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CEGESOMA - State Archives

NEWSLETTER

No 71 - December 2021







NEWS

BEST WISHES

At the end of this year 2021, the CEGESOMA team thanks you for your loyal support.

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THE 'LATVIAN BEEHIVE' IN ZEDELGEM AND THE POW CAMP VLOETHEMVELD

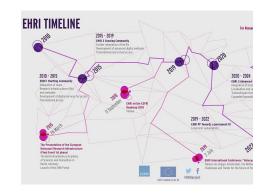
Fifteen experts on the history of World War II make recommendations on two sensitive issues.

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EHRI

Important new steps toward a permanent research infrastructure.

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HISTORY OF THE POSTAGE STAMP

A Call for Papers, 'Postage stamps, a reflection of social representations and of collective memories?'.

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CALL FOR APPLICATIONS

The EHRI - Conny Kristel fellowship programme 2022: an opportunity



for young researchers to carry out archival research in one of EHRI's partner institutions.

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FOCUS ON THE COLLECTIONS



LEOPOLD III BETWEEN FASCINATION AND CONTESTATION

Discover the ninth episode in our series 'The Librarian Talks'.

Read more and watch the video

RETURN OF JOURNAL AND NEWSPAPER COLLECTIONS TO CEGESOMA

Our entire library collections are now housed at Aviation Square: a real bonus for consulting documents.

► Read more



PUBLICATIONS



JBH

Discover the new issue (2021-4) of the Journal of Belgian History.

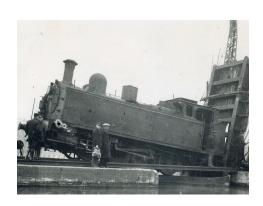
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AGENDA

INVITATION

'Trains and the Holocaust. From a Symbol of Progress to a Genocidal Tool': a conference (in English) organized by Europalia, the Auschwitz Foundation and Kazerne Dossin on 27 January 2022.

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VACANCY



BELCOWAR

The State Archives/CegeSoma and *KULeuven* are recruiting a work leader/tenure track professor for the FED-tWin Belcowar.

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Home » News » Best wishes for 2022!

Best wishes for 2022!



Dear readers, Dear friends,

At the end of this year, we wanted to tell you how much we enjoyed reading you, hearing you or meeting you and trying to respond in the best way to your expectations.

Indeed, many of you have turned to CegeSoma to obtain scientific information, to do research or to attend one of our public history conferences.

This year has been, for you as well as for us, synonymous with a change in our way of working not only due to the ongoing health crisis but also because in 2021, the major part of our archives has moved to two other repositories of the State Archives in Brussels. We will continue, as you know, to manage them and guide you in your research.

2021 also saw the birth of 'Wikibase Resistance', a research tool on people who were involved in resistance activities in Belgium during World War II. A great team, including all CegeSoma volunteers, has been working on completing this database of more than 150,000 resistance fighters.

Our research projects <u>EHRI</u>, <u>POSTWAREX</u>, <u>ADOCHS</u>, <u>PEOPLE@WAR</u> have made good progress and have been published in various forms, publications, online conferences, etc. The <u>Journal of Belgian History</u> has not been left behind: three issues have been published, including a double issue.

You have also followed us in increasing numbers via <u>Belgium WWII</u> (virtual platform on Belgium and its inhabitants during WWII), via our website, via our <u>Facebook page</u>, via our new <u>Youtube channel</u> And via our freshly redesigned Newsletter!

On behalf of the entire team of CegeSoma/State Archives, I would like to thank you, dear readers, dear friends, for your support, your encouragement and for the flexibility you have shown in the face of the circumstances and the changes of habits that have been imposed upon you. You have blown us away!

We wish you all a year 2022 rich in discoveries, a year of solidarity, a year of serenity! And please know that you are and will always be welcome at CegeSoma!

Nico Wouters, Head of CegeSoma/State Archives, on behalf of the entire team

Other news

Good news: the Library's collections are back!

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The legacy of the British PoW camp on the Vloethemveld site



On Friday 26 and Saturday 27 November 2021, an international panel of 15 historians with expertise in the history of the Second World War and its heritage met in Zedelgem, Belgium, at the request of the municipality, to provide a recommendation on how to deal with the recent controversy over the monument "The Latvian Beehive", inaugurated on municipal land in 2018, and the development of the former grounds of a huge PoW camp in which the municipality is a partner.

None of the members of the panel has received any form of financial remuneration for their contribution. They have reached their conclusions independently, without interference from the stakeholders in the issues under discussion.

The panel is an ad hoc association of experts and in their presentation of the facts and their recommendations listed in this short report represent only themselves, in their capacity as individual researchers and regardless of their institutional affiliation. The recommendations have not been submitted to the municipality of Zedelgem for prior approval.

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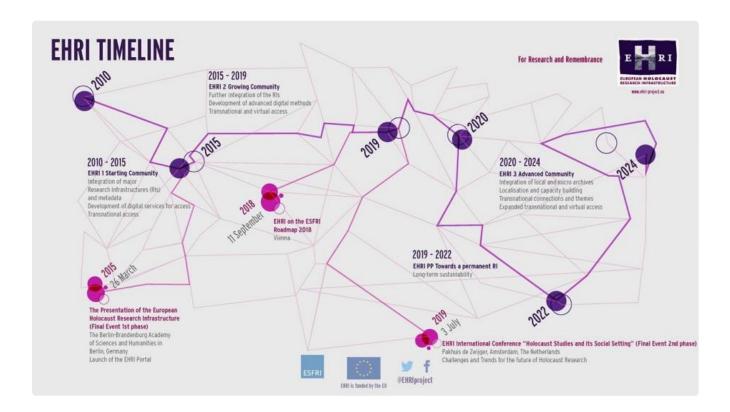
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Home » News » The Netherlands commits to EHRI-ERIC

The Netherlands commits to EHRI-ERIC



In recent months a number of major steps were taken in the process of transforming **EHRI** (European Holocaust Research Infrastructure) into a permanent European research infrastructure, a so-called ERIC (European Research Infrastructure Consortium). The path towards ERCI is led by the project EHRI-PP, in which the State Archives is a partner and in charge of work package 2 'Legal and Governance'.

The major news is undoubtedly that at the Malmö International Forum on Holocaust Remembrance and Combating Antisemitism on 13 October 2021, the Dutch Minister of the Interior and Kingdom Relations Kajsa Ollongren, has committed to establish the headquarters of the ERIC in the Netherlands and to provide long-term funding that includes the so-called "hosting premium" from the host country. The importance of this concrete financial commitment cannot be underestimated, and other key steps were made in parallel on the path towards EHRI-ERIC.

For instance, the *board of governmental representatives*, in which Belgium is represented since the beginning, has gathered a number of times already to discuss the advancement of EHRI-PP and to provide feedback about a number of policy documents, among others with regard to the management structure of the future ERIC.

Belgium

In Belgium too, a series of new developments can be reported. In September, Belgium has expressed its political support for the future EHRI-ERIC.

Together with another Belgian EHRI partner, namely Kazerne Dossin, two workshops were organised (on 24 September and on 26 November) about the further expansion of the Belgian National Node for EHRI. The permanent research infrastructure shall take the form of a 'distributed' research infrastructure. In addition to the central entity in the Netherlands, EHRI shall have national 'branches' composed of institutions and organisations that conserve archives and sources related to the Holocaust, that carry out research about the Holocaust or keep the remembrance thereof alive, or that are active in the field of digital Humanities, which is a key occupation of EHRI. Institutions and organisations located in Belgium that correspond to this profile were invited to the workshops and a plan shall be established in collaboration with them in the coming months in order to concretise

the Belgian National Node.

Based on policy documents and the feedback from the *board of governmental representatives*, the statutes of the future ERIC are also being prepared since late November. The State Archives / CegeSoma is in charge of coordinating this task.

Since November 2021 also, <u>Dr. Matthew Haultain-Gall</u>, who was already involved in EHRI-2, has joined the EHRI team at the State Archives / CegeSoma. He takes over parts of the work of <u>Dr. Adina Babesh-Fruchter</u>, who combines her work at EHRI with a <u>Marie-Curie fellowship</u> at KULeuven since September.

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Home » News » Call for papers (Webinar: 10th May 2022)

Call for papers (Webinar: 10th May 2022)

Postage stamps, a reflection of social representations and of collective memories?



Although today they are exclusively – or almost exclusively – destined for the world of collectors, **postage stamps** have nonetheless been an essential medium for the transmission of national identities for decades. As objects associated with everyday life and mass communication, stamps are an example of what is known as banal nationalism; These are objects that we use daily, but we have almost forgotten how much they contribute to our representation of society. This makes them all the more important.

Stamps are found everywhere, in democracies and dictatorships, in times of war and times of peace. They participate in the construction of societies and their collective memories. Although they are essentially "national" products, stamps circulate internationally, through their primary function as payment for postage', as well as through the world of collectors.

As an object of exchange and collection, stamps are of interest to researchers from different disciplines, but these researchers and their teams are not necessarily aware of each other. It is from this observation that the idea of organising a webinar to stimulate dialogue and reflection on some aspects of the history of philately was born.

Through this exchange, we wish to encourage reflection on a number of essential questions:

- 1. Decision-making processes: who decides on the images that appear on stamps? How has this evolved over the decades and in relation to shifting political regimes?
- 2. What are the criteria for stamp production?
- 3. How can we analyse their reception?
- 4. What are the prevailing logics? Political, commercial, cultural?
- 5. What are the major themes? What is debated and why? Are there any taboos or omissions?
- 6. What sources are available?
- 7. How can comparative approaches be promoted?

The Webinar is open to scholars and fields of all human and social sciences and will take place on 10 May 2022.

The organizers (Chantal Kesteloot for CegeSoma/State Archives & Jean-Michel De Waele for CEVIPOL (Centre

d'Etude de la vie politique / ULB)) will collect the proposals (max. 1 page) until 1st February.

Please send your text at jean-michel.de.waele@ulb.be and chantal.kesteloot@arch.be.

Feedback is to be expected on the 1st of February.

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Home » News » Launch of the call for candidates for the EHRI-Conny Kristel scholarships - 2022

Launch of the call for candidates for the EHRI-Conny Kristel scholarships - 2022



The EHRI (European Holocaust Research Infrastructure), of which the State Archives/CegeSoma is one of the partners, aims to facilitate international Holocaust research by improving access to archives and stimulating international contacts between Holocaust researchers.

The **Conny Kristelfellowships**, which offer young Holocaust researchers the opportunity to conduct archival research in one of the EHRI's partner institutions, help achieve this goal. An EHRI Fellowship can also be applied for at the State Archives/CegeSoma (if working in Belgium, you cannot apply for a scholarship at the State Archives/CegeSoma, but may apply for an institution outside of Belgium). A new call was recently launched, which is open until 15 January 2022.

- More information about application conditions and the procedure can be found here.
- Applications will be <u>accepted until January 15, 2022</u>.
- For questions about opportunities offered by the State Archives/CegeSoma for Holocaust research, please contact dirk.luyten@arch.be.

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In the CegeSoma Library: Leopold III, between fascination and contestation.

'In the CegeSoma Library: Leopold III, between fascination and contestation'. Under this title, we invite you to discover the ninth 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 ninth episode of our video series 'The Librarian's Talks: 9. 'In the CegeSoma Library: Leopold III, between fascination and contestation'.

The person of Leopold III, it is certain, raised a wave of passion and hatred, the latter being sometimes associated with the former, in accordance with the adage that "the cry of hatred is the last cry of love". And the CegeSoma library, once again, could not fail to echo this great trauma that shook the political identity of the Belgian people, from 1940 to 1950 ... at least.

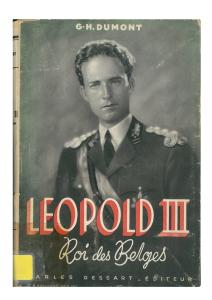
During these years "when Belgians did not like each other" but especially from the moment when writers became free again while the monarch had publicly become a factor of division(s), following his behavior in '40-'41 and his supposed ulterior motives, one witnessed the blossoming of a whole literature, sometimes hagiographic, sometimes polemical (the "pro" dominating rather than the "anti"...). Then, the "Royal Question" having come to its conclusion in the middle of the

summer of '50, this flow of ink rapidly diminished without ever quite drying up, sometimes even transcending the boundaries of the Kingdom to interest France and, to a lesser extent, Great Britain. With the passing of the decades, time having gradually done its work, the historical approach had apparently prevailed over the tensions of the past. But these were never far away. And when one took the



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trouble to examine them closely, many scientific contributions, apparently austere, struggled here and there to curb passions that had not been extinguished, on one side or the other of the old line of confrontation.



How can we be surprised? From the beginning, historians, rather but not exclusively self-righteous, went down in the arena to take the defense of the monarch, whether it is a Georges-Henri DUMONT (Léopold III, roi des Belges-1944) or a Jo GÉRARD (in the periodical Vrai, while

waiting for his Léopold III, un roi trahi-1963), and in this register a number of sometimes talented successors will be found (like a Christian KONINCKX or a

Jean VANWELKENHUYZEN...). But the publicists and essayists form much larger battalions than those of Clio's disciples, from the obscure Henri GERMEAU (Défense d'un Roi : Sa Majesté Léopold ///-1945) to the more elite Sir Roger KEYES (Echec au Roi-1986), from the ebullient

Jean CLEEREMANS (Un royaume pour un amour. Léopold III, de l'exil à l'abdication-1989) to general Robert CLOSE (Léopold III, les "non-dits "-2001). We are passing by some of the best and worst ones.

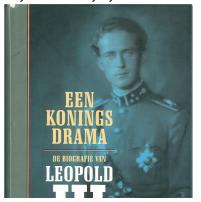


On the other side of the barricade, among the " anti's ", the actual book production is less abundant: In the case of the "anti" movement, the production of books is often limited to booklets (such as De

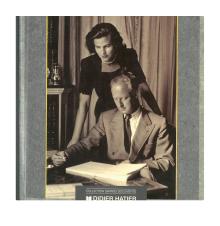
Waarheid over Leopold III / La vérité sur Léopold III, published under the auspices of the Front de l'Indépendance and Fernand Demany), with sometimes late inheritors, such as Walter DE BOCK (in Extreem-rechts en de staat-1981), who sees the King as the "figurehead of the extreme right"), or Serge MOUREAUX (Léopold III: la tentation autoritaire-2002). We should also mention the symptomatic contributions of Alfred FABRE-LUCE, GISCARD D'ESTAING (Antoine, not Valéry...) and above all Robert ARON, who used the Notebooks of Count Capelle for his Léopold III ou le choix impossible (1977).

In the field of pure historiography (but is there such a thing as truly "pure" historiography?), one should certainly not

overlook the now classic Leopold III et le gouvernement : les deux politiques belges de 1940, produced by Jean STENGERS in 1980, as well as the short but very dense study by Jules GERARD-LIBOIS and José GOTOVITCH (Léopold III, de



l'an 40 à l'effacement-1983), and also the collective work on Léopold III, published in 2001 by Complexe under the direction of Michel DUMOULIN, Mark VAN DEN WIJNGAERT and Vincent DUJARDIN. Let us mention that a Dutch edition of the latter was released the same year by Manteau... Finally, how could we not mention the major work of Jan VELAERS and Herman VAN GOETHEM, Leopold III. De Koning. Het







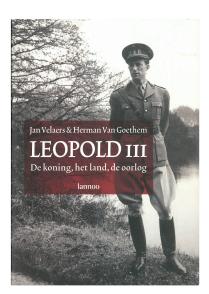
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land. De oorlog (1994), without any doubt the most complete work on the question?



One could go on and on: our Center has in its collections hundreds of titles on this issue, from the crudest pamphlet to the

most thorough bachelor's thesis, from the blackest literature to the most enamored writings. Not forgetting, of course, those dedicated to Lilian Baels, alias "Princess of Réthy". All you have to do is come and consult this abundant production in our reading room...



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Home » News » Good news: the Library's collections are back!

Good news: the Library's collections are back!



The rapid growth of our collections, as 2010 approached, had made it necessary to open up a new storage space on Belgrade Street, in the commune of Forest. For practical reasons magazines and newspapers were gathered there together with the iconographic documentation (photos, posters,...).

The time passed, and new opportunities appeared to fully integrate CegeSoma into the National Archives of Belgium. The transfer of most of our archives, mainly to another repository of the State Archives, has allowed us to recover a large space at Aviation Square, 29 (where, as everyone knows, is located the reading room that we share with the "Service des Victimes de Guerre"). It has thus been possible to re-establish the structural -and above all functional- unity of the Library: no more need to wait a week to obtain a magazine or a newspaper not yet digitized since, at this end of 2021, after an ad hoc move, the whole library sector is once again gathered in the same place, a stone's throw (or so) from the reading room.

We bet that neither the researcher nor the occasional reader wishing to consult one or another title in this imposing library will complain, since their access will be accelerated.

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Home » Publication » A new issue of the JBH (2021-4)

A new issue of the JBH (2021-4)

CegeSoma in the spotlight World War II Magazine JBH



The fourth and last issue of the Journal of Belgian History (JBH) in 2021 contains four individual articles and some new literature reviews.

In the first article, Laurence van Ypersele (professor at *Université catholique de Louvain*), Camille Berny (assistant in Contemporary History and Methodology at the same university) and Gauthier Godart (member of the *Centre d'Histoire du Droit et de la Justice* (*CHDJ*)) uses 53 interviews as a source to look at the traumatic impact of WWII on children.

Raphaël van Lerberge (PhD in history at the Vrije Universiteit Brussel) examines how information technology has helped shape the social security system in Belgium.

Pierre Lannoy (lecturer at the *Faculté de Philosophie et sciences sociales* at the *Université Libre de Bruxelles)* uncovers a 'forgotten history' by looking at the presence and deployment of Italian POW's who were interned in occupied Belgium after the battle of Caporetto in October-November 1917.

The fourth and final article is by the young historian Samuel Dal Zilio (*Université libre de Bruxelles*), who publishes his first academic article based on his Master thesis. He looks at the influence that families of patients could exert

on the trajectory of these patients in the so-called 'insane asylum' of Schaarbeek between 1853 and 1914.

Would you like to get a copy? Send an e-mail to cegesoma@arch.be or to hilde.keppens@arch.be

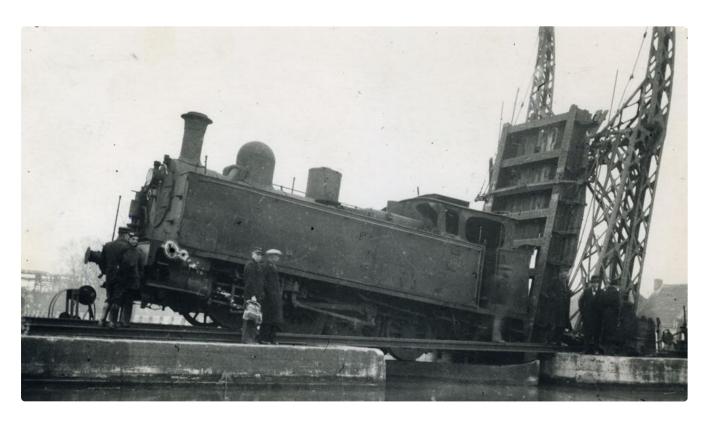
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Home » Event » Trains and the Holocaust. From a Symbol of Progress to a Genocidal Tool.

Trains and the Holocaust. From a Symbol of Progress to a Genocidal Tool.

Conference at Kazerne Dossin

World War II Conference



On 27 January 2022**, the international Holocaust memorial day, Europalia organizes the conference "Trains and the Holocaust. From a Symbol of Progress to a Genocidal Tool". Several speakers will look at different aspects of the role that trains played in the deportation of Jews and Roma from Mechelen. In the morning session, Nico Wouters (CegeSoma/State Archives) will give a brief talk about the role of the NMBS/SNCB and the policy of cooperation with the German occupier and Koen Aerts (UGent-CegeSoma/State Archives) about the attack on the XXth convoy.

The conference takes place in Kazerne Dossin and starts at 9.00 am. The official language is English.

You can find all practical information (programme, registration, etc) here : https://europalia.eu/en/trains-and-tracks/events/trains-and-the-holocaust---from-a-symbol-of-progress-to-a-genocidal-tool

** POSTPONED: a new date will be announced soon.



27/01/2022 - 09:00 to 17:15

Practical information:

Address: Goswin de Stassartstraat 153 - 2800 Mechelen

Main language

English

REGISTRATION

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TAGS

Jewish history Persecution of the Jews Local history

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Vacancies

The State Archives/CegeSoma and KULeuven are recruiting a work leader/tenure track professor for the FED-tWin Belcowar. The vacancy text can be found here.

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