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CEGESOMA - State Archives

NEWSLETTER

No 66 - May 2021



NEWS

CALL FOR CONTRIBUTIONS

Submit your proposal for a presentation about the quality improvement of digitizing heritage collections on the occasion of the study day of the BRAIN project ADOCHS on 14 September.

► [Read more](#)



RETURN OF THE PHOTO LIBRARY

Over 300.000 photos once again fill the archival rooms of CegeSoma at the Square de l'Aviation.

► [Read more](#)

FOCUS ON THE COLLECTIONS

LEON DEGRELLE IN THE CEGESOMA LIBRARY

Discover the richness of our collections of and about the leader of the Rexist movement.

► [Read more & watch the video !](#)



PUBLICATIONS



THE HOLOCAUST IN SOUTHEAST EUROPE

A new publication by Adina Babeş-Fruchter (scientific collaborator of EHRI at CegeSoma) and Ana Bărbulescu about the current state of research on the Jewish genocide in this part of Europe.

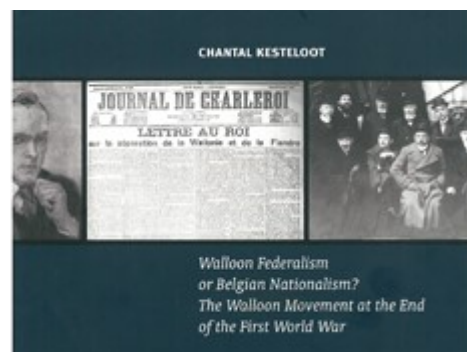
THE HISTORY in South-Eastern Europe

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WALLOON FEDERALISM OR BELGIAN NATIONALISM?

Chantal Kesteloot revisits the little-known history of a radicalized Walloon movement after the First World War.

► [Read more](#)



THEY CHOOSE CEGESOMA - STATE ARCHIVES



HANNES, INTERN PUBLIC HISTORY

Portrait of a young passionate historian, preparing a new module for Belgium WWII.

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COVID-19 PANDEMIC

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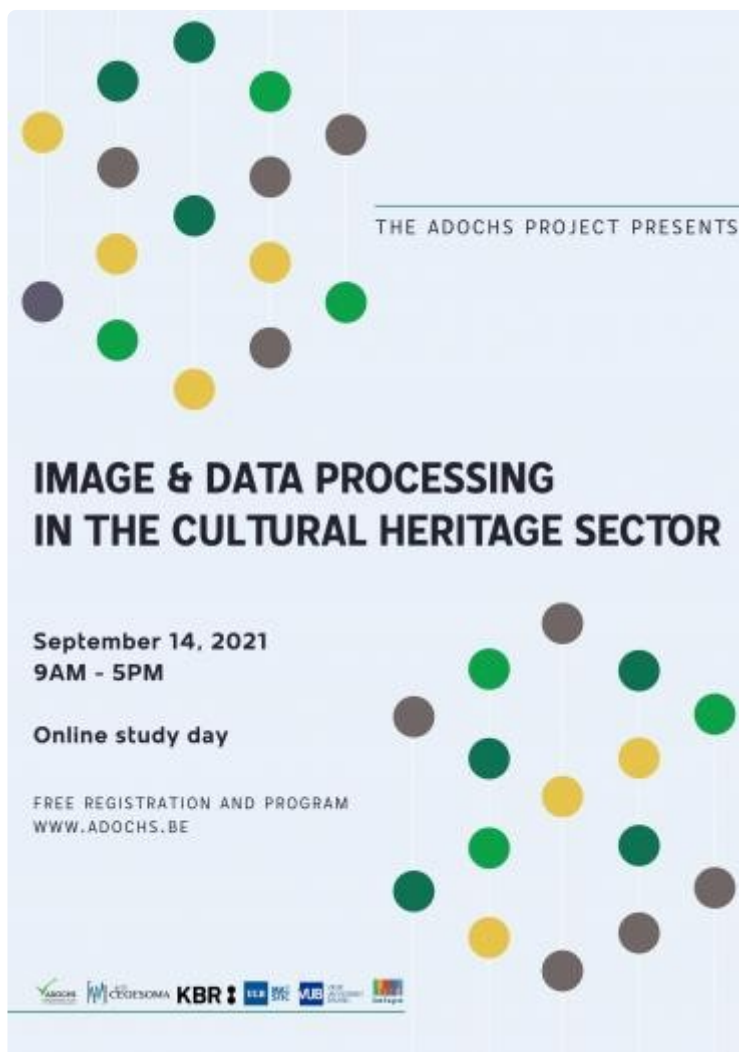
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SAVE THE DATE & CALL FOR POSTER

Image & Data Processing in the Cultural Heritage Sector (ADOCHS Study Day)

Cegesoma in the spotlight [Colloquium](#)



On Tuesday 14 September 2021, the [ADOCHS](#) project (*Auditing Digitalization Outputs in the Cultural Heritage Sector*) organises an international study day on Image & Data Processing in the Cultural Heritage Sector. While morning presentations will shed light on the project results to improve quality of the files produced in the context of heritage digitisation, those of the afternoon will open the debate on the possible follow-up of this project and the evolution of our organisations in the light of artificial intelligence.

This study day will also be an opportunity to **open a dialogue between researchers and professionals** on experiences and achievements in professional environments close to our own.

Do you want to join us?

During the afternoon poster session, researchers and professionals from libraries, archives and museums are invited **to present their ideas, reflections and projects** to improve the digital valorisation of our heritage and documentary collections and interact with the audience. [Under this link](#) you will find all the information needed to submit your contribution (**by 30 June 2021 at the latest**).

Final programme & Registration to come soon. Stay tuned!



14/09/2021 - 09:00 to 17:00

Organisers

CegeSoma (State Archives of Belgium)
Royal Library of Belgium (KBR)
Université libre de Bruxelles (ULB)
Vrije Universiteit Brussel (VUB)

Main language

English

Partners



KBR 



TAGS

Digital humanities

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[Home](#) » [News](#) » The CegeSoma photo library is back in the Square de l'Aviation

The CegeSoma photo library is back in the Square de l'Aviation



If, for most of our readers, the photo library is first and foremost an instrument that they consult online, Cegesoma does have a material collection of over 300,000 photos. For reasons of space, this collection was until recently located in our repository at the *Rue de Belgrade* in Forest. It took several round trips by the truck of the State Archives and the help of many colleagues for our entire photo library, kept in this repository, to be brought back to our premises at the Square de l'Aviation.

What does the CegeSoma photo library represent?

The photo library of CegeSoma counts about 310.000 photographs mainly concerning the Second World War. These photos come from press agencies, private donations, etc.

Among these 310,000 pictures, 230,000 come from the archives of the photo agency Siphos ('Service International Photographique') conserved at CegeSoma since 1972. This photo agency, founded in 1933, obtained in 1940, together with two other agencies, a commercial monopoly from the *Propaganda Abteilung*. Siphos thus quickly became the largest company in Brussels producing news images and supplying the press with photographic material. In 1943, it was taken over by the Atkantik agency (Berlin). In 1946, the director of Siphos and most photographers working for this agency were found guilty of collaboration by the Brussels Military Court. The equipment and archives of Siphos were confiscated. The Siphos fund is made of photos that were originally seized by the Chief Military Prosecutor's Office as pieces of evidence for the post-war collaboration trials.

The photo library also contains about 80.000 photos of individuals related to the two world conflicts (military, political, social and economic aspects of both wars), the post-war years (Cold War, Korean War, Belgian Congo and ex-colonials, Expo 1958 ...). Among others, we find the very beautiful photographs of [Janine Binon](#) (Hospital of the Ocean in De Panne and the Queen Elisabeth schools 'Charles Théodore' and 'Marie-Josée' in Wulveringhem during

14-18), the [Algoet](#) photo collection...

CegeSoma doesn't hold original vintage prints for 14,000 of these 80,000 photographs. Indeed, if all the photographic documents that have been entrusted to us have been digitized, only a part of them are kept in their original form. Some photos of individuals, once digitized, have been returned to their owners who, understandably, are often very attached to them. This is mainly the case of photos from the First World War and of ex-colonials. In these digital collections, the very beautiful [Cauvin](#) and [De Bremaecker](#) collections are worth mentioning.

Consultation, reproduction and donation of photographs ?

Most of our collections [are available online](#). However, among the CegeSoma's photographic collections, some digitized photos are not, due to copyright and privacy issues. If you have found a photograph that interests you but is not available online, please send your request to isabelle.sampieri@arch.be.

The return of the photographic collections to the Square de l'Aviation will not change anything in terms of consultation (no access to the original photo prints), but the waiting time for reproductions will be shorter than before. If you wish to obtain a photographic reproduction, we invite you to consult the page '[Reproduction of CegeSoma documents](#)'.

Finally, if you have a photographic collection related to the themes studied by CegeSoma and would like to ensure its lasting preservation and contribute to the memory of our society while stimulating the historical research of the scientists and readers attending our institution, please contact gertjan.desmet@arch.be.

Other news

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[Special issue of 'De Leiegouw' about resistance and collaboration](#)

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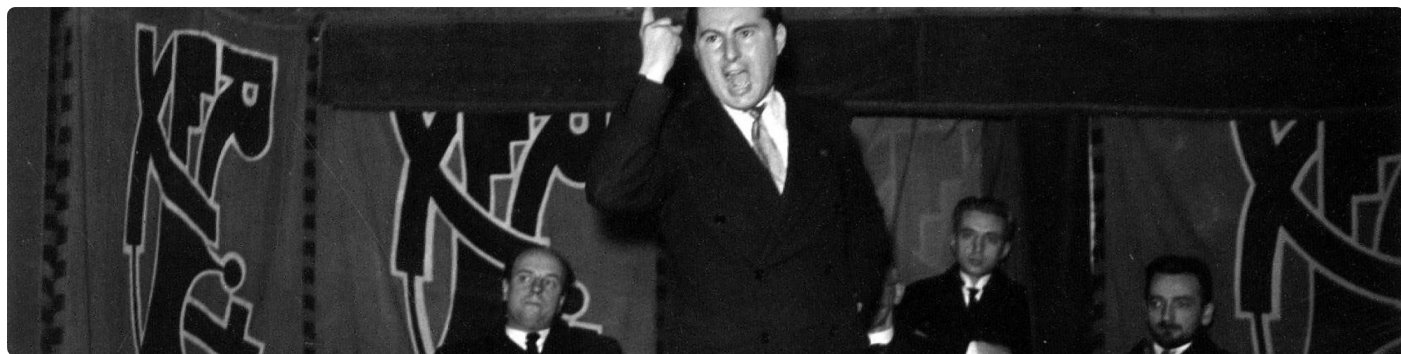
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Leon Degrelle : A Paper Führereke (« Little Führer ») ...in the CegeSoma Library

Leon Degrelle : A Paper Führereke (« Little Führer ») ...in the CegeSoma Library ... Under this title, we invite you to discover the fifth 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 fifth episode of our video series 'The Librarian's Talks: 5. Leon Degrelle : A Paper Führereke (« Little Führer ») ...in the CegeSoma Library'.

Léon Degrelle dans la bibliothèque du CegeSoma. Léon De...



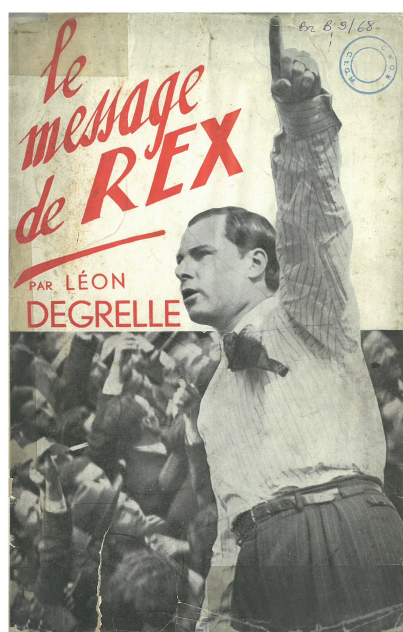
Why Degrelle? Why still speak about Léon Degrelle, former "Head of the Rexist Movement", champion of the "Crusade against Bolshevism" on the Eastern Front and long since deceased? Because in this year 2021 "national-populisms" are on the rise all over Europe? That it is good to remember, in these times, "the darkest hours of our history"? Well, not really. This is not our intention here. Our ambitions are more measured and probably more realistic. The character, as such, occupies in our Library a significant part of the shelves: no less than 97 writings are directly devoted to him, from the scientific work to the partisan pamphlet, and the titles specifically related to his Movement or to his fights on the Russian front are even more numerous. At this point, it seems likely that the steady flow of publications will continue unabated, since the most recent book productions (in both national languages) are only two or three years old. In short, historiographically speaking, the corpse of the Chief of Rex is still stirring. That is why we undertake to draw the attention of the "general educated public" and interested persons to this presence in our Library. A presence, that after the Liberation, many would have found unwelcome, even sacrilegious, since that name was so hated at the time...



Should we recall it? His presence (in 8vo or quarto-sized books!) within the walls of our institution owes a great deal to the offices of Dr. Goebbels, the Reich Minister of Propaganda. It was those who, at the outset, gave Degrelle the opportunity to exist thanks to the *Ordre Nouveau* media, and from 1943-1944 made him a hero (a herald?) in the small world of European collaboration, when the military situation was evolving more and more unfavorably for Germany and its supporters needed to be "doped up" by "edifying examples" created for the occasion. We will remember for a long time, in our homes, his smiling face, but in SS uniform, on the front page of the widely distributed magazine *Signal* one day in 1944...

This suited perfectly the extrovert character of this man who, moreover, by his nature and his socio-professional past or his political commitment, could in turn, according to the circumstances, profile himself as either a journalist, a media man, an inspired tribune, a war leader, etc... And make an illusion in the eyes of a certain public, always fascinated by the media rumor when it promoted the image of the "strong man".

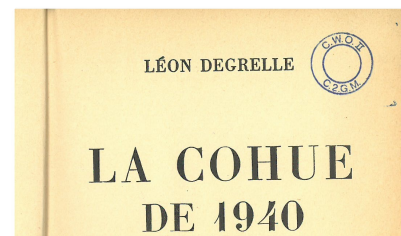
One thing is certain: his writings are not rare, his literary career spanning more than 60 years. At the beginning, we can pinpoint quite a few pamphlets concocted while he was still working for the *Action Catholique de la Jeunesse Belge* or/and the Editions "Rex". So let us highlight in our collections, among others, *Les Taudis* (1929), *Les Flamingants* (1930), *Vive le Roi !* (1931) and *Contre l'incinération. Vera-t-on chez nous rôtir les morts?* (1931)... Let us skip some... " and from the best "! Later, after having detached himself from the traditional Catholic family in 1935-1936 to play the tribune of the people against "les pourris" (« the rotten ones »), he was seen devoting himself to an aggressively polemical and openly pamphleteering literature, with the series of his "J'accuse" (« I accuse ») booklets : *J'accuse M. Segers d'être un cumulard, un bankster, un pillard d'épargne et un lâche* (« I accuse Mr. Segers of being a cumulard, a bankster, a thief of savings and a coward »), *J'accuse Marcel-Henri Jaspar, menteur, pillard et faussaire* (« I accuse Marcel-Henri Jaspar, a liar, a looter and a forger »), etc, etc... , .



Shortly after his electoral breakthrough, wanting to give his movement some intellectual or ideological consistency he applied himself to write for the masses of laymen attracted by his media-political hubbub *Le Message de Rex* (1936) as well as *La Révolution des âmes* (« The Revolution of the Souls ») (1938), which his opponents maliciously dubbed '*La Révolution des ânes*' (« The revolution of the Donkeys »). During the Occupation, as a militant committed to "European" National Socialism, he naturally did not remain silent, and during these 'years of lead' we record his modest (ahem!) *Degrelle avait raison!* (1940), his largely dramatized early war memories of *La guerre en prison* (1941) and (already!) with *Feldpost* (1944), his recollections as a veteran of the Russian front.

But it is especially during his post-war Spanish exile that he will prove to be the most prolific (it is true that he had to occupy his forced leisure...).

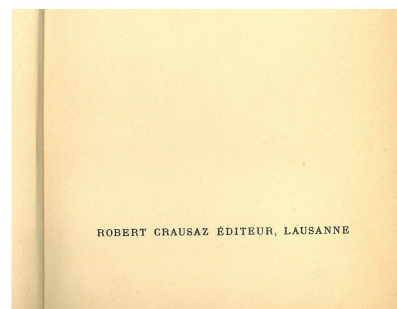
His writings turn apologetic with *La cohue de 1940* (1949), undoubtedly his greatest publishing success, a book in which he tries to "muckrake" scores of prominent politicians, still in good standing at the time in post-war Belgium. They then become lyrical with *Front de l'Est 1941-1945* (1969), or *Hitler pour*



1000 ans (1969), and veer to plain ranting in the two volumes of his final essays with historical pretensions entitled (no kidding!) *Hitler démocrate* (2002 - 2 vol.).



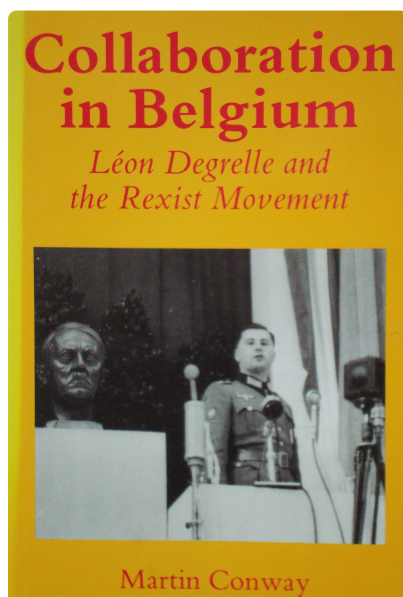
After his death, in 2000, his friends edited an unpublished text of his, *Tintin mon copain* (Tintin my friend), intended as a wink to "his friend Hergé", but although richly illustrated, the humorous charge that it supposedly contains is rather flat. He could have left it at that, but in the meantime he had felt the need to add his voice to the chorus of deniers of the Judeocide, with his *Lettre à mon cardinal* (1975) and especially his *Lettre au pape à propos d'Auschwitz* (1975), showing that he had forgotten nothing and learned nothing.



This non-exhaustive bibliography of his works shows that Degrelle knew how to talk about himself. Unfortunately, other people, polemicists or historians, had the same idea. And the literary harvest is just as fruitful in this respect.

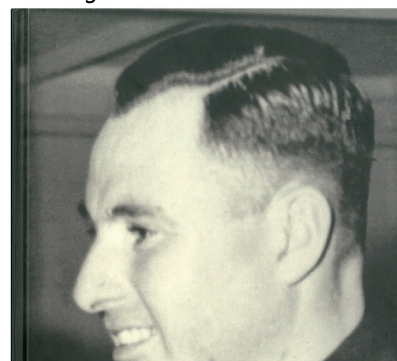
Writing about Degrelle

During his active political phase (roughly 1935-1945), writings naturally accumulated around his name, whether by his supporters (such as José Streeel, in *Ce qu'il faut penser de Rex* (1935) or Usnard Legros, in *Un homme, un chef : Léon Degrelle* (1937), not to invoke the ghosts of a Robert Brasillach and his *Léon Degrelle et l'avenir de Rex* (1936)) or his many opponents (Robert de Vroylande, with the ferocious *Quand Rex était petit* (1936) and the more vehement *Léon Degrelle Pourri* (1936), or Frédéric Denis, with his - somewhat premature - *Rex est mort* (1937)). If there is, in general, relatively little reliable information to be drawn from these committed publications, they are no less interesting for grasping the spirit of an era and, as long as Degrelle was alive, they sometimes enjoyed a long literary posterity in a more elaborate form. One thinks of the works of Charles d'Ydewalle (*Degrelle ou la triple imposture* (1968)) or of Pol Vandromme (*Le loup au cou de chien. Degrelle au service d'Hitler* (1978)), without forgetting *L'aventure rexiste-Essai* by Robert Pfeiffer and Jean Ladrière (1966), which presents a more "historicized" turn.



But truly scientific productions on rexism and its leader only began in earnest with the study of the Frenchman Jean-Michel Etienne, *Le mouvement rexiste jusqu'en 1940*, published symptomatically in Paris in 1968. Then came, no doubt indirectly encouraged by Maurice De Wilde's television broadcasts in the early 1980s, a succession of quality publications: Jean-Marie Frérotte's *Léon Degrelle, le dernier fasciste* (1987), Martin Conway's *Collaboration in Belgium : Léon Degrelle and the Rexist Movement* (1993), Eddy De Bruyne and his thorough work on the Walloon Legion or Rexism in the emigration across the Rhine, and (finally!) Bruno Cheyns and his excellent *Léon Degrelle: De Führer uit Bouillon* (2017).

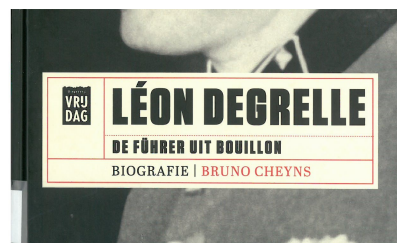
The latter examines especially the impact of the "Rex-leader" in the Flemish context, a hitherto little studied theme. This list is obviously not exhaustive, and, moreover, for lack of space, it does not take into account



any of the articles written about him or his movement in scholarly journals or in

the proceedings of academic conferences.

It is clear that the demon Degrelle is present within the walls of CegeSoma. But no fear, even if you wish to meet him: he is just a paper devil...and he cannot leave our reading room anyway!

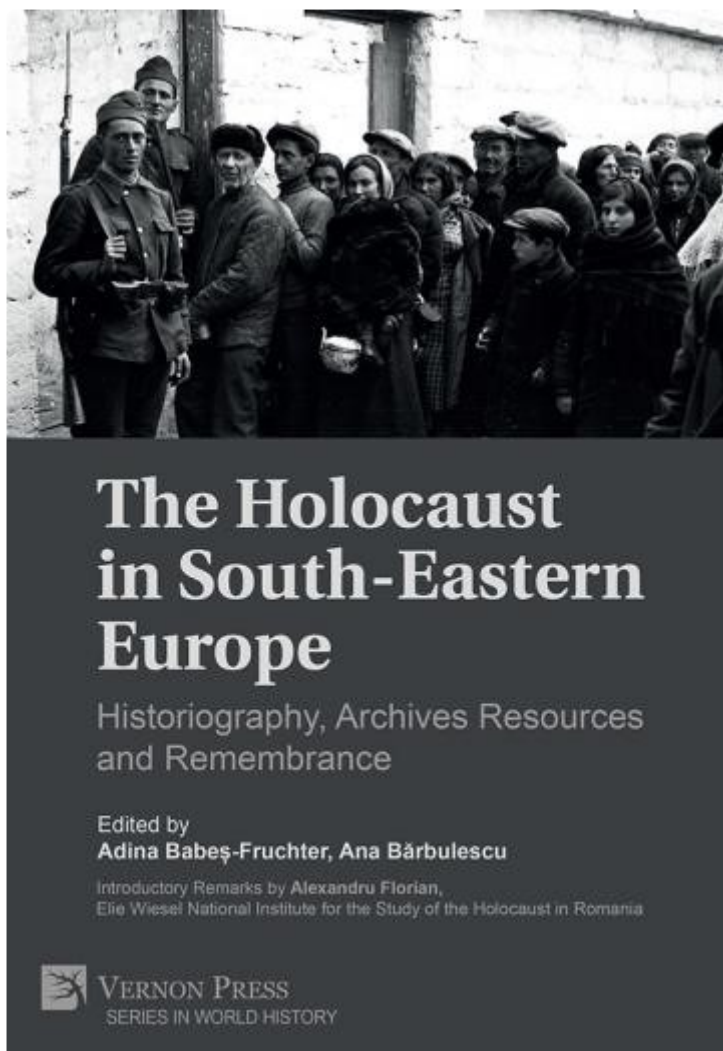


A. Colignon

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The Holocaust in South-Eastern Europe: Historiography, Archives Resources and Remembrance

World War II [Book](#)



For many decades, the Holocaust in South-Eastern Europe lacked the required introspection, research and study, and most importantly, access to archives and documentation. Only in recent years and with the significant help of an emerging generation of local scholars, the Holocaust from this region became the focus of many studies. The present volume aims to introduce the current state of Holocaust research in South-Eastern Europe to different categories of scholars in the field of Holocaust studies, to students and to the general public. Considering the dialectical relationship between archival resources, historiography, and memory, the editors' goal is threefold: to make visible the road taken by this region's countries from a historiographical paradigm that obliterated the Holocaust to a gradual development of Holocaust studies; to unveil the richness of the archival collections regarding South-Eastern Europe and the multiplicity of Holocaust research topics still underrepresented within historiography; and to pinpoint the mnemonic difficulties that this part of Europe has in confronting its recent past. Furthermore, by elaborating on the cases of three different Western countries - Germany, Belgium (article co-authored among others by Veerle Vanden Daelen and Dorien Styven from [Kazerne-Dossin](#), Belgium) and the Netherlands -, and describing the access to sources and Holocaust historiography for each one of them, the present volume makes it possible to identify important similarities and differences with several South-Eastern European countries as well.

The editors of the collective volume "The Holocaust in Eastern Europe: Historiography, Archives Resources and Remembrance," are [Adina Babeş-Fruchter](#) and Ana Bărbulescu. Adina Babeş-Fruchter, PhD in Political Sciences, is currently a European Holocaust Research Infrastructure researcher at the State Archives of Belgium/Centre for Historical Research and Documentation on War and Contemporary Society. Ana Bărbulescu, PhD in Sociology, is a senior researcher and head of the research department at Elie Wiesel National Institute for the Study of the Holocaust, Bucharest, Romania.

“The volume ‘The Holocaust in South-Eastern Europe’ highlights the centrality of open, transparent and well-documented archives for advances in Holocaust research and meaningful remembrance.” Dr. Reto Speck, Co-Director EHRI

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AUTHOR(S)

[Adina Babeş-Fruchter](#)

Ana Bărbulescu

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53,00 € (postage not included)

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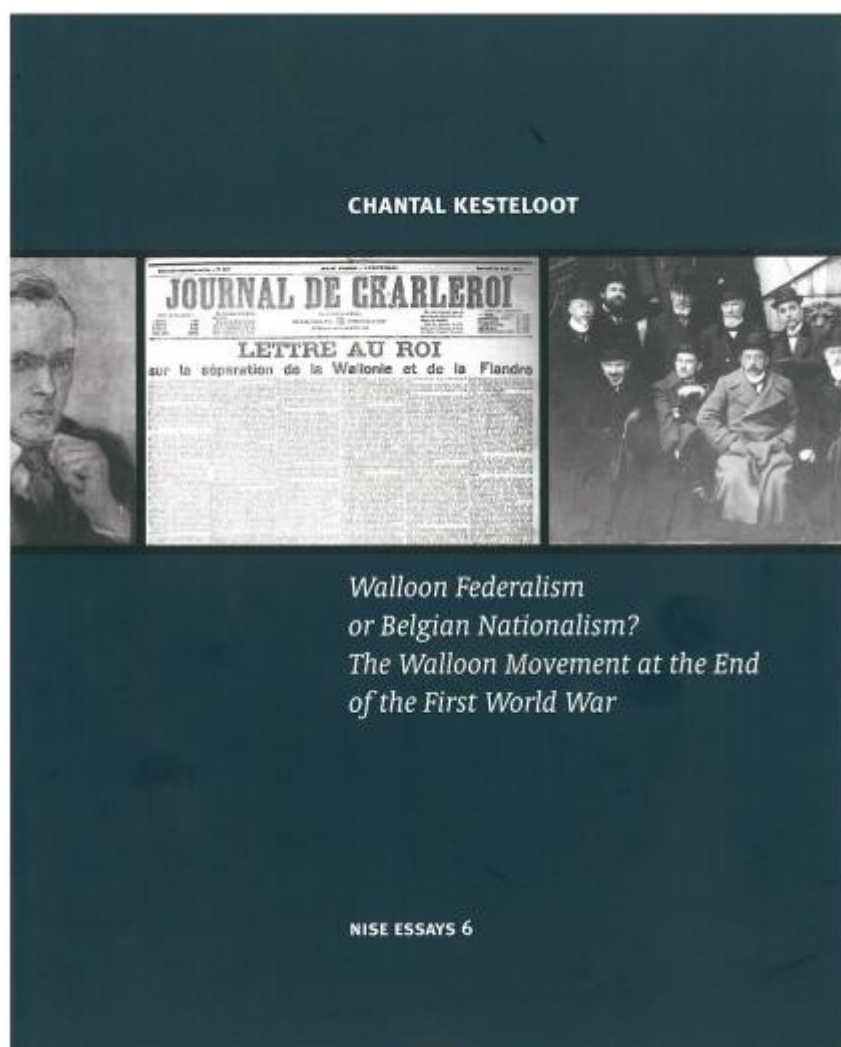
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Walloon Federalism or Belgian Nationalism ?

The Walloon Movement at the End of the First World War.

World War I [Book](#)



A long-ignored history

Much has been written about the history of the Flemish movement and the crucial importance of the First World War in its evolution. The history of its Walloon counterpart during the same period is much less known. It is true that the Walloon movement was a less important actor, but it is nonetheless interesting to see whether the winds of radicalism that blew over the Walloon movement in 1912 had a lasting effect.

For a long time, people were satisfied with the idea of a Walloon movement falling into lethargy from July 1914 to the spring of 1919, little or nothing happening between these two dates. Recent research has helped to nuance this vision. The Walloon movement, both in occupied Belgium and in Paris, was neither inactive nor silent, and the occupying Germans also took an interest in it. But what impact did this have at the end of the war, when Belgian nationalism seemed to triumph? Here also, research has mainly focused on Flemish nationalism, marked by the emergence of a new competing nationalist identity, in radical opposition with the Belgian fatherland. In short, a Flemish movement deeply transformed by the First World War....

A Walloon movement in full effervescence

On closer inspection, the Walloon movement also appears to be deeply marked by the First World War. It is far from the hesitations that characterized it before the war when it came to giving shape to projects for state reform. If the Walloon Assembly never really debated the question of federalism and its forms before 1914, it is quite different after the war. During the war various projects are prepared, usually in secret. The year 1919 sees intense debate, with no less than eight proposals ranging from two- or three-party federalism to regionalism submitted to the delegates of the Assembly. Eventually, the moderate approach prevails and federalism is temporarily sidelined.

The importance of these debates

Over a hundred years later and at a time when Belgium has officially become a federal state, these debates are interesting in many ways and allow for a better understanding of today's Belgium. They testify to the radicalization of the Walloon movement well before the famous "Walloon National Congress" of October 1945. They reveal how the war encouraged reflection. They already show the difficulty of choosing between a two- or three-party federalism. Through these debates, the whole question of legitimacy is also raised. At a time when the Flemish movement is being labelled as "activist", the Walloon movement is eager to show that its attitude during the conflict is beyond reproach. If the federalist projects are eventually brushed aside, it is because they might recall the administrative separation put in place by the German occupier. But the Walloon movement seeks above all to convince people of its irreproachable patriotic attitude. The two identities function in mirror image: to the compromise of one with the Germans, it is necessary to oppose the good patriotic choices of the other. From then on, and always in this perspective, no tolerance is possible for any form of Walloon activism. The movement wishes to gain in legitimacy. The entry of Jules Destrée into the government is one aspect of this strategy, the renoucement of federalism in late 1919 is another. The debates of 1919 reveal the extent to which some Walloon militants already wanted the end of a united Belgium. But the war and its impact are important factors in the long term... both in Belgium and abroad, for the Flemish movement as well as for its Walloon counterpart.

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AUTHOR(S)

[Chantal Kesteloot](#)

PRICE

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TAGS

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You are welcome to visit our reading rooms



Our reading rooms reopen **on Tuesday 5 January 2021** and can be freely accessed upon appointment and under strict observance of the safety measures in force.

Reservation of workspace in the reading room must be made by e-mail to the State Archives in question at least 2 workdays before the visit. You can find the contact details of our repositories [here](#). (CegeSoma : cegesoma@arch.be).

Please consult the [special preventive measures against Coronavirus/COVID-19](#) to best prepare your visit.

You can stay informed about further developments via our website and via [Facebook](#).

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