war is also addressed.

Nico Wouters (CegeSoma) indeed writes about the memory of WWII in Belgium ("Veilig verleden?"), while Helen Grevers (Vredescentrum) and Antoon Vrints (UGent) have penned an essay about remembrance in the Netherlands ("Van nationale consensus tot morele paniek?" (From national consensus to moral panic?)).

Bruno De Wever (UGent) had a short conversation with Nico Wouters and Helen Grevers about the memory of the war: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=U30mqcncCTo&t=5s>

Nico Wouters' introductory chapter about Belgian war memories was translated to English and is available here : <https://the-low-countries.com/article/the-history-of-the-second-world-war-must-not-become-a-safe-past>

You can find all practical information (content, ordering) in the publication announcement on the website of Ons Erfdeel: <https://www.de-lage-landen.com/book/nulpunt-1945-de-lage-landen-een-mensenleven-later#>

PRODUCT DETAILS

Binding: paperback

Number of pages: 192 p.

Format: 18 x 24 cm

Publishing date: 2020

EAN/ ISBN: 9789079705313

Editor: Ons Erfdeel vzw, Menen

PRICE

35,00 € (postage not included)

ORDER

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