

Session 4: Interacting with Collections

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These last two decades, the professional disclosure of WWII-related archives – documental as well as audio-visual – has been revolutionized. Classic academic archival research – and archival institutes such as NIOD, CegeSoma and the Belgian and Dutch National Archives are active players in innovating practices of digitization and as such giving shape to the new research perspectives that result from it. In this session, we want to reflect on the future consequences of these rapid changes.

- Will the disclosure of archives become transnational by definition and what are, in this perspective, the lesson's learned from EHRI?
- In light of the enormous public investment in WWII-history : how (and to what extent) can professional institutes integrate users' perspectives and participation?
- Will the Digital Turn make any national framework obsolete in the near future? Will it even replace national WWII-chronologies, making the end of the Chinese Civil War in 1949 a more acceptable terminus ad quem than 1945? What about the reunification of Germany in 1989-90?
- Is there still a need for institutes such as CegeSoma or NIOD, national centres for war-studies, that combine an archival and documentation function with a research agenda? Does the digital revolution itself necessitate a newly defined relationship with other (larger) institutes or networks in both countries?