

CEGESOMA - State Archives

NEWSLETTER

No 102 - March 2025

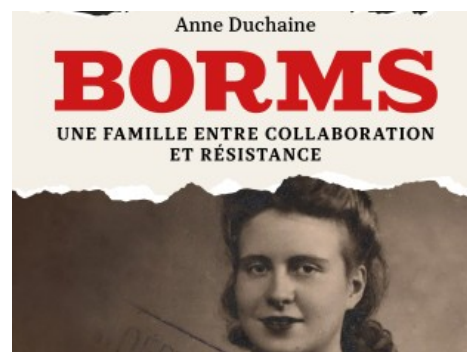


ON THE AGENDA

BORMS, A FAMILY BETWEEN COLLABORATION AND RESISTANCE

On Wednesday April 23, Anne Duchaine will look at the controversial personality of her great-uncle, August Borms, and the resistance activities of her parents. She will discuss the construction of identity, the meaning of the word "resist", commitment and the transmission of memory. The interview will be conducted by Aline Cordonnier.

► [Read more](#)



THE SPOILATION OF JEWISH TENANTS IN PARIS

Join us on May 22 for a Public History Meeting with Sarah Gensburger. She will present the results of her research on this dispossession, ignored by historians, at the crossroads between the history of the Holocaust and that of housing. The interview will be conducted by Laurence Schram.

► [Read more](#)

PUBLICATION

JOURNAL OF BELGIAN HISTORY

The first issue 2025 features a series of recent research articles on 20th-century Belgian history, plus two contributions in the 'debate' section on the Resistance.

► [Read more](#)



RESEARCH

THE CONCILIARE PROJECT

After a year's research, we take stock of this European project on the legacy of the colonial past, and discover its new website.

► [Read more](#)





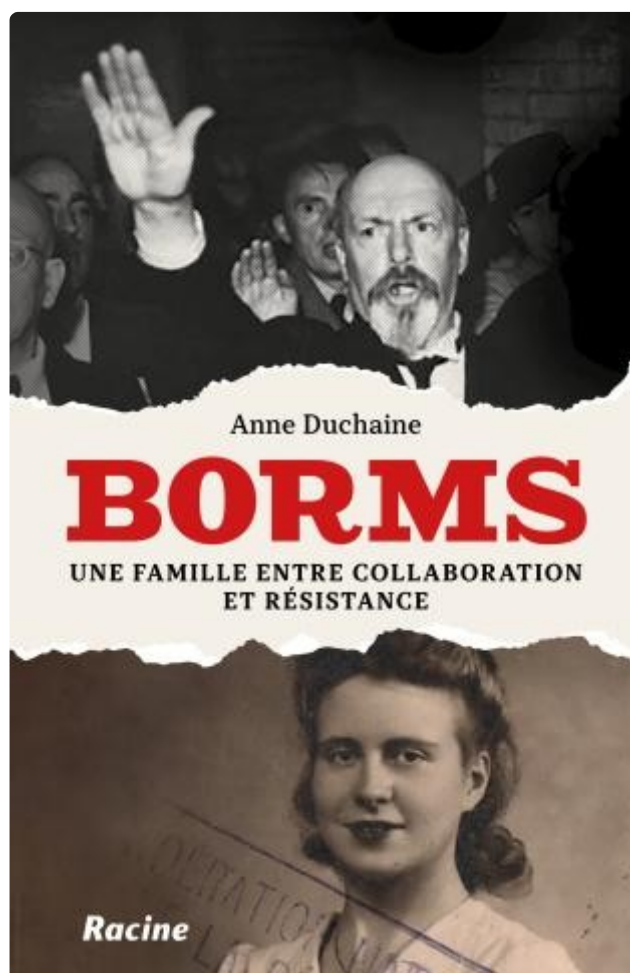
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Borms, a family between collaboration and resistance.

CegeSoma Public History Meetings (2025-3)

World War II [Conference](#)



Conference-debate (in French) with guest Anne Duchaine.

A talk led by Aline Cordonnier.

Within the Borms family, two figures stand out, seemingly at odds with each other: August, a Flemish nationalist, close to the Nazis, collaborator during both world wars, arrested in 1945 and executed in April 1946, and his niece, Regina, a resistance fighter with the Armed Partisans, arrested in Liège in 1944 and deported “Nacht und Nebel” to the Gommern and Ravensbrück concentration camps.

Anne Duchaine, author of '*Borms, une famille entre collaboration et résistance*', is the daughter of Regina Borms and Jacques Duchaine, both members of the Armed Partisans. Interested by her mother's connection with her paternal uncle, August Borms, she looked into this controversial figure, and gained access to his repressive files, enabling her to understand his involvement in the inner circles of National Socialism.

At the same time, realizing that she had only a fragmentary knowledge of her parents' resistance activities, she became a meticulous explorer of World War II archives and assiduously frequented the reading rooms of CegeSoma, CARCoB and Dacob.

Anne Duchaine retraces this family saga and then plunges us into the post-war years, particularly those of disillusionment in the face of the recomposition of geopolitical alliances. She examines the construction of identity in the face of a parent wounded by her executioners and, beyond her own family history, a reflection on many other similar stories, questions the meaning of the word "resist", as well as the themes of commitment and the transmission of memory.

Who exactly was August Borms, and what were the links between his life and that of his niece? What prompted Regina Borms, born in East Flanders and a committed Communist, to join the Resistance and, once deported, to stand up to the Nazis? What is our subjective relationship with history? How and what can we pass all this on? How can we guarantee a living memory that can inform and help us understand the present?

Our guest will answer these questions and present the results of her research on Wednesday 23 April. The debate will be moderated by Aline Cordonnier. This event will take place in the CegeSoma conference room as part of the Public History Meetings, in partnership with the association 'Friends of CegeSoma'.



Anne Duchaine graduated from *UCL* and began her career in psychiatry before becoming a researcher in the sociology of work. She has published work and articles in the *Courrier hebdomadaire du CRISP*, *La Revue nouvelle* and *L'Observatoire*. In 2019, she spoke as part of the Transmemo research project on children of resistance fighters and children of collaborators, then for the TV documentary "*Les enfants de résistants - Belgique 1940- 1945*" (Children of resistance fighters - Belgium 1940-1945).



Aline Cordonnier is a cognitive psychologist by training and a post-doctoral researcher at *UCLouvain*, where she studies the complex interaction between individual and collective memory. Her current work aims to understand how personal and historical memories of controversial pasts are transmitted from one generation to the next within families, contributing to our understanding of how shared narratives shape family identity and cultural continuity.



23/04/2025 - 14:00 to 15:30

PRACTICAL INFORMATION :

Where: CegeSoma conference room, Aviation Square 29, 1070 Brussels

When: Wednesday, 23 April 2025 (2:00 pm to 3:30 pm)

Registration required: isabelle.ponteville@arch.be or 02.556.92.11

Admission fee: €5.00 to be paid on site

Interested parties can purchase the book on site for €27.50 (please bring the exact amount in cash).

Anne Duchaine, *Borms. Une famille entre collaboration et résistance*, Brussels, Racine 2024, 384 p.
Please bring a friend!

Main language

French

BROWSE THE BOOK

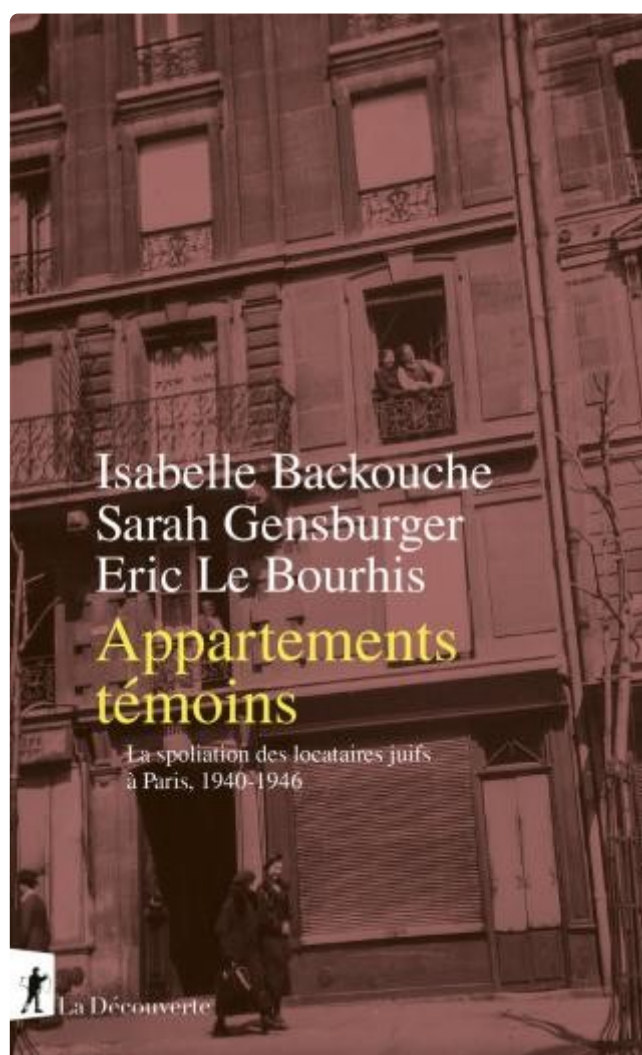
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Appartements témoins. La spoliation des locataires juifs à Paris, 1940-1946.

CegeSoma Public History Meeting (2025-4)

World War II [Conference](#)



Conference-debate (in French) with guest Sarah Gensburger.

An interview led by Laurence Schram.

At the time of the Liberation, the return to ordinary life was not easy for the vast majority of Jews in the Paris region who had survived the war. Out of a population of some 200,000 Jews before 1940, 40,000 were murdered. To survive, the majority of them left their homes, either for the Free Zone, the provinces or some other address in the capital. When they returned, they found their apartments occupied by non-Jewish families, leaving them dispossessed. Contrary to popular belief, these new tenants did not move in spontaneously, but under the aegis of the Vichy authorities, backed by the Germans. Worse still, it was ratified by the restored Republic after the Liberation.

The book '*Appartements témoins. La spoliation des locataires juifs à Paris, 1940-1946*' tells the untold story of this dispossession, at the crossroads of the Shoah and housing history. A public policy was introduced to satisfy a Parisian population in need of shelter. The aim was also to rehouse victims of the Allied bombing raids. Jewish people found themselves excluded from the real estate market, where owners, civil servants, evacuees, neighbors, concierges and "well-connected" customers - in short, Parisian society in all its diversity - all came together. Thousands of unpublished archival documents, tearful letters and discriminatory paperwork describe this spoliation.

Long after the Liberation, virulent anti-Semitism was expressed regarding these apartments, as the returning Jews disrupted the arrangements of the time of the Occupation: the restored Republic eventually worked to limit their right to return. As such, these apartments bear witness to the mechanisms by which Jews were excluded from Parisian society. This book finally gives them a voice.

Sarah Gensburger will present the results of her research on Thursday May 22. The debate will be moderated by Laurence Schram. This event will take place in CegeSoma's conference room as part of the Public History Meetings program, in partnership with the non-profit organization 'Friends of CegeSoma'.



Director of research at the *CNRS, Centre de Sociologie des Organisations - Sciences Po Paris*, **Sarah Gensburger** is a sociologist and political scientist of memory and a Shoah historian. Besides the book presented at this meeting, she co-edited among others : *Qui pose les questions mémorielles ?* ; with Jenny Wustenberg (dir.), *Décommémoration. Quand le monde déboulonne et change les noms de rues*, or *The Covid-19 Pandemic and Memory. Remembrance, commemoration, and archiving in crisis*. (photo Julian Tapprich)



Laurence Schram, historian at Kazerne Dossin and scientific collaborator at Brussels Free University, took part in the design and creation of the Jewish Museum of Deportation and Resistance (1995), in close collaboration with Prof. Maxime Steinberg. She contributed to the

renovation of the Belgian pavilion at Auschwitz, the new Kazerne Dossin Museum and its memorial. Author of studies on the Shoah in Belgium, she wrote her doctorate on the history of the Dossin barracks. Her research was awarded the Natan Ramet Prize in 2016 and the Jacques Rozenberg - Auschwitz Foundation Prize. Her book *Dossin - l'antichambre d'Auschwitz* was published in 2017.



22/05/2025 - 14:00 to 15:30

PRACTICAL INFORMATION :

Where: CegeSoma conference room, Aviation Square 29, 1070 Brussels

When: Thursday, May 22, 2025 (2:00 pm to 3:30 pm)

Registration required: isabelle.ponteville@arch.be or 02.556.92.11

Event fee: €5.00 to be paid on site

Isabelle Backouche, Sarah Gensburger, Eric Le Bourhis, *Appartements témoins. La spoliation des locataires juifs à Paris, 1940-1946*, Paris, Editions La Découverte, 2025, 448 p.

Main language

French

OBTAIN THE BOOK (PAPER OR DIGITAL VERSION)

READ AN EXCERPT FROM THE BOOK

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[Home](#) » [News](#) » The first 2025 issue of the Journal of Belgian History is out !

The first 2025 issue of the Journal of Belgian History is out !



This issue contains four articles presenting a series of recent research studies on the history of Belgium in the 20th century.

Juliette Masquelier (*UAntwerpen* and *ULB*) and **Margaux Roberti-Lintermans** (*UCLouvain*) examine the role of Christian and socialist women's movements in the reform of childcare services in French-speaking Belgium around the 1970s. The political struggle of these movements played a role in the gradual "depillarization" of Belgium.

Stef de Baedts (*UGent*) presents a reworked version of his master's thesis on the changing ideological worldviews of Flemish East Front fighters during World War II.

Matthew G. Stanard (professor at Berry College in Mount Berry, Georgia, USA, and president of the French Colonial Historical Society) presents his research on 'Bwana Kitoko' (Noble Lord), the influential but now somewhat forgotten film by André Cauvin about the young King Baudouin's tour of the Belgian Congo in 1955. He shows that Cauvin borrowed scenes, techniques and perhaps even themes from Leni Riefenstahl's notorious *Triumph des Willens* (The Triumph of the Will, 1935), an emblematic propaganda film for the German Nazi regime.

Finally, **Vincent Mazy** (*UCLouvain*) publishes a revised version of his master's thesis on the organization of the

Saint-Léonard prison in Liège during World War I, and the forms of internal resistance organized by political prisoners held in preventive detention sections set up by the German military authorities.

The issue also includes a debate section with an article by **Antoon Vrints** (UGent) on the Resistance in Flanders and an article by **Bart Willems** (State Archives, Antwerp) on the Belgian Resistance from a transnational perspective.

Priced at 15 euros (excl. postage) it can be ordered from Hilde Keppens, CegeSoma, Square de l'Aviation 29, 1070 Brussels, +32 2/556 92 11 - hilde.keppens@arch.be

Other news

[The Conciliare project is one year old!](#)

[Afternoon of reflection in Nijmegen about the Central Archives for Special Jurisdiction](#)

[Inventory operation at CegeSoma March 24-28, 2025](#)

[EHRI Becomes an ERIC to Secure the Future of Holocaust Research](#)

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[The SADO Photographic Archive: A Magnificent Addition to CegeSoma's Collections!](#)

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[JBH : new publication \(2024/3-4\)](#)

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[Belgian State Security Archives \(AA1333\)](#)

[Inventory of the archives of the Public Prosecutor's Office attached to the Military Court](#)

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[Home](#) » [News](#) » The Conciliare project is one year old!

The Conciliare project is one year old!



In March 2024, the European Conciliare (Confidently Changing Colonial Heritage) project began, focusing on the legacy of the colonial past. It brings together six countries (Belgium, Netherlands, Portugal, Italy, Finland and Croatia) and researchers from different disciplines (social psychologists, anthropologists, sociologists, political scientists and historians), as well as associations such as *ICOM Belgique-Wallonie/Bruxelles* and the Afropean Project. One year after its launch meeting, the project now has its own website - [The project - CONCILIARE](#) - which will enable everyone to follow the progress of the different groups, including through a newsletter.

On March 19 and 20, 2025, all the partners met in Zagreb to discuss the state of research and the challenges ahead.

Comparative dimensions

This project's originality comes from its comparative dimension. Each Workpackage - WP - ("School Textbooks", "Public Space", "Museums", "Culture & Traditions") associates different countries, most with a colonial past and others without. In the group working on public space, three former colonial powers are analyzed: Belgium, Portugal and Italy. Of course, while each country's colonial past is specific, it is also interesting to look at convergences. In all three countries, the colonial past is essentially represented by white male figures, while the colonized populations are largely absent or represented in terms of domination or recognition of the colonial power. In all

three countries, these representations are now being contested and debated. Here too, the project will enable us to compare the forms and conditions of disputes through cross-disciplinary research practices. The goal is eventually to encourage a more peaceful approach to this heritage, and a better understanding of this now-controversial past.

Public spaces and Belgium

CegeSoma/StateArchives is coordinating Workpackage 2 (WP), which is dedicated to public spaces. In Belgium, the team worked on identifying colonial traces in three cities: Brussels, Antwerp and Mons. It was decided to study, in the three countries concerned, the capitals as sites of power, as well as two other significant cities. While Antwerp was an obvious choice, Mons may come as more of a surprise. In choosing this city, we wanted to explore the question of whether protests are of the same order where traces of the colonial past are less present and where active groups have a somewhat different profile. In all three cities, the team's priority was to identify colonial traces, whether or not they are the subject of protest.

At this stage, just under 250 traces have been identified in these three cities. Most of these are street names, but statues, busts and monuments are also included in the study. It is these commemorative objects that are the focus of much of the protest action. Our primary objective, however, was to document these traces. To do this, we made use of a wide range of archives. At this stage, general information was collected for each of the traces.

All the data for the three countries concerned will eventually be compiled on a new site. This first phase - the mapping - will be completed by in-depth research into a number of controversial traces. Of course, the personality of Leopold II is essential and has already been the subject of extensive research. But our primary objective is to compare the logics of protest within the cities concerned: what chronology, what forms of action, what groups, what players, what press coverage, what public reactions to these actions... These are just some of the avenues of analysis that will be pursued in the coming months.

Other news

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