

CEGESOMA NEWSLETTER

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[nl](#) [fr](#) [en](#)

NEW MANAGEMENT FOR CEGESOMA

Since 1 May, Nico Wouters is the new director of CegeSoma. His appointment marks the beginning of a new phase in which the institution will be able to fully develop its mission as a centre of expertise in public history, research, and valorization regarding the history of the two world wars and other twentieth-century conflicts. CegeSoma will continue to function within the institutional framework of the Belgian State Archives. [\[MORE INFO\]](http://www.cegesoma.be/cms/index_en.php?article=3485)

NEW RESEARCH PROJECT – THE TRANSITION FROM WAR TO PEACE IN BRUSSELS, 1918

In the coming months, CegeSoma will investigate one of the most turbulent periods in Belgian history: the transition from war to peace at the end of the First World War. For the purpose of an exhibition for the BELvue Museum (2018), we will focus on the last months of the German occupation in Brussels, as well as on the troubled societal context of the months surrounding the liberation. Furthermore, we want to retrace how the Belgian polity underwent crucial democratic reforms during this period. The daily life of the inhabitants of the Belgian capital - which was characterized by a peculiar combination of joy and grief - will be a prominent theme in the upcoming exhibition. [\[MORE INFO\]](http://www.cegesoma.be/cms/expo_en.php)

TRANSMEMO: NEW RESEARCH ON THE MEMORY OF COLLABORATION AND RESISTANCE DURING THE SECOND WORLD WAR

In September 2017, the new research project TRANSMEMO will be launched. The project will examine the way in which memories of resistance and collaboration during the Second World War in Belgium were passed on from parents to children and grandchildren. For this purpose, CegeSoma will engage a new researcher for a two-year period (the deadline for submission of applications is 2 June 2017).

[\[MORE INFO\]](http://www.cegesoma.be/cms/index_en.php?article=3484)

ARCHIVES – UGESCO PROJECT : HIGH-QUALITY SPATIAL-TEMPORAL METADATA FOR THE DIGITISED COLLECTIONS

On 1 April, CegeSoma, in coordination with a multidisciplinary team (Ghent University, Université Libre de Bruxelles, and KU Leuven), launched the UGESCO project (Upscaling the Geo-temporal Enrichment, Exploration and Exploitation of Scientific Collections). UGESCO is dedicated to improving the quality of geo-temporal metadata of digitized audiovisual collections. [\[MORE INFO\]](http://www.cegesoma.be/cms/rech_encours_en.php?article=3481&pagnbr=7&pagofs=0)

[/cms/rech_encours_en.php?article=3481&pagnbr=7&pagofs=0](http://www.cegesoma.be/cms/rech_encours_en.php?article=3481&pagnbr=7&pagofs=0)

OPEN WORKSHOP 'SCOPE AND LIMITS OF RECONCILIATION'

On 29 May, CegeSoma and CECRI (Centre d'étude des crises et des conflits internationaux, UCL) will organize an open workshop on the scope and limits of reconciliation ('Scope and Limits of Reconciliation'). Sandra M. Rios Oyola and Björn Krondorfer will exchange views on the subject.

[\[MORE INFO\]](http://www.cegesoma.be/cms/index_en.php?article=3459)

NEW MANAGEMENT for CegeSoma

On 1 May, [Nico Wouters](#) was appointed as the new head of CegeSoma (the fourth operational division of the Belgian State Archives). His appointment marks the end of a long transition period in which CegeSoma was headed by interim directors. From now onwards, the institution will be able to fully develop its mission as a centre of expertise in public history, research, and valorization regarding the history of the two world wars and other twentieth-century conflicts.

[Nico Wouters](#) (1972) is Doctor of History (Ghent University). His main fields of expertise are the Second World War (local government, resistance and collaboration, persecution of the Jews, post-war repression) and politics of remembrance after 1945. He also takes a particular interest in comparative history and oral history. Between 2004 and 2006, Nico Wouters was one of the researchers of the project 'Docile Belgium' (concerning the persecution of the Jews in Belgium) at CegeSoma. From 2011 onwards, he was head of the section Academic Activities of CegeSoma. In this capacity, he has coordinated research projects (such as the ongoing WWI-project [The Great War From Below](#)) and several study days and conferences.

He is co-editor in chief of the [Journal of Belgian History](#) and a member of the editorial board of the Low Countries Historical Review. Furthermore, he is guest professor at the History department of Ghent University and Honorary Research Fellow at the University of Kent (School of History).

Some of his recent publications are :

- *Mayoral Collaboration under Nazi Occupation: Belgium, the Netherlands and the North of France (1938-1946)* (Basingstoke/New York 2016)
- As editor: *Transitional Justice and Memory in Europe (1945-2013)* (Antwerp/Cambridge 2014)
- With Koen Aerts: *Mondelinge geschiedenis in België en de (de-)constructie van collectieve herinnering*. Special issue of *Revue belge de philologie et d'histoire* (92-2, 2014).

Brussels, November 1918. From War to Peace?

On 26 September, the exhibition 'Brussels, November 1918' will open in the BELvue Museum, an initiative of CegeSoma/State Archives.

The exhibition wants to evoke the last months of the war and the first months of peace in the city of Brussels.

In the past years, the occupation years were the core of the multiple commemorative events. Now it is time to focus on the transition from war to peace.



11 November 1918 marked the end of the Great War, but this date goes far beyond the symbolic importance of the Armistice. As the guns went silent, peace had not yet been achieved. Two days before the Armistice, the German Reich collapsed and the Republic was declared in an atmosphere of absolute chaos. On the battlefields, the soldiers had to learn to live in peace again. This transition was quite a traumatic experience. For more than four years, daily life at and behind the front had been dominated by the war.

As the nation's capital, Brussels is the incarnation of national power, even though the government remained in exile in Sainte-Adresse near Le Havre during the war, as well as of local power structures, though these lost much of their power during the occupation. But there are also the 700,000 inhabitants of Brussels who were subjected to the German occupation.

The exhibition Brussels, November 1918: from War to Peace? shows a quantity of photographs and historical documents, but also some exceptional archive footage. Interactive applications allow the visitors to discover songs that were popular at the end of the war. With touchscreen modules, the press at the time of the liberation can be consulted. Finally, the exhibition wants to focus on the day-to-day difficulties of the war refugees.

Brussels, November 1918: from War to Peace? focuses on the following themes:

- The final offensive
- Daily life
- The refugees
- The 'red days' (a revolt of German soldiers around 11 November)
- 22 November 1918
- Peace and hatred
- The post-war period

Curators: Chantal Kesteloot and Jens van de Maele

[Interview with Chantal Kesteloot](#)



Scientific committee : Bruno Benvindo/Emmanuel Debruyne/Dominiek Dendooven/Barbara Deruytter/Sophie de Schaepe/drijver/Benoît Majerus/Gonzague Pluvinage/Peter Scholliers/Pierre-Alain Tallier/Laurence van

Ypersele/Christian Vreugde/Antoon Vrints/Nico Wouters

Scenography and realisation : mimesis.architecten

[Interview with the scenographers](#)

The exhibition is free and can be visited at the BELvue Museum from 26 September 2018 to 6 January 2019.

Opening hours and information : <https://www.belvue.be/fr/activity/temporary-exhibition>

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TRANSMEMO: New Research on the Memory of Collaboration and Resistance during the Second World War

In September 2017, the new research project **TRANSMEMO** has been launched, a partnership between the CegeSoma (Nico Wouters), Ghent University (Bruno De Wever & Koen Aerts) and the UCL (Olivier Luminet & Valérie Rosoux). Three young researchers, Florence Rasmont (CegeSoma), Aline Cordonnier (UCL) and Pierre Bouchat (UCL) are in charge of the project.

Oral history serving the study of the memory of the collaboration and the resistance

TRANSMEMO is a two-year research project which seeks to analyse how memories of resistance and collaboration were passed in a family context (three generations). Oral history will be the principal methodological framework. Through interviews with three generations (children during the war, their children and grandchildren), we will attempt to uncover how representations on collaboration and resistance were shaped and maintained. The aim is to understand how certain collective memories can become such persistent factors within a society. The relevance of these findings are particularly relevant to understand the divergent perceptions of the Second World War in Francophone Belgium and in Flanders.

The project will use the valuable historical collection of oral sources preserved at CegeSoma. The interviews made during the course of the project will eventually be added to the collection.

A project with a social dimension

It is expected that the project will lead to a better understanding of the way Belgians came to terms with the Second World War. Moreover, we hope that the project will shed a light on the effects of unresolved collective traumas on the making of persistent social tensions within a society .

To consult the video of the project TRANSMEMO, please click [here](#).

[Nico Wouters](#)

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Répression et exécution de collaborateurs, 1944 – Photo A. Neufort. Coll. CegeSoma CA 553

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ARCHIVES – UGESCO Project : High-quality Spatial-temporal Metadata for the Digitized Collections

The UGESCO project was launched on 1 April. It is a two-year project coordinated by the ELIS department of Ghent University, with the participation of CegeSoma (Belgian State Archives), the STIC department of the Université Libre de Bruxelles, the Arts Faculty of the University of Leuven and the Geography department of Ghent University.

High-quality Metadata for a Better Exploration of Digitized Collections

One of the major problems concerning the access to the digitized collections of the Belgian Federal Scientific Organizations concerns the uneven quality of their metadata, which impacts the exploration and interpretation of their contents. Audiovisual collections are particularly affected by this phenomenon. Spoken sources cannot be explored as easily as textual documents, while image recognition software for iconographical sources is still relatively limited in terms of performance. Common European platform projects such as [EHRI](#) have shown the importance of the interoperability of data and of the need to optimize data quality to improve access.

A 'Toolbox' for the Professionals and a Platform for the PublicThe UGESCO project (Upscaling the Geo-temporal Enrichment, Exploration and Exploitation of Scientific Collections) wants to focus in particular on the problem of **geo-temporal metadata**. For this purpose, two major objectives have been identified:

- To explore the added value of the retrieval of geo-temporal metadata (including the study of the possibility of interlinking different collections) and their improvement through IT techniques and recent developments in linguistic engineering. The aim is to develop a toolbox which will automatically register improvements in metadata quality.
- To develop a web-based public platform which allows the exploration of these metadata in time and space.



<http://online.rutgers.edu/resources/articles/an-introduction-to-metadata-master-of-information/?program=mi>

Furthermore, UGESCO aims to examine the added value of a crowdsourcing platform with regard to the validation and improvement of the generated metadata. As such, the public will be involved in the project as well.

CegeSoma Doubly Involved

CegeSoma participates in the UGESCO project on two levels. First, a recently engaged researcher will work specifically on the section 'users'. He will be charged with defining the needs of the Federal Scientific Institutions concerning quality improvements of geo-temporal metadata. Additionally, he will identify the target groups susceptible of using the platform, while he will also carry out tests of the various tools under development. The problem of crowdsourcing will of course be an important element in this 'users' study. Furthermore, CegeSoma aims to act as a content provider for UGESCO. As such, it will provide metadata sets to the other work packages which will be used as case studies by researchers. These sets will be completed by other collections, keeping in mind the need to constantly evaluate their interoperability.

[Mathieu Roeges](#)

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Open WORKSHOP ‘Scope and Limits of Reconciliation’

On **29 May**, CegeSoma and [CECRI](#) will organize an open workshop on the scope and limits of reconciliation ('Scope and Limits of Reconciliation'). Sandra M. Rios Oyola and Björn Krondorfer will exchange views on the subject.

Dr. **Sandra M. Rios Oyola** is a Colombian sociologist, lecturer at the department of International Studies at Leiden University. Her research interests cover the study of memory, religion, peace processes, and transitional justice from an interdisciplinary perspective. **Björn Krondorfer** is Director of the Martin-Springer Institute at Northern Arizona University and Endowed Professor of Religious Studies at the Department of Comparative Cultural Studies. Nationally and internationally, Krondorfer facilitates intercultural encounters on issues of conflict, memory, and reconciliation.

There will be time for **discussion** at the end of the workshop.

Scope and Limits of Reconciliation

With two guest speakers



Dr. Sandra Eics
Leiden University



Björn Krondorfer
Northern Arizona University



May 29



14.30 - 16.30 PM



Cegesoma
Square de l'aviation, 29
1070 Brussels
(near Brussels-Midi)



Practical details

Registration for the workshop is free but participation is limited. Please register via [Lut Van Daele](#) (02/556.92.99)

Venue : CegeSoma, 29, square de l'aviation 1070 Brussels

Schedule : 2.30 p.m. – 4.30 p.m.

Language: English

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