

PHD RESEARCH

A short overview of recent PhD research on Belgian modern and contemporary history

ANNELEEN ARNOUT

Sights/Sites of splendor. The shopping landscape in nineteenth-century Brussels

KU Leuven & Universiteit Antwerpen, 2015.

Supervisors : Jo Tollebeek & Bruno Blondé.

This dissertation discusses the history of the shopping landscape in Brussels during the nineteenth century. Historians have long focused on the new, big commercial institutes of the nineteenth-century city, such as the arcade and the department store. They paid next to no attention to the broader context of other novel commercial institutes, such as auction houses and market halls, and even less to more traditional commercial circuits and spaces, such as open air markets and small, 'insignificant' shops. The commercial isolation in which they often studied the big commercial palaces did not correspond with the historic reality. Markets, market halls, shops, department stores, arcades, auction houses, bazaars, and branches of multiples and cooperatives shared streets, pavements and clients. This dissertation thus starts from the sum of these places : the shopping landscape. It uncovers the different places where people shopped and examines their mutual relations. It investigates the way these shopping sites and their reciprocal relations developed throughout the nineteenth century. It scrutinizes how the development of the shopping landscape determined the development of a shopping culture and how that culture influenced the way the shopping landscape evolved.

This dissertation demonstrates that the shopping landscape in the center of Brus-

sels densified intensely as the century progressed. The century of modernity did not bring Brussels revolutionary new sites for shopping, but it saw an increase in the scale of different sites where people could shop. Shopping became a quintessentially pedestrian activity. Window-shopping thus became an increasingly indispensable part of the shopping experience. Shop windows and streets were designed to facilitate the practice more efficiently. The development of the shopping landscape was therefore strongly intertwined with municipal projects of city beautification, sanitation and rationalization. Both the successes and the limitations of municipal policy are clearly distinguishable in the development of the shopping landscape. This dissertation demonstrates that the development of shopping culture was a complex process that was engrained in a full range of shopping spaces. New sites for shopping, such as shopping arcades, market halls, auction houses and department stores, functioned as catalysts. Both old and new – and everything in between – sites for shopping were characterized by a surge of splendor all through the century – even if it did not always lead to the anticipated results.

MICHAEL AUWERS

The Island and the Storm. A Social-Cultural History of the Belgian Diplomatic Corps in Times of Democratization, 1885-1935

Universiteit Antwerpen, 2014. Supervisor : Marnix Beyen.

The Island and the Storm examines how processes of democratization have revealed themselves in the evolution of diplomatic culture. Focusing on the Belgian diplomatic corps as a test case and investigating the social

and professional practices and discourses of its members, it sheds light on a fundamental phase in the diplomatic corps' transition from a European aristocratic fraternity to the international meritocratic elite that it is today. As such, it contributes to our understanding of the process of negotiation between "pre-modern" and "modern" ways of conceiving and articulating international relations.

The study fills an important gap in our understanding of late modern diplomatic culture. Contrary to more 'traditional' diplomatic histories, it writes the political into the social-cultural history of diplomats. First, it clearly positions the institution of diplomacy within the national political system and implements a perspective that reconciles diplomats on the one hand and the three poles of 'mixed government' on the other hand. This implies scrutinizing the changing relations between diplomats and the monarchy, the members of the government, and parliamentarians and journalists. Second, it adopts the perspective of the diplomats of a minor and neutral state, whose stakes differed considerably from those of the much studied Great Powers and thus differently affected the ways in which the institution of diplomacy created meaning for its practitioners. Thirdly, the thesis examines the social-cultural history of diplomatic development before and after the transformational First World War. Contrary to the few existing social(-cultural) histories of diplomatic communities, which tend to offer static portraits of diplomats in an age when the paradigms of 'traditional' diplomacy still dominated conduct in international relations, this study scrutinizes how diplomats dealt with the transition from 'old' to 'new' diplomacy on the international level. On the domestic level, it takes into account how they reacted

to the social-political transformations caused by the war.

LUIS ANGEL BERNARDO Y GARCIA
The Belgians' stomach. "Economic Miracle" and Labour Force Restoration. Food Policy Origins and Development during the immediate aftermath of WWII (1914-1948) -

[Original Title : *Le Ventre des Belges. "Miracle économique" et restauration des forces de travail. Origines et développement de la politique alimentaire du second immédiat après-guerre (1944-1948)*]

Université Libre de Bruxelles, 2015. Supervisor : Serge Jaumain; co-supervisor : Jean-Jacques Heirwegh.

In the immediate aftermath of WWII, the "scarcity economy" of the occupation persisted in Belgium. In order to ensure food supplies for the population and maintain economic activity, authorities began to organize the national economy from above, though it had until then traditionally been left to the workings of the free market. The governments that succeeded each other after the Liberation were committed to restoring the labour force. Like defending a "strong franc", this restoration was necessary for economic growth, the maintaining of social order and political normalization. The heavy and unrewarding supply department was handed over to the Communist Party for most of its existence, which stretched from September 1944 to December 1948.

Belgium's choice (which was creditworthy) was to favour a policy of abundant supply, as opposed to the investment planning chosen by impecunious countries such as France, the Netherlands or the United Kingdom. Hindered by the legacy of the occupation, food policies

were strongly contested by the food sector. Immediately after the Liberation, labour class organisations strongly opposed the politics of austerity and the sacrifices required for Belgium's recovery. In fact, the food policies applied at the time -i.e. the price and wages policies and the general food supply policy- can only be analysed and studied in comparison with former food crises dating back to the first occupation. To conclude, the food crises linked to the (aftermath of the) wars run parallel with a small-scale informal economy and are primarily the result of foreign supply crises.

JULIE BOUR

Between national and local: Louis Jacquinot, archetype of a moderate notable - [Original Title : *Entre national et*

local : Louis Jacquinot, archétype du notable modéré]

Université de Liège & Université de Lorraine-Metz.
Supervisor : Cathérine Lanneau.

Louis Jacquinot was born in 1898 in Gondrecourt-le-Château, a commune in south Meuse, and died in 1993 in Paris. He remains an unknown figure in political history. However, he exercised governmental functions in the Third Republic and became a minister in the Fourth and the Fifth Republics. Overall, Louis Jacquinot served as a minister almost twenty times, including as Naval Minister (1943-1945 and 1947), Minister of Veterans and War Victims (1949-1951), and Minister of Overseas France (1951-1954 and 1961-1966). In parallel, his local functions also prove important: Jacquinot served as a Member of Parliament for Meuse from 1932 to 1973 and as a Member and President of the General Council in Meuse from 1945 to 1973. The career of this moderate is examined in view of his longevity. This thesis traces his

life and his local and national career, but is especially devoted to the study and analysis of elected positions' roles and guidance.. Indeed, the Meuse MP archives contain 17,000 letters that are used in this work. A general analysis of departmental practices over almost a century is achieved through the use of other sources from archives in Meuse, including those from Jacquinot's predecessors (Raymond Poincaré, Jules Develle, André Maginot) and successors (Jean Bernard).

SÉBASTIEN CHARLIER

Diffusion and reception of modern architecture in Liège (1928-1939)

- [Original title : *Diffusion et réception de l'architecture moderne à Liège (1928-1939)*]

Université de Liège, 2014. Supervisor : Jean-Patrick Duchesne.

The objective of this thesis is to sketch the most accurate portrait possible of modern architecture in Liège in the 1930s through an analysis of local architectural reviews and an exhaustive study of architectural production from 1928 to 1939.

The first research axis demonstrates the wide range of views held by review editors. There were thus a range of doctrinaire (*L'Équerre*), industrial (*La Technique des travaux*), and corporatist (*Le Rez-de-chaussee*) reviews. Beyond contributing to the diffusion of architectural forms and theories, reviews also provided forums for debate not confined to Brussels. Like those in the capital, periodicals in Liège represented the great struggles – be they aesthetic, social, economic, or political – that marked Belgian society in between the two world wars.

The second research axis concerns questions of reception and draws on an analysis of

building authorization requests between 1928 and 1939.

The first narrative demonstrates the late character of the emergence of modern architecture in Liège. Unlike Brussels, Liège lost its modernist thinkers after the war. This dearth explains Liège architects' struggle to spread their ideas in the face of conservative masters of construction.

It is thus not shocking that Liège did not see the rare successful application of modern architecture until later. In the 11 years covered by our study, only the houses built for the Tribouillet contest (1930) and Queen Astrid's playground pavilion appear as evidence of modern architecture's influence. Besides these manifestations, the immense majority of architectural production in Liège diverged from theoretical principles, instead favoring a freer and more intuitive interpretation that gave birth to new eclecticism.

LORE COLAERT

History from the Grave. The Politics of Memory in Exhumations of Mass Graves from the Spanish Civil War

Universiteit Gent, vakgroep geschiedenis, 2015.
Supervisor : Gita Deneckere.

The Spanish transition to democracy after the death of Franco in 1975 has long served as a model to researchers and practitioners of 'transitional justice'. This interdisciplinary field studies strategies used by states and international institutions to deal with a legacy of human-rights abuses. The Spanish transition entailed an agreement not to address the past of the Civil War (1936-39) and dictatorship (1939-75) inside the political and judicial arena. This 'pact of forgetting' guided Spain

relatively peacefully into a democratic welfare state. Due to recent shifts in memory, the Spanish transition model seems to have broken down through 'the recovery of historical memory'. The practice that most contributes to the rupture of this 'pact of forgetting' is the exhumation of mass graves left by Francoist repression during and after the Civil War.

This dissertation aims to assess the contribution of these exhumations to a new collective memory in Spain. The author critically questions the following ideas about the Spanish exhumation campaign: first, that unexcavated mass graves are sites of forgetting and traumatic memory and, second, that the exhumation of mass graves is a natural and universal reaction to this. The third idea that the dissertation questions is that exhumations contribute to the historical record of Spain through the revelation of unmediated, objective truth.

To this end, the author investigates what kind of representation of the past is constructed in the wake of the exhumations. They are therefore studied as 'memory practices' and the exhumation teams as 'memory activists'. The study uses a diverse range of data such as popular and academic literature, documents, social media usage, participant observation, and interviews conducted within the exhumation movement. The author carried out research with a major exhumation team, the Association for the Recovery of Historic Memory (ARMH), at a number of sites. Within an ethnographic approach, this study applies historical theory to the 'practical past' or to how history is constructed by social actors in society.

HANNE COTTYN

**Renegotiating communal autonomy.
Communal land rights and liberal
land reform on the Bolivian altiplano.
Carangas, 1860-1930**

Universiteit Gent, 2014. Supervisor : Eric Vanhaute.

This dissertation is the result of detailed research on local dynamics in the rural indigenous communities of the Andean Highlands, where production and government are regulated by strong communitarian structures. In the late 19th century, the Bolivian government promulgated a body of anti-corporatist measures that denied the collective land rights maintained by those communities. The central story of this dissertation is the thwarting rather than progression of this reform.

The province of Carangas, entirely situated on the altiplano, was one of the few rural regions where land reform did not materialize. While this is classically explained by its poor conditions for agricultural expansion and predominantly indigenous population, this research highlights the still largely hidden story of community defence and the multi-faceted resistance strategies deployed by these indigenous Bolivian communities. This is achieved through a combination of field work and archival research in and outside Bolivia.

The case study is framed by broader questions on the trajectories of rural change in relation to processes of globalization. Specific questions examine the disintegration and reviving of autonomous communitarian spaces throughout the cycles of world-systemic contraction and expansion. This is assessed in relation to the right to land and the imposition of standardized frameworks for land management, specifically in the rural Andes. Here,

century long processes of colonial exploitation and post-colonial extractivism result in a remarkable (but increasingly more vulnerable) margin for the preservation of communitarian land management.

The research results contribute to a better understanding of global-local interactions in which local actors, in this case rural communities, creatively re-negotiate the conditions of their participation and autonomy in a globalizing world.

ALEXANDRA DE HEERING

**Memories of the Past in the Ceri.
Three Generations of Cakkiliyars
Bear Witness (Tamil Nadu - India) -**

[Original Title : *Mémoires du passé au Ceri.
Trois générations de Cakkiliyars témoignent
(Tamil Nadu - Inde)*]

Université de Namur, 2014. Supervisors : Stéphane Leyens & Anne Roekens.

Caste, a specifically Indian form of hierarchical social organization, continues to form the backbone of Indian society. It still plays an important role in people's everyday life and shapes most people's trajectories, especially among the lowest castes, despite the fact that castes and particularly dalit (untouchable) communities have undergone a vast array of transformations since India's independence.

I adopted the oral history methodology in order to study these historical changes, as well as to focus on the ways in which Dalits relate to their own past. I centered my investigations on two cakkiliyars settlements (*ceri* in Tamil) located in the Western Ghats of Tamil Nadu (South India). With the help of an interpreter, I collected the testimony of more than 60 female and male Cakkiliyars spread over three generations. Fieldwork addressed

the following questions : How did the life circumstances of these cakkiliyar communities change over the last 60 years ? How did inter-caste relationships evolve in this period ? What was the impact of these changes on people's understanding of themselves in relation to other groups in society ?

At the micro level, this work endeavours to record the past of these communities and to 'un-knit' the social, political, cultural and economic changes that 'made the difference' at the local level, with particular attention paid to the dalit/non-dalit relationship. In this study, it appears that important contextual specificities have significantly impacted the differentiated paths taken by cakkiliyar people in both villages.

The study's broader contribution to scholarship centers on issues related to memory. Although Dalits share a common past, they remember it in many different ways. As other scholars have argued, I conclude that people's mindset today largely influences the perspective each one adopts while speaking about the past. I identified three main categories that characterize different departments one can observe in Cakkiliyars' oral testimonies : a) Dalits looking for their dignity, b) the hesitant Cakkiliyars and, c) the submissive Harijans. Each category implies a given mindset (a specific mental/psychological condition) that not only conditions one's behavior and aspirations for the future but also affects one's approach to the past.

OLIVER DE MARET

Italian Food Businesses and the Construction of Italianness in Late-Nineteenth-Century Brussels: Enterprises, Migrants and Meanings

Vrije Universiteit Brussel, 2015. Supervisor : Peter Scholliers; co-Supervisor : Fabio Parasecoli (The New School, New York).

This doctoral dissertation focuses on the public foodways of Italian migrants in Brussels as an innovative way of exploring how identities were constructed and community cohesion was articulated at the end of the long nineteenth century. It provides a detailed study of the Italian population in the city of Brussels and the commune of Saint-Josse-ten-Noode between 1876 and 1914. By focusing on all types of food businesses, their names, the products they sold, the people who operated them, and the advertisements they produced, it describes and analyzes the ways in which Italians commercialized Italian food and constructed images of Italianness.

Moreover, the dissertation reveals that Italian food entrepreneurs were quasi-omnipresent and highly visible in the Brussels public foodscape. They established diversified activities aimed at all social classes and strategically located throughout the city. The results point toward the birth of the first truly exotic culinary trend in Brussels. Italians articulated this entrepreneurial and culinary innovation through the introduction of novel foods, which were often familiar foods commercialized under a new, Italian label. Because the overall group of Italian migrants in Brussels was relatively small and economically modest, food entrepreneurs could not rely solely on Italian customers. In order to broaden their appeal, they advertised in French.

Overall, Italian food entrepreneurs created a specific *bruxellois* Italianness constructed around references to an Italian nation of cities and regions, the French-speaking features

of the Brussels foodscape, and notions of genuineness, quality, luxury, the bourgeoisie, exoticism, and cosmopolitanism.

BART DE SUTTER

The paradox of virtue. Helsinki human rights activism during the Cold War (1975-1995)

Universiteit Antwerpen, 2015. Supervisors : Maarten Van Ginderachter & Samuel Moyn.

Human rights NGOs devote resources to causes from which they derive no direct benefit. In doing so they practice virtue. But just like any other organization, they have to deploy these resources strategically to achieve their goals. Furthermore, there are thousands of human rights NGOs competing with each other for resources. Therefore, the hypothesis of this study is that effective activism has to fit into the interests of those actors that provide resources.

The literature on human rights activism lacks empirical analysis and takes an insider's view for granted. Based on resource mobilization theory and Bourdieu's sociology, this study explains through archival research why certain types of activism were successful and others were not.

The International Helsinki Federation for Human Rights (IHF), a coalition of so-called Helsinki groups that monitored their governments on their compliance with the Helsinki Final Act, serves as a case study. At the initiative of Helsinki Watch, the predecessor of Human Rights Watch, the IHF was formed in 1982. In joining the IHF, these Helsinki groups promoted the human rights principles of the Act and were simultaneously competing for the same resources.

Each chapter analyzes events in which the tension between principles and interests came to the fore, from 1975 to 1995. Empirical analysis starts in chapter 2 in a discussion of the formation of Helsinki Watch in 1979. Chapter 3 examines why Helsinki Watch formed the IHF. The next chapter discusses how the federation developed during the years 1982-1988. The last empirical chapter examines the consequences of the end of the Cold War for the IHF.

The study confirms the hypothesis that the promotion of human rights depends on the fight for scarce resources. The paradox of virtue is that this inevitable struggle leads to the distortion of principles.

VICTOR FERNANDEZ-SORIANO

The gun and the olive tree : Francoist Spain, colonial Greece and human rights in Europe - [Original Title : *Le fusil et l'olivier. L'Espagne franquiste, la Grèce des colonels et les droits de l'Homme en Europe (1949-1977)*]

Université libre de Bruxelles, 2013. Supervisor : Pieter Lagrou.

It has been common place to associate the process of European integration with human rights since its very beginnings. However, whereas a commitment to human rights is consecrated by the EU's primary laws, such was not the case for its legal predecessor, the European Community. Human rights were excluded probably for two reasons : they were already integrated into the domain of the Council of Europe and every matter of political interest was deferred to a later discussion on the creation of a political community. In this context, relations with the far-right dictatorships of Southern Europe would

become a significant issue in the political definition of the European Community. When these regimes asked to participate into the Common Market in the 1960s, the Community was compelled to debate the political limitations of such partnerships, and subsequently the European integration process's commitment to human rights and democracy. Experiences with the Southern dictatorships brought to the European fore a political and legal practice that would prove to be pioneering and useful to further developments. More precisely, they strongly contributed to the consolidation of the idea that the European Community is linked to a set of values identified with human rights, so that participation should be conditioned to their respect. This idea, although advocated by Europeanist milieus at the time, did not come into force in Community law until the 1970s, and even then it only did so gradually. When the dictatorial periods of Portugal, Greece and lastly Spain came to an end, the idea immediately grew that they should become the next members of the European Community in spite of their lower levels of industrialization. By that time, the political evolution of the European Community was proving that the Community was not just an economic organization, but also a political one founded on the rule of law. An April 1977 declaration officially affirmed for the first time the obligation of Community members to respect human rights. By that time, the Community was already eager to negotiate the accession of Greece, Portugal and Spain.

ANNE-SOPHIE GIJS

Repression and purges : The power of the absent : the avatars of anti-communism in the Belgian Congo (1920-1961) - [Original Title : *Le pouvoir*

de l'absent : les avatars de l'anticommunisme au Congo (1920-1961)]

Université de Louvain-la-Neuve, 2014. Supervisor : Vincent Dujardin.

Obscure religious movements, restless unions, industrial spies, impetuous journalists, foreign conspirators and nationalist rising stars... Between 1920 and 1961, the face of communism in the Congo was at the (very) least multifaceted.

Its reality, danger, and power not only varied with the political, economic, and social context in Belgium and its colony, but also with the international arena's challenges, both in the East and the West.

However, underlying these *variations* are several *constants* : hidden motives and aspects of the networks, recurring mental strategies and patterns will shape this fight against the red peril.

Using archives, works and unpublished testimonies that are Belgian, Congolese, and international and come from both from the liberal-capitalist and communist "edge", our historical and critical analysis demonstrates that, despite its failure to *in fine* establish itself in the Congo, communism nonetheless had an surprisingly mobilising power through the impacts and achievements that the fear of it generated.

This makes it possible to discuss "the power of the absent". Its influence is exerted in a host of areas, from police and military spheres – official and covert – to complex diplomatic and economic mechanisms, including of course delicate political and identity issues.

Using the concepts of “myth” in the construction of a communist Lumumba and “scapegoat” as a “crisis regulator,” our study concludes that broad human mechanisms are at work in the identification of a destabilising enemy and its elimination, which intends to produce symbolic appeasement or legitimacy.

STÉPHANIE GONÇALVES DE ARANJO-PASSOS
A war of stars : Ballet tours as cultural diplomacy during the Cold War (1945-1968) - [Original Title : *Une guerre des étoiles. Les tournées de ballet dans la diplomatie culturelle de la Guerre froide (1945-1968)*]

Université libre de Bruxelles, 2015. Supervisor : Irene Di Jorio.

My thesis examines the tours of the “big six” ballet companies at the beginning of the Cold War (1945-1968): Paris Opera, Royal Ballet of Covent Garden, Bolshoi and Kirov, New York City Ballet and American Ballet. Beyond inspiring romantic images of dancers in tutus, ballet is an important showcase and a key instrument of cultural diplomacy, illustrating the development of a “dancing diplomacy”. This research considers ballet as a tool for transnational cultural diplomacy, with a particular focus on its actors (institutional, artistic and commercial). This is a story embodied by women and men – the dancers – whose job is to twirl on international stages, supervised by administrators and governments with conflicting priorities. This research highlights the tensions, challenges and dynamics between different actors. It highlights the dual role of the dancers as cultural ambassadors and messengers in host countries.

By establishing the role of ballet as a tool of cultural diplomacy, the Cold War encouraged

interchange. It thus poses questions about the idea of bipolarity as a tight separation between two blocks: on the contrary, exchanges occur, are numerous and demonstrate regular artistic relations in a continuation of the long history of ballet. Ballet companies cross borders and dancers retain their traditional role as cultural ambassadors.

My thesis is based on various diplomatic sources (National Archives, Foreign Ministry Archives, National Archives), art (opera), and films and general and specialized press from four countries (France, Great Britain, USA and Russia).

EVELYN JONCKHEERE
Genealogy of attention and distraction practices in relation to the economic and cultural context and the psychosocial experiences of the modern spectator - [Original Title : *Grand Théâtre, café-concert en variététheater in Gent (1880-1914). Genealogie van de aandachts- en verstrooiingspraktijken in relatie tot de economisch-culturele context en psychosociale ervaringen van de moderne toeschouwer*]

Universiteit Gent, 2014. Supervisor : Christel Stalpaert; co-supervisor : Bram Van Oostveldt (Universiteit Amsterdam).

In 1898, a so-called ‘theatre crisis’ revealed a certain tension in recreational life of the provincial city of Ghent. Many patrons of the *Grand Théâtre* preferred the distractive performances of variety entertainment. This crisis illustrates the weak enthusiasm for the adaptations made to accommodate the attentive attitude, which was present in the official ‘*Grand Théâtre*’ and absent from variety performances such as the café-concert.

This study researches the extent of 'the problem of attention' in the late 19th century, which, as has been pointed out by Jonathan Crary in his study *Suspensions of Perception: Attention, Spectacle and Modern Culture* (1999), was present in the recreational life of the provincial city of Ghent. Through the attention practices in the *Grand Théâtre*, the distraction practices in the *café-concert* and the combination of attention and distraction in variety theatre, Crary's theory is measured against a rarely questioned artistic domain: theatre, *café-concert* and variety theatre in an industrial provincial town.

In this study the problem of attention is applied as a declarative model for the difference in perception between 'official' and 'popular' forms of culture and recreation. By linking the tensions in spectatorship with the economic, cultural and psychosocial developments between 1880 and 1914, this study exposes the relationship between modernity and modern perception in an industrial provincial town.

Finally, this study indicates that popular and commercial entertainment ('popular culture') are tied to the aesthetic and spectatorship of official, subsidized entertainment forms ('high culture'). This unbreakable link shows that historical research has to approach the differences between popular and high culture with sufficient caution, in order to avoid 'reducing' phenomena such as the *café-concert* and variety theatre to popular culture.

MAZYAR KHOIJINIAN

Immigration, a Temporary Extra Workforce? Labour Market, State Policies and Trajectories of the Turkish Workers recruited for the

Belgian Coal Mine Industry, 1956-1980

- [Original Title : *L'immigration, une main-d'oeuvre d'appoint temporaire ? Marché du travail, politiques étatiques et trajectoires des travailleurs turcs recrutés pour l'industrie charbonnière belge (1956-1980)*]

Université libre de Bruxelles, 2014. Supervisor : Pieter Lagrou.

This thesis primarily explores Turkish labour immigration in the Belgian coalmining industry. It traces an historical sequence that began in 1956, the year of the Bois-du-Cazier disaster in Marcinelle (which resulted in 262 deaths). It then discusses the definitive end to the recruitment of Italian workers for this notoriously dangerous industrial sector, the recruitment of mine workers from increasingly distant locations and the initial attempts to recruit workers in Turkey. The study ends in 1980, the year in which Benelux Member States reintroduced the tourist visa requirement for Turkish citizens.

More broadly, the thesis examines the relevance of the assumption that the migratory policies developed and implemented by public authorities during the *Golden Sixties* considered migrant workers to be a part of a temporary workforce.

The first part of the thesis, which traces the evolution of Belgian immigration policy between 1830 and 1960, reframes the history of Turkish workers' immigration in the Belgian coalmining industry and related policies in the context of the twofold process of public control and the nationalisation of migratory policy in the 19th and 20th centuries.

The second part traces the configuration of the interdependence between, on the one

hand, the paths of Turkish migrant workers recruited by the Belgian coal industry in the 1960s and 1970s, and, on the other hand, the systems put in place, separately or jointly, by the Belgian state, the Turkish state, the coalmining industry, trade unions and services and associations and other bodies welcoming and assisting migrants in order to organise, stabilise and integrate Turkish immigrants in the country's mining regions.

The third part discusses the future of Turkish immigration in the context of successive mine closures and new job opportunities at the few coalmines that are still operational. It also outlines the process of the nationalisation of integration policies mainly handled hitherto by the paternalistic governance of the coal industry.

This thesis also addresses, though to a lesser extent, immigration from Turkey before 1960 and Turkish immigration in the 1960s and 1970s, parallel the recruitment of workers for the coalmining industry, in other sectors and regions (Brussels, Antwerp, Ghent, Ardennes, etc.).

Moreover, the thesis's perspective is not restricted solely to Turkish immigration to Belgium and Belgian migratory policy, since it also examines, by way of comparative analyses, the case of contemporary Moroccan immigration and the Dutch migratory policy that led to a massive exodus of Turkish mine workers from the Belgian coal industry.

NIELS MATHEVE

A republic of comrades: Elite and elite networks in Belgian interwar politics (1918-1940) - [Original Title : *Une République des Camarades. Elite en*

elitenetwerken in de Belgische tussenoorlogse politiek (1918-1940)]

KU Leuven, 2015. Supervisor : Emmanuel Gerard.

This thesis explores the existence and *modus operandi* of interwar elite networks and the ways they influenced Belgian politics in the period between the two world wars. Although parliament underwent an undeniable democratization, the centre of political power – the government – remained firmly in the hands of the more traditional elites. Their networks proved to be a formidable counter-weight for the growing electoral representation of the more progressive democratic parliamentary factions.

Moreover, it turned out that many leaders of the emerging 'new' groups found their way to the political top through the traditional, existing channels such as family ties and (higher) education. As before the war, a good background still guaranteed access to the most influential domains and networks of the interwar period : party leadership, the royal entourage, financial holding companies, academia, the bench, etc. In reality, these networks were actually hard to set apart, for the interwar elite was characterized by a structural accumulation of positions, not bound to one domain of society.

The competition between these different networks ultimately gave way to some sort of power balance that became particularly noticeable in government, where it led to a monopolization of positions and jurisdictions. Although governments usually did not last very long and cabinets quickly succeeded one another, the same networks seemed to be able to stay in control over the same domains. Moreover, a restricted group of politicians were able to secure their positions in several

consecutive cabinets, thereby guaranteeing continuity both in terms of personnel and control over cabinet portfolios. This balance of power proved very resilient and was hardly affected by changing electoral results.

In the end, the growing criticism of this concentration of power led to an increasing interest in both legal restrictions with regard to the accumulation of offices and the need for party reorganization. It did *not* lead to fundamental reforms. However, the dissatisfaction with the impotence of parties and the disproportionately big influence of financial institutions and the monarchy made younger generations of politicians conscious of the necessity of party discipline and more stringent legal restrictions, and thus laid out the foundation for more structural reforms that would be implemented after the Second World War.

MYRIAM MERTENS

Chemical Compounds in the Congo: Pharmaceuticals and the ‘Crossed History’ of Public Health in Belgian Africa (ca. 1905-1939)

Universiteit Gent, vakgroep Geschiedenis, 2014.
Supervisor : Baz Lecocq.

This dissertation is about pharmaceuticals and, in particular, the science-based, mass-produced therapeutic agents that came to prominence during the ‘therapeutic revolution’ of the long twentieth century. More specifically, it examines how pharmaceuticals became central to the control of sleeping sickness (human African trypanosomiasis) in the Belgian Congo during the first decades of the twentieth century and what this tells us about colonial public health. Taking on epidemic proportions in the early 1900s, trypanosomiasis quickly became a public

health priority for the Belgian colonial administration which largely resorted to pharmaceutical strategies to curb its spread.

Placing pharmaceuticals at the heart of an enquiry into trypanosomiasis’ colonial history, this dissertation adds an extra-European dimension to the historiography of twentieth-century therapeutics. At the same time, it contributes to the historical literature on sleeping sickness by expanding our understanding of how trypanosome-killing chemical compounds (or trypanocides) came to dominate the fight against this infectious disease in the Congo, beyond simple references to therapeutic efficacy and Belgian colonial rule. It operationalises this question of ‘pharmaceuticalisation’ by tracing ‘drug trajectories’; charting the fates of the arsenicals Atoxyl and Tryparsamide as sleeping sickness drugs in early twentieth-century Congo. These are the compounds most commonly associated with the Belgian campaign against sleeping sickness before the Second World War and thus the ones that seemed particularly successful as trypanocides.

Atoxyl and Tryparsamide’s ‘success’ as sleeping sickness drugs, however, was neither self-evident nor straightforward. Their presence and widespread use in the Congo was not the result of a simple top-down transfer of western scientific-industrial objects to Africa under the influence of colonialism, but part of a much more contingent, interactive, and fluctuating process. The pharmaceuticalisation of response to sleeping sickness emerged at an intersection between multiple localities, scales, and social spheres and through an entanglement of colonial and other social and spatial dynamics. This points us towards a ‘crossed’ rather than a simple, or exclusively

'colonial', history of public health in Belgian Africa.

PASCAL PIROT

The Belgian dynasty and science, 1909-1959 - [Original Title : *La dynastie belge et la science, 1909-1959*]
Université de Liège, 2015. Supervisor : Philippe Raxhon.

This thesis investigates the role of the Belgian dynasty in scientific developments since the beginning of the reign of King Albert I (December 1909) until the establishment of the National Council for Science Policy (CNPS) in 1959, during King Baldwin's reign and following the publication of the conclusions of the "National Commission on Science" that same year. The study deals with the action of the sovereign and the networks he formed alongside his retinue (the queen, the crown prince, the advisers of the court, some close relations of the king, the ministers in charge of scientific affairs) in the scientific field. It engages with various research themes : how these people saw the role of science in society; what influence they had in the development of science (institutions, initiatives, projects); what relationships existed between the dynasty and the scientific institutions; and what the relationships between the dynasty and the Congo were in the realm of science. This perspective, which focuses on three Belgian sovereigns of the twentieth century, should make it possible to assess the development and progressive implementation of "science policy". To date, no study has been wholly devoted to this topic. Numerous archive funds have been used to support this thesis, including the Archives of the Royal Palace, the Royal Belgian Institute of Natural Sciences, the Fund for Scientific Research (FNRS) and Belgian scientific institutions..

PIERRE-LUC PLASMAN

The Congo Free State and Leopold II (1876-1906): A study of the paradox of Leopold's governance -

[Original Title : *L'État indépendant du Congo et Léopold II (1876-1906). Étude sur le paradoxe de la gouvernance léopoldienne*]
Université Catholique de Louvain, 2015. Supervisor : Vincent Dujardin.

The Congo Free State is generally considered to have been the personal property of King Leopold II, over which he ruled as absolute monarch. Similarly blame was put on those responsible for mass violence caused by rubber harvesting and processing. If international campaigns have condemned these atrocities from the beginning of the twentieth century, none have described these as genocide. This fact leads to two lines of research.

The first focuses on the institutional mechanisms within the CFS, which is studied within this work as a colonial state. This approach provides for a better understanding of the scope of Leopold's autocracy and its limits. It questions the image of the pyramid on top of which the King reigns as an individual.

The second line of research investigates the atrocities linked to the 'red rubber' scandal in depth. The facts draw out the paradox that existed within Leopold's reign between profit-making and the maintaining of a philanthropic reputation, the essential leitmotiv of Leopold's Congo.

Without dismissing the question of the number of victims, this perspective helps us discern the motivations behind such acts and the responsibility of the decision makers, including that of the king himself. This analysis of Leopold's reign promotes, in the end, a

better understanding of the colonial politics of Leopold II.

DIMITRI RODEN

'In the Name of the German People!' German Military Justice and Public Order in occupied Belgium (1940- 1944)

Ghent University, Faculty of Arts, History department – Royal Military Academy, Brussels, Faculty of Social and Military Sciences, Department of Behavioural Sciences, Chair of Law. Supervisors : Bruno De Wever & Stanislas Horvat.

In the historiography of war crimes committed by the German army during the Second World War, historians tend to make a distinction between a 'war of extermination' on the Eastern Front and the 'conventional war' in the west. Whilst the *Wehrmacht* (WH) was involved in large-scale war crimes in the east, the same German army could act as a 'moderate' occupier in the west. Is this image still in line with reality? General Alexander von Falkenhausen, the military governor in occupied Belgium and Northern France between June 1940 and July 1944, was convinced that his military regime had protected the Belgians from the worst. Nevertheless, von Falkenhausen's regime was responsible for the deportation of political prisoners and Jews, the execution of hostages, as well as the arbitrary brutality of German policing.

This PhD research aims to verify the image of a 'correct' occupier alongside the activity of German military justice in Belgium. What role did military justice play in maintaining public order and safety? What does the jurisprudence tell us about the safety policy of the MBB? Was von Falkenhausen's approach to the Resistance as moderate as he would later claim? And what does the military

jurisprudence in occupied Belgium show about the position of the WH within the Third Reich? An answer to these questions is to be found in the approximately-10,000 prison files discovered by Belgian liaison officers shortly after the war in several German prisons.

Although statistically German occupation may have claimed fewer victims in Belgium than in other countries in Western Europe or on the Eastern Front, the idea of a 'correct' occupation in Belgium can not be considered realistic. Von Falkenhausen and his military justice might differ with Berlin about how they thought Resistance in Belgium should be dealt with but, at the end, they all shared the same goal: total German victory.

ORNELLA ROVETTA

The International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda as a historical source? -

[Original Title : *Le Tribunal Pénal International pour le Rwanda comme source d'histoire ?*]

Université libre de Bruxelles, 2013. Supervisor : Pieter Lagrou.

Between 1995 and 2013, the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR) judged seventy-five people involved in the Tutsi genocide in Rwanda, perpetrated between April and July 1994. Today, this *ad hoc* Tribunal created by the Security Council in November 1994 is closing its doors. This research uses the archives produced during the trials. The dissertation particularly focuses on the early years of the Tribunal and analyses the specificities of the sources collected and produced over the course of this international judicial process. By doing so, it sheds light on the multiple actors involved in this emerging process and examines the narratives it produced. The thesis consists of two parts

corresponding to two crucial moments in the Tribunal's history: firstly, it puts in perspective the creation of the ICTR and its legal and political debates using diplomatic archives, State and United Nations documents, and NGO sources and interviews. The second part introduces a detailed study of the first trial, that of the burgomaster Jean-Paul Akayesu.

The trial archives from the very first case (1995-1998) handled by this international tribunal made it possible to analyze the complex elaboration of a transnational judicial landscape. A founding moment in the Tribunal's history, the first trial turned into a stimulating micro-historical case study highlighting the concrete implementation challenges of international criminal proceedings. For this reason, the thesis proposes to explore the very particular context in which this trial took place and to study the specific dynamics of this initial and foundational trial, alternating between the narratives of the massacres at the local level and a broader contextual approach to the facts.

This research has been financed by a FRS-FNRS grant (Aspirante) from 2009 to 2013 and has been carried out under the direction of Professor Pieter Lagrou. Three research stays both in Rwanda and in Arusha (Tanzania, seat of the ICTR) have been made possible with the support of the FRS-FNRS.

CAROLINE SÄGESSER

The temporal aspects of faiths in Belgium in the 19th century: legislation, regulation, jurisprudence, and practice - [Original Title : *Le temporel des cultes dans la Belgique du XIXème siècle : législation, réglementation, jurisprudence et pratiques*]

Université libre de Bruxelles, 2014. Supervisor : Jean-Philippe Schreiber.

In 1830, Belgium's independence resulted from a coalition between Catholics and Liberals, and the Constitution of 1831 represents a compromise between their viewpoints. While asserting freedom of belief and religion and a mitigated form of separation between the Church and State, the Belgian Constitution obligates the State to fund religious clergy. Legislation organizing state funding of religion adopted during the French period (1795-1814) remained in place after 1831, though it underwent adjustments deemed necessary by the new regime and was extended to provide benefits to the Protestant, Anglican and Jewish faiths. If this extension was met with general agreement, the amount of funding made available to the Catholic Church and the extent of state control over the Church were highly disputed issues throughout the 19th century.

This study chronicles the changes made to legislation, administrative procedures and jurisprudence pertaining to state funding of religion throughout the period, analyzing them in the context of the general political history of Belgium. Special attention is given to the organization of funding for church construction (*fabrica ecclesiae*) and the reforms introduced by the law of 1870 on the "temporal aspects of the faiths". The thesis documents the origin of regulations and procedures still in place today, while explaining why the system of state funding for religion has not been significantly reformed in Belgium: most of the Liberals and Catholics agreed upon the social utility of a clergy funded by the state.

VINCENT SCHELIENS

Thanks to the other side: Flemish and Walloon identity construction through the 'Other', 1840-1993 - [Original

Title : *Met dank aan de overkant. Vlaamse en Waalse identiteitsconstructie aan de hand van alteriteitsvertogen, 1840-1993*]

Universiteit Antwerpen, 2015. Supervisor : Marnix Beyen; co-supervisors : Jef Verschuere & Dave Sinardet.

This research builds on the assumption that the 'making' of national identities cannot be primarily explained by national identity as such, but rather by the capacity of national elites to draw clear boundary lines between the Self and the Other, identity and alterity. Belgium, which has never been explored in this manner, constitutes an excellent case for the study of identity construction by the means of alterity discourses. After all, Belgian history was largely characterized by the development of two comparable national movements. Gradually, the Flemish and Walloon movements would succeed in transcending their internal ideological and social discrepancies and in fundamentally undermining Belgium's identity construction.

Studying both movements simultaneously for the first time, the thesis analyses their discourses on the Other and the way in which these discourses were used to create a stable self-image. Combining detailed discourse-analytical methodology with a more longitudinal approach, the study unveils the discursive strategies of the Other from the start of these movements until their institutionalization as federal states. In order to facilitate this methodology, five critical moments have been chosen, spanning 150 years of Belgian history.

Very early, both movements develop a discourse on the Other that has largely been maintained until today. The negative representation of the Other was constantly strengthened by characterizing the Other as a larger ethnic 'external Other' : Latin or German. On both sides, personal identity was homogenized around the self-image of a minority group, victim to the aggression of the Other. These victimization discourses were traversed with self-images of personal superiority. Important events like both World Wars or the federalization of the country did not break this continuity but strengthened it. The discursive channel in which both movements were stuck from the beginning deepened itself time and time again.

Despite pleas for openness, the desired homogenization of the community lead to constant attempts to cleanse territories of every presence or manifestation of the Other. This cleansing idea was expressed through an abundance of metaphors, but – at the linguistic frontier – also physically. This intensive conflict between both movements lead to a form of mimetism : strategies, topoi and even organizational choices were appropriated, incorporated and deployed against each other.

Finally, this dissertation demonstrates that the paradox between the successful institutionalization of nationalism and its shifting interpretations can be explained by means of alterity discourses.

LAURENCE SCHRAM

Dossin barracks 1942-1944: Story of a place - [Original Title : *La caserne Dossin 1942-1944. Histoire d'un lieu*]

Université libre de Bruxelles, 2015. Supervisor : Pieter Lagrou.

On 27 July 1942, the Nazis opened an assembly camp for Jews in the Dossin barracks in Mechelen. The sole function of the camp was to assemble victims, including 25,000 Jews and gypsies, before their deportation to Auschwitz-Birkenau.

In 1945, only 5 % of these racial deportees would still be alive.

Even though the Dossin barracks represented the antechamber to death, their history has largely remained unwritten. This paper represents the first time they have been studied in their totality. Great attention is paid to the personalities of victims, persecutors and bystanders. The author focuses on human beings and their behaviours.

The camp required a relatively small number of SS staff. To keep the camp running the SS used Jewish workers. The SS exercised absolute power over the camp, ruling through terror that resonated throughout every aspect of internees' life in the camp. The arbitrary nature of their rule led to maltreatment, atrocities and abuses.

Confronted with this violence, internees adapted their behaviour to the circumstances: from collaboration to resistance. This resistance developed inside the camp but never led to an organised resistance network.

In the night between 3 and 4 September 1944, the SS abandoned the *SS-Sammellager*. Some 550 Jews were still in the camp. Their "liberation" did not attract particular attention. For their part, the internees' jubilation quickly evaporated after they realised the extent of the devastation the *Shoah* brought into their lives. Almost no family was left untouched after two years of deportation.

The history of each of the transports enables us to understand the way in which they were assembled and allows us to follow the fate of the deportees, those who escaped, those who were murdered once off the train, the forced labourers, and the few survivors.

The author places the Dossin barracks in their European context and focuses on the genocidal mission of the camp, a link in the chain between the RSHA in Berlin and Auschwitz-Birkenau, the scene of the extermination of the Jews of Western Europe.

DELPHINE STEYAERT

Neo-gothic polychromed sculpture in Belgium as seen by the Guild of St.-Thomas and St.-Luc (1863-1913)

- [Original Title : *La sculpture polychromée néo-gothique en Belgique vue par la Gilde de Saint-Thomas et de Saint-Luc (1863-1913)*]

Université libre de Bruxelles, 2014. Supervisor : Jacqueline Leclercq-Marx; co-supervisor : Catheline Périer-D'Ieteren.

This thesis examines a group of artists and craftsmen active in sculptural art in the second half of the 19th century. More precisely, it explores the ways in which medieval sculptures were restored in comparison with full neo-gothic sculptures, with a focus on wood statues and altarpieces conserved in gothic churches. The selected artists and craftsmen (J.-B. Bethune, J. Helbig, A. H. Bressers, the Blanchaert brothers) closely collaborated using diverse strategies. They set the basis for the School of St.-Luc's neo-gothic style. Members of the guild of St.-Thomas and St.-Luc, they claimed, at the instruction of English architect A.W.N. Pugin, an exclusive understanding of medieval art realized through their work. They sought to study medieval art and, at the same time,

give recommendations for restoration and new endeavors. The selected personalities participated actively in the Christian Catholic revival of the second half of the 19th century.

No monograph or synthesis on the subject had been undertaken before this thesis. The visual and technical study carried out in the churches in question was associated with important archival resources (the Bressers-Blanchaert fund at KADOC-KU Leuven, the de Bethune Foundation at Marcke, the archives of the Royal Monument Commission and the archives of church councils). Many restoration files of the Royal Institute for Cultural Heritage in Brussels were also consulted. This work takes a multidisciplinary approach to the subject between the Middle Ages and the 19th century. It seeks to clearly distinguish the elements directly inspired by the art of the Middle Ages from those typical of the 19th century through the study of the works of art as well as their medieval environment that itself underwent changes over the course of the great restoration campaigns of the 19th century.

IWAN STRAUVEN

**Victor Bourgeois (1897-1962):
Radicalism and pragmatism,
modernity and tradition** - [Original

Title : *Victor Bourgeois (1897-1962).*

Radicaliteit en pragmatisme. Moderniteit en traditie]

Université libre de Bruxelles, Universiteit Gent, 2015.

Supervisor : Judith Le Maire; co-supervisor : Emiel De Koening.

This thesis is the first broad and systematic study of Victor Bourgeois's oeuvre and the development of his theories. Unlike the image of Bourgeois outlined in the written histories of 20th-century Belgian architecture, this

study is based on a fundamental continuity between his pre- and post-war oeuvres and a consistency between his theories and practice. These result from a sustained social commitment to which Bourgeois, with the poet Pierre Bourgeois at his side, wished to give shape throughout his professional career.

The study is in two parts, starting with a '*catalogue raisonné*' that provides the most complete possible overview of his built and unbuilt projects, plus commentary and a short bibliography. The second part, which is preceded in the first volume by an essay, assembles all the information available in the literature concerning the architect's formative years and international career, and makes corrections and important additions. It also explores, on the basis of three key texts, the three areas of work in which Bourgeois gave shape to his social commitment : urban planning, architecture and education.

The fundamental question lies in the domain of architectural criticism : what was Bourgeois' approach, what form did it take in his built and unbuilt projects, and on what issues was it founded ? Exploring the subject in greater depth, the intention of these questions is to gauge the 'weight' and importance of Bourgeois' work. How relevant is his work and approach to the present time, apart from the obvious importance of an extensive and systematic documentation of the work of this key figure in Belgian Modernism ?

The purpose of the essay is to present a layered and nuanced portrait of Victor Bourgeois. He is introduced as a modernist who at the same time pursued continuity with tradition, a radical iconoclast who also remained always pragmatic. In Bourgeois' case, this am-

bivalence resulted from his criticism of and fascination with the historical city. In this way the thesis examines Bourgeois as an eminent exponent of a different modern tradition, which, the Charter of Athens notwithstanding, sought continuity with the existing patterns of the city.

BART TRITSMANS

Layered Landscapes. Urban green space between policy and perception, Antwerp 1859-1973 - [Original Title :

Waardevolle bijkomstigheden. Stedelijk groen in beleid en beleving, Antwerpen 1859-1973]

Universiteit Antwerpen, 2014. Supervisors : Hilde Greefs (UA) & Inge Bertels (VUB).

The twenty-first century is marked by an increased interest in the liveability of (both expanding as well as shrinking) cities. Urban green space plays an important role in the perception of cities. And although it comes across as a recent preoccupation, the attention paid to urban green space originated in the second half of the nineteenth century when European societies were marked by industrialisation, urban growth and the densification of the urban environment. The changing urban environments revealed the value of urban green space, and raised questions on their typology, their functions, and their users. My research focuses on the city of Antwerp in the period between 1859-1973, but takes the international context into account to highlight both the impact of broader evolutions and the specificity of urban space. As many different (f)actors (e.g. local politicians, action groups, environmentalists, investors, architects, town-planners and ordinary citizens) influenced the history of urban green space throughout the previous two centuries, my research consist of a three-

dimensional study. First, it presents an analysis of the changing meanings and perception of urban green space from the perspective of local politicians and urban policy. These changing policies, which have been the subject of previous research, will be nuanced by two perspectives that reveal the importance of the perception and use of green space. The second perspective shows the friction between the authorities and citizens over the use of urban green space, and highlights the layered meaning of urban space. The third perspective emphasizes the importance of the alternative perception and use of urban green spaces, and focuses on the daily uses and interactions of citizens. The three-dimensional approach nuances the prevailing focus on both official sources and official green spaces and sheds light on the value of both alternative green spaces and an alternative study of urban space as a whole.

JORIS VANDENDRIESSCHE

Arbiters of Science. Medical Societies and Scientific Culture in Nineteenth-Century Belgium

KU Leuven, 2014. Supervisor : Kaat Wils; co-Supervisor : Frank Huisman.

This dissertation focuses on the scientific function of medical societies in nineteenth-century Belgium – a function essentially presented as one of arbitration. As spaces of sociability, medical societies formed the primary spaces for the discussion, publication, and dissemination of new ideas and observations. By scrutinizing these activities, this study highlights the different ways in which scientific standards were set. It discusses the procedures of medical publishing, the codes of conduct that were enforced during scientific debates, the legitimizing of medical

expertise (e.g. in public health) and the commemoration of deceased colleagues (both from a distant and more recent past). Taken together, these practices reveal the normative function of medical societies.

The study of these norms, moreover, allows for the illumination of the ways in which the medical sciences were grounded in contemporary civil society. In the early- and mid-nineteenth century, the practice of science reflected the values of nineteenth-century citizenship: physicians' philanthropic efforts showed their social awareness; speeches testified of their oratorical talents and historical works of their literary skills and national sentiments. In the late nineteenth century, processes of specialization and internationalization led to the downfall of this 'gentleman science' and inspired new norms and values that better matched the more exclusive and professionalized science, which developed in academic laboratories. These shifts also altered societies' position in the scientific landscape. They now took up a more peripheral role, which reduced their normative impact on the medical sciences.

RIK VERCAMMEN

Living on the edge ? Vagrants and beggars in Belgian state benevolent colonies (1870-1930)

- [Original Title : *Leven aan de rafelrand ? Landlopers en bedelaars in Belgische Rijkswelddadigheidskolonies (1870-1930)*
Vrije Universiteit Brussel, 2014. Supervisor : Anne Winter; co-supervisor : Catharina Lis.

This thesis examines the men who ended up in the so-called state benevolent colonies in Belgium between 1870 and 1930 after being convicted of vagrancy or begging. I

examine both the role of the central and local governments in creating and implementing the legislation concerning vagrancy and beggary. It is impossible to fully understand the intervention of the government, however, without looking at the people who were the subject of this policy. Uncovering their individual characteristics makes it possible to determine how the authorities put their objectives into practice. The novelty of this thesis is situated in the fact that I focus on the perspective of the condemned men themselves. As such, I am able to shed light on their agency. A representative sample of 851 individual incarceration records out of more than 42,000 preserved records formed the basis for this research.

In this thesis I seek to contribute to the knowledge of the people considered vagrants or beggars. Until now, our knowledge of the people subjected to vagrancy policy practices was very limited. Only a few popular publications have suggested some general characteristics, albeit in a cliché manner. I demonstrate that the group of men who were sentenced as vagrants or beggars was very heterogeneous. These men possessed divergent characteristics, which were often at odds with stereotypical assumptions. Yet they were all brought together into the same institutions under the heading of vagrant or beggar. This indicates that the problems of vagrancy and begging that governments hoped to resolve were not the same as the problems experienced by the people involved. Consequently, government solutions to the vagrancy problem were not tailored to the needs of the men themselves. The sentenced only opted for a 'voluntarily' imprisonment in a state benevolent colony if there were no alternatives.

GERTJAN WILLEMS

The construction of a national cinema. Research on the role of film production policy in creating Flemish identity (1964-2002) - [Original

Title : *De constructie van een nationale cinema: Een onderzoek naar de rol van het filmproductiebeleid in het stimuleren van een Vlaamse identiteit (1964-2002)*

Universiteit Gent, 2014. Supervisor : Daniel Biltereyst (Ghent University); co-supervisors : Philippe Meers (University of Antwerp) & Roel Vande Winkel (University of Leuven).

The role of official film production policy in creating a Flemish identity from 1964-2002 forms the central research question of this dissertation. Flemish identity is regarded as a national identity, which is conceptualized as having a contingent, dynamic and discursive construction. As disseminators of representation, films provide some of the building blocks that individuals and groups can use to construct a national identity. While most studies focus on textual representations, it is equally important to study the production context and the struggle for meaning behind the representations. Within the Flemish context, the government's film policy plays an important role in that process. The introduction of a support mechanism in 1964 was the result of the Flemish desire for cultural autonomy in the Belgian political context. In line with this, the concrete aim of its film policy was to culturally uplift the Flemish audience. Even though Flemish film policy was marked by ambiguity, we can say that conceptualizations of 'quality' and the 'Flemish character' of films held a central place in the policy process, which aimed to construct a recognizable Flemish cinema. Nevertheless, the policy process was often ambiguous because of its dependence on sectorial circumstances and

because the film policy itself was also often quite inconsistent in ensuring the Flemish character of the films.

From the 1980s on, commercial and economic motives grew more important in Flemish film policy. This evolution ran parallel with the growing internationalization of film productions. The new economic perspective was reflected in the policy intentions, discourses and goals, which lessened the importance of cultural- and Flemish national-inspired motivations. This, however, did not mean that those factors disappeared. The motivation for the emphasis on the Flemish character of the films partly shifted from a culturally educational nation-building ideal to a more economic perspective, but the final goal of constructing a body of cinema with a clear Flemish identity largely remained unchanged.