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The Benelux and the Cold War: Re-interpreting West-West Relations

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What is there new to say on the Low Countries and transatlantic relations during the Cold War? How do recent trends in Cold War research open up uncharted areas to explore these relations from new angles and perspectives? With attention shifting to cultural, global, transnational and multi-centric approaches to the international history of the twentieth century, it would seem that the transatlantic is long passé as a primary frame of reference. As the first special issue in this series claimed (The Low Countries and Eastern Europe during the Cold War), existing scholarship on the Benelux nations has tended to emphasise the ‘loyal ally’ thesis, the uniqueness of small states among larger powers and the importance of traditional diplomacy. With this special issue, a set of articles has been brought together that open up new ways to consider the changing relations both within and between the Benelux nations and their Western allies during the Cold War. As a starting point, it takes the dual approach of the Benelux nations as both actors in the Cold War and as sites where Cold War dynamics were played out and influenced local political and social outcomes. By applying such a structure-agency approach, new perspectives on the importance of the Cold War for Benelux history, and the relevance of the Benelux for Cold War history, can be mapped out.

KEYWORDS: Global Cold War, European Integration, Transatlantic Relations.

The Cold War is something of an elusive entity in terms of its lasting impact on public memory in Belgium, Luxembourg and the Netherlands. Whereas the impervious bunkers

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of the *Atlantikwall* will continue to dot the coastal areas for many years to come, the Cold War has left little comparable behind. Holger Nehring has pointed out how nuclear bunkers ‘remind us of how the Cold War was quite literally dug into the landscape’, but much of this architecture remains hidden from view, enhancing the sense that the Cold War, as opposed to WW II, did not leave any lasting visible traces.¹ This anomaly stretches further than architecture and landscape. Politically and socially, the East–West contest was experienced as a day-to-day reality over several decades, the level of tension varying with each crisis. The Benelux nations were founding members of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization and orientated their security policies around it in order to oppose the Soviet Union. Their governments – and in particular, key individuals such as Paul-Henri Spaak, Joseph Luns, Pierre Harmel and Max van der Stoep – acted over several decades to maintain the alliance and strengthen the bonds between the various nations, and above all, between North America and Western Europe. Yet the Cold War’s impact in the Benelux nations has generally been taken for granted or downplayed in relation to other more important factors such as decolonisation or European integration. There is one major title that covers the political, social and cultural dimensions of Cold War Belgium; no comparable volume exists for the Netherlands, with the exception of a recent volume on Dutch–Belgian relations since 1940. Dutch historians tend to focus on the long transatlantic history that has linked the US with the Netherlands.²

As the introduction to the first special issue noted, three themes dominate the existing Cold War historiography of the Low Countries. Firstly, the assumption that they consistently acted as ‘loyal allies’ of the United States. Secondly, that despite being small powers they still maintained a unique significance in international affairs. Thirdly, that the focus has remained primarily on traditional diplomacy and foreign policy. This has produced a body of work that is impressive in depth but rather limited and self-congratulatory in scope. Foreign policies have been characterised as following in a tradition – in the Dutch case, a strong leaning towards free trade, moralism, and the search for balance between greater powers (which for many years took the form of neutrality).³ Belgium is seen as a nation of merchants that is focused on Europe (and particularly France and Germany), an attitude stemming from its uncertain beginnings as a neutral nation among the great powers in 1830. Similarly, the failure to develop a coherent Africa policy after 1960 is seen as the continuation of a policy whereby the Belgian state – which reluctantly acquired the Congo from King Leopold II in 1908 – limited itself to supporting companies in the Congo.⁴ The myth that Belgium has always been a supporter of European supranationalism has also been successfully debunked in recent years.⁵

These debates have narrowed the field for critical investigation, since socio-economic and political phenomena that fall outside the free trade/morality/neutrality triumvirate can easily be side-lined as anomalies. What is more, foreign policy does not cover foreign relations, while a traditional diplomatic history approach ignores the multifarious cross-border activities of individuals, social movements and multinationals that cannot be contained – and do not always conform to – a view of the world emitted by a Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Research on transnationalism and non-state actors in Belgium, while excellent, is catalogued as social history and therefore rarely explicitly engages with Cold

War studies.⁶ As a result, the Cold War as a topic is narrowed to an orthodox story that seems exhausted as a research field: the major crises have been covered, the diplomatic record transcribed and the case is more or less closed. These special issues reject that view.

The Cold War has largely been regarded as one such anomaly that caused unnecessarily hysterical and dramatic outbursts that do not need to be taken too seriously.⁷ Thus, Duco Hellema ends his study of the Dutch response to the events in Hungary in late 1956 with the unremarkable comment that ‘little was actually achieved by the Netherlands . . . The Netherlands and Dutch anti-communism were, therefore, not very relevant to the Hungarian revolution’.⁸ From this perspective, the Cold War was something that was tolerated and endured, but not really engaged with. It happened ‘somewhere else’. In Belgium, Marc Lamot succinctly summarised that view when he defined the Cold War as ‘white noise,’ something that shaped but never affected Belgian decision-making which was preoccupied with economic and political interests.⁹ Hellema has further claimed that while the superpower confrontation did influence Dutch politics and society, ‘the Netherlands were actually rarely involved with major conflicts in world politics’.¹⁰ The nuclear threat was present, but there was no credible defence against it other than relying on the Americans.¹¹ The crises that directly affected national interest were colonial: Indonesia, New Guinea and the Congo. In each case, so the claim goes, the ‘loyal ally’ stance was severely tested as the United States opposed the long-term aims of The Hague and Brussels, but the damage was never irreparable. Nonetheless, the full impact of decolonisation still needs to be gauged since those conflicts exposed the limits of what Geir Lundestad called the ‘importance of a common ideology and culture’ in cementing the Trans-Atlantic partnership. While US policymakers identified themselves with their nation’s anticolonial beginnings and pursued a modernising agenda, the European continent still clung to its civilising mission.¹²

Socially and politically, it is hard to see how the Cold War did not transform the everyday experience of the Benelux nations. The political left was faced with the dilemma of dealing with a demonised totalitarian version of ‘actually existing socialism,’ causing the social democratic parties to distance themselves from the communists and preventing a reformist united front against the forces of capital.¹³ The communists, meanwhile, became a target for state apparatuses (and, in the early years, their alleged paramilitary allies) unwilling to accept treason and the possibility of sabotage in their midst. The lines of political legitimacy were redrawn by Cold War tensions, and then policed by exclusion, subterfuge and occasional violence. The essay here by Emmanuel Gerard on the murder of Jules Lahaut indicates the extent to which irregular right-wing forces were prepared to settle local scores in the name of the ‘Cold War struggle’. Although the Netherlands did not experience political assassination during the Cold War, similar sentiments did exist. In the late 1940s and early 1950s, the Dutch state still needed to enforce its monopoly of violence against groups determined to take the anti-communist (and pro-colonial) campaign into their own hands.¹⁴

The fractures in society wrought in quick succession by world war, decolonisation, and enforced post-war ideological re-alignments went deep, as the (largely still classified) files of the intelligence and security services indicate. The documents of the

Belgian ‘Staatsveiligheid’ are completely classified, although special access has been granted for specific investigations (such as on the Lahaut murder). A section of the Dutch Binnenlandse Veiligheidsdienst archive was publically released in 2015.¹⁵ These documents, mainly covering the years 1946–52, were a major step towards transparency in this respect, but this has occurred in the teeth of long-running delays, bureaucratic obstacles and an unwillingness on the part of the state to open up its past. Some fractures must remain hidden – something that was also heavily indicated by the refusal in late 2012 to countenance a full historical investigation by the Netherlands Institute of War Documentation into the scale of violence and atrocities committed during the Indonesian war of independence.¹⁶ Of course, such resistance to full disclosure has been encountered in France, Britain and other nations – it is a natural response of states to keep their secrets. What is most remarkable about the Netherlands and Belgium, however, is the degree to which this openness is still, in the second decade of the twenty-first century, so reluctant. In the Dutch case, this indicates how deep the self-perception of a small state bound by a strong moral code really is: ‘The Dutch are used to imagining their society and its history as peaceful, well-balanced, consensual and convivial, non-violent, equal, democratic and tolerant: in brief, a society without history in the cruel or heroic sense of the word’.¹⁷ The recent uproar caused by the UN investigating the ‘Black Pete’ figure for racism only confirms this further on a wider social level. In Belgium, there is a concern that unwelcome revelations could adversely affect diplomatic ties, since Brussels is home to so many international and European institutions.¹⁸

The frame for this particular special issue is set by the interconnected themes of sites and actors. Sites, in the sense that the Benelux nations in their own particular ways were locations – political, economic, social – where the wider forces of the Cold War contest influenced and interacted with local interests. To paraphrase Welsh historian Martin Johnes, this means ‘looking at events like ... the atomic bomb that had no specifically [Belgian, Dutch or Luxembourgish] dimensions but impacted on [the Benelux] nonetheless They also demand that we consider national histories through international perspectives’.¹⁹ The pressures of abiding by the demands of a military alliance, of policing political legitimacy, and of persuading publics of the merits of the anti-communist cause all needed to be met. A similar approach can, therefore, be applied to smaller states in both West and East, in terms of how they functioned as ‘test cases’ for the ideological demands of the superpowers – and how they still managed to forge their own identities and interests within this matrix.²⁰ In the West, American political, economic and cultural interests were dominant, but they were also appropriated, remade and remodelled by local forces according to their local (and/or parochial) interests.²¹ Recent work on how the Dutch political and military elites created a propaganda apparatus to promote moral resilience domestically indicates how far old traditions of state non-intervention were undermined by new concerns about the impact of austerity and possible unrest in society at large.²²

Relations with other powers also needed to be reset, both formally and informally. For a brief period after WW II, some – such as future Nobel Prize winner Jan Tinbergen, and Paul Henri Spaak – called for a ‘Third Way’ between the free market system of the

United States and the collectivism of the Soviet Union. “We do not need to set our goals according to either of these great extremes,” Tinbergen wrote, “[w]e must be ourselves, and follow our own path.”²³ The communist world looked to promote its value-system abroad, creating new encounters and clashes of ideals.²⁴ The loss of control over the principal colonies within fifteen years after WW II caused deep concerns not only about economic damage and the loss of natural resources, but also about the enforced regrouping of the post-colonial metropole that this would require. The Dutch could fear sinking to the same level as lowly Denmark, but even Denmark still had Greenland. In Brussels, the loss of the so-called exemplary colony (modelkolonie) was seen as an insult, and when the province of Katanga seceded under the leadership of Moïse Tshombe, the Eyskens government offered it support in defiance of the new authorities in Leopoldville.²⁵

Ties with the United States were deepened structurally through NATO and the European Recovery Program, and this was not a meeting of equals. As David J. Snyder argues in his essay, this reordering of relations was far more complex than a simple assessment of unequal material power capabilities would suggest. This investigation of the fuller meanings of ‘clientilism’ cuts across established interpretations such as ‘empire by invitation’, ‘politics of productivity’, ‘market empire’, ‘empire of fun’ and ‘empire of liberty’ that have so far set the frame for interpreting the post-WW II transatlantic dynamic.²⁶

This leads into the theme of agency. The demands of alliance politics and ideological consensus opened up possibilities for states – particularly smaller or weaker states, paradoxically enough – to pursue interests in the international system through irregular means. The orthodox interpretation of the international system as being driven by the interests of the great powers alone is too narrow and simplistic. Political, economic and military cooperation can enable smaller states to function as ‘secondary centers of power’, negotiating and obtaining benefits from this relationship.²⁷ The Netherlands may be ‘your average small country’ according to most criteria, but it has also been the site of some of the largest multinationals, the busiest port and substantial outward and inward investments – particularly to and from the United States.²⁸ The assistance of both Belgium and the Netherlands in the aftermath of the French withdrawal from NATO’s military command in 1966 is illustrative of such assistance for maintaining US strategic infrastructure in Western Europe. Luxembourg’s hilly terrain made it an important redoubt in the trans-European stay-behind networks of Gladio, and Belgium is the site of perhaps the most lasting Gladio mystery with the so-called ‘Bende van Nijvel’.²⁹ No less than Dutch Foreign Minister Norbert Schmelzer (1971–73) declared that it was a question of context, vision and will:

the *possibility* for a small state to play a role is set by objective factors, such as the constellation of world politics at a given moment; the *actual* role depends on the way in which one grasps the chance to use these existing possibilities.³⁰

Of course, this could also lead into a blending of national and international (read: transatlantic) interests, as if the two were synonymous. In the security field, this is best illustrated by the Belgian and Dutch determination to obtain American aircraft in the

face of cheaper alternatives from Dassault and Saab – a tendency that has continued long after the end of the Cold War with debate surrounding the purchase of the Joint Strike Fighter.³¹ But national interests obviously did not disappear, and both Belgium and the Netherlands attempted to influence their more powerful ally across the Atlantic through concerted public diplomacy campaigns, as Frank Gerits' essay shows.³² If issues of major national importance were at stake, determined efforts were made to overcome their weaker positions by utilising alternative levers of influence in Washington.³³ Talk of 'asymmetry,' therefore, needs to be nuanced with a subtler understanding of the scope of diplomacy between smaller and larger powers.³⁴

Having said that, it is important not to over-play any claims to uniqueness. Willem Frijhoff has commented that the national frame of reference has often been avoided by historians unconvinced of its merits: 'The Dutch cannot really afford to keep their awareness of the past within their own boundaries'.³⁵ Luxembourg only achieved full independence in 1867; from 1815 to 1830, Belgium and the Netherlands were one political unit. History has seen the redrawing of the boundaries between them on multiple occasions. Nevertheless, out of this fluid existence have come persistent, pervasive self-images. Belgium and Luxembourg have always been acutely aware of their modest size and vulnerability. The Netherlands on the other hand, for Frijhoff, still 'cultivates great memories and rather lofty ambitions', not least via the pretensions of the *gidsland* motif of a nation setting standards for others in tolerance and civic freedoms.³⁶ This veers towards reductionism, and as the essay of Alexander Reinfeldt shows, there have been different 'national self-images' for different groups, and they are not static. The Netherlands' 'amphibious character' – partly continental, partly oceanic – has also contributed to contrasting perceptions, interests and group dynamics in politics and society.³⁷ Belgium has been linguistically and culturally divided since its inception, and Cees Wiebes and Bert Zeeman demonstrated that there was no Dutch–Belgian transatlantic consensus in the early Cold War period whatever the presumptions of the Benelux concept have led us to believe.³⁸ In the 1970s, the focus was on how an identifiable elite defined the course and temper of foreign policy;³⁹ since then more attention has been given to the alternative cross-border bottom-up linkages of social movements. Matthijs van Beek's essay explores this in detail here.

National self-images are certainly not the sole domain of the elites – and neither are the elites a single unit. During the Cold War, there were various cases of Dutch civil servants aligning with their counter-parts in the United States against the designs of their own ministers.⁴⁰ Forms of 'entrepreneurial diplomacy' that cross through, over, and alongside official channels are an important (and often neglected) element to Benelux diplomatic history, as Giles Scott-Smith argues. Reference to the vital Dutch input into the Bilderberg meetings should be enough to confirm that point.⁴¹ Ten years ago, Tity de Vries investigated why there were so few Dutch intellectuals in the anti-Stalinist transnational networks of the Congress for Cultural Freedom, and concluded that the most likely candidates already possessed their own active international connections.⁴²

In short, while the Dutch adhered to a determined Atlanticism and entertained the notion of a middle-power, Belgium and Luxembourg felt that as small nations their

interests would be better served by support for the European integration process. Nonetheless the Benelux as a site of the Cold War was characterised by a host of commonalities: the long-term impact of decolonisation, the subtle but real effects of the Cold War on everyday life and domestic policies, the constant need to renegotiate positions within the transatlantic framework.⁴³ From these perspectives, the Benelux nations are not so much *gidslanden* as *schakellanden* – connecting nations, significant nodes of transit and traffic that are useful for, and that make use of, the intentions and interests of others, be they in the West, South or East. It is these connections that this special issue, together with its predecessor, seeks to emphasise, elucidate, and explore, in the process hopefully laying out paths for future research into the Cold War Benelux.

Notes

- ¹ See Holger Nehring, 'The forgotten impact of a war that didn't happen,' Open Security (March 2010), online, available at < www.opendemocracy.net/opensecurity/holger-nehring/forgotten-impact-of-war-that-didnt-happen > . See also Peter Hennessy, *The Secret State: Preparing for the Worst, 1945–1990* (New York: Penguin, 2010); Nick McCalmley, *Cold War Secret Nuclear Bunkers* (Barnsley: Pen and Sword Books, 2013).
- ² Mark van den Wijngaert and Lieve Beullens, *Oost West West Best: België onder de Koude Oorlog 1947–1989* (Tielt: Lannoo, 1997); Duco Hellema, Rik Coolsaet, and Bart Stol, eds., *Nederland-België: De Belgisch-Nederlandse Betrekkingen Vanaf 1940* (Amsterdam: Boom, 2011); Hans Krabbendam, Cornelis A. van Minnen, and Giles Scott-Smith, eds., *US-NL: Four Centuries of Dutch-American Relations, 1609–2009* (New York: SUNY Press, 2009).
- ³ The three principal texts that outline these traditions are Alfred van Staden, *Een Trouwe Bondgenoot* (Baarn: In den Toren, 1974), Joris Voorhoeve, *Peace, Profits and Principle* (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1979), and Duco Hellema, *Nederland in de Wereld* (Houten: Spectrum, 2010). See also Ben Bot et al., *Lijn in de Buitenlandse Politiek van Nederland* (The Hague: Staatsuitgeverij, 1984).
- ⁴ Guy Vanthemsche, *Congo: De Impact van de Kolonie Op België* (Tielt: Lannoo, 2007), 207.
- ⁵ Maarten Van Alstein, 'De Belgische Diplomatieke Elite, Spaak, En Het Onstaan Van De Hegemonische Koude Oorlogsconsensus: Interpretaties Van De Vijandige Bipolarisering 1944–1949' (doctoraat, Universiteit Antwerpen, 2009); Rik Coolsaet, *België En Zijn Buitenlandse Politiek 1830–2000* (Leuven: Van Halewyck, 2001), 573.
- ⁶ Daniel Laqua, Christophe Verbruggen, and Gita Deneckere, eds., 'Beyond Belgium: Encounters, Exchanges and Entanglements, 1900–1925', *Revue Belge de Philologie et D'histoire* 90, No. 4 (2012).
- ⁷ See for instance Mark Traa, *De Russen Komen! Nederland in de Koude Oorlog* (Amsterdam: Polak & van Gennep, 2009).
- ⁸ Duco Hellema, 'The Relevance and Irrelevance of Dutch Anti-Communism: The Netherlands and the Hungarian Revolution, 1956–57', *Journal of Contemporary History*, 30 (1995), p. 183.
- ⁹ Marc Lamot, 'De Koude Oorlog Als Storende Ruis En Ultiem Referentiekader 1970–1990', in *Oost West, West Best: België Onder de Koude Oorlog, 1947–1989*, ed. Mark Van den Wijngaert and Lieve Beullens (Tielt: Lannoo, 1997), 137–56; Cees Wiebes and Bert Zeeman, 'Nederland, België En de Sovjetdreiging (1942–1948)', *Internationale Spectator* 41, No. 9 (1987): 468–77; Coolsaet, *België En Zijn Buitenlandse Politiek 1830–2000*; Yan Vanden Berghe, 'België En Het Buitenland', ed. Lucien Huyse and Kris Hoflack (Leuven: Van Halewyck, 1995), 205–207; Maarten Van Alstein, 'Wat Betekende de Koude Oorlog? Belgische Diplomaten En de Vijandige Bipolarisering: Edouard Le Ghaet En Baron Hervé de Gruben', *Bijdragen Tot de Eigentijdse Geschiedenis* 20 (2008): 103–44.
- ¹⁰ Duco Hellema, 'De Koude Oorlog en Nederland', *Historisch Nieuwsblad*, 5 (2011), online, available at < <http://www.historischnieuwsblad.nl/nl/artikel/27608/de-koude-oorlog-in-nederland.html> > .
- ¹¹ On Dutch civil defence see for instance Bart van de Boom, *Atoomgevaar? Dan zeker de B.B. De geschiedenis van de Bescherming Bevolking* (The Hague: Sdu, 2000).
- ¹² Geir Lundestad, in *The United States and Western Europe since 1945: From 'Empire' by Invitation to Transatlantic Drift* (Oxford, New York NY: Oxford University Press, 2003), 12.
- ¹³ Dietrich Orlow, *Common Destiny. A Comparative History of the Dutch, German and French Social Democratic Parties, 1945–1969* (New York: Berghahn, 2000); Paul Koedijk, 'The Netherlands, the United States, and Anticommunism during the early Cold

- War,' in Krabbendam, van Minnen and Scott-Smith, *US-NL*, 597–607.
- ¹⁴ Bob de Graaff and Cees Wiebes, *Gladio der Vrije Jongens: een particuliere geheime dienst in koude oorlogstijd* (The Hague: Sdu, 1992); Coreline Boot, *Het Leger Onder Vuur: De Koninklijke Landmacht en haar critici, 1945–1989*, Ph.D. dissertation, Leiden University, 2014.
- ¹⁵ Lars Bové, *De Geheimen van de Staatsveiligheid: Speurtocht Naar Een Schimmige Overheidsdienst* (Boom: Lannoo, 2015); 'Rijksarchief laat oog vallen op archief staatsveiligheid', 2010, online, available at < <https://www.apache.be/2010/11/18/rijksarchief-laait-oog-vallen-op-archief-staatsveiligheid/> > .
- ¹⁶ 'Misdaden in Nederlands-Indië', 10 July 2012, online, available at < <http://www.isgeschiedenis.nl/nieuws/misdaden-in-nederlands-indie/> > .
- ¹⁷ Willem Frijhoff, 'The Relevance of Dutch History, or: Much in Little?' *BMGN* 125 (2010), p. 19.
- ¹⁸ 'Tensions mount in the Netherlands as UN questions "Black Pete" Christmas tradition', *The Independent*, < <http://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/tensions-mount-in-the-netherlands-as-un-questions-black-pete-christmas-tradition-89095311.html> > .
- ¹⁹ Martin Jones, 'Wales and the Cold War', *Llafur* 10 (2011), pp. 2–3.
- ²⁰ See for instance Elidor Mëhilli, 'Socialist Encounters: Albania and the Transnational Eastern Bloc in the 1950s', in Patryk Babiracki and Kenyon Zimmer (eds.), *Cold War Crossings: International Travel and Exchange across the Soviet Bloc, 1940s-1960s* (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, .
- ²¹ See for instance Rob Kroes, 'American Empire and Cultural Imperialism: A View from the Receiving End', *Diplomatic History* 23 (1999), pp. 463–477.
- ²² Floribert Baudet, *Het Vierde Wapen: Voorlichting, propaganda en volksveerbaarheid, 1944–53* (Amsterdam: Boom, 2013).
- ²³ Jan Tinbergen, 'De derde Weg', *Socialisme en Democratie*, 3 (1946), p. 370; Coolsaet, *België En Zijn Buitenlandse Politiek 1830–2000*, 362.
- ²⁴ See Catherine Almey, *Belgique et Chine au coeur de la guerre froide (1954–1957): la politique des petits pas* (Louvain: Presse Universitaires, 1994).
- ²⁵ H. Baudet, 'Nederland en de rang van Denemarken', *Bijdragen en Mededelingen betreffende de Geschiedenis der Nederlande*, 90 (1975), pp. 430–443; Matthew Stanard, *Selling the Congo: A History of European Pro-Empire Propaganda and the Making of Belgian Imperialism* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2011).
- ²⁶ Niall Ferguson, *Colossus: The Price of America's Empire* (New York NY: Penguin, 2004), 62; Victoria De Grazia, *Irresistible Empire: America's Advance through Twentieth-Century Europe* (Cambridge and London: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2005), 15; Odd Arne Westad, *The Global Cold War: Third World Interventions and the Making of Our Times* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 8.
- ²⁷ Trygve Mathisen, *The Functions of Small States in the Strategies of the Great Powers* (Oslo: Universitetsforlaget, 1971), p. 61.
- ²⁸ Onno de Wit, 'From Europe to the United States and Back Again? Two Centuries of Inward Investments in the Netherlands', unpublished paper, 2003; Keetie Sluyterman, 'Changing Business Systems in the Netherlands in the Twentieth Century', *Business History Review* 84 (2010), pp. 737–750.
- ²⁹ Gérald Arboit, 'Retour sur les Reseaux Stay Behind en Europe: Le Cas de l'Organisation Luxembourgeoise', *Note Historique* 17, Centre Français de Recherche sur le Renseignement, 2008; Guy Bouten, *De Bende van Nijvel en de CIA* (Leuven: van Halewyck, 2011).
- ³⁰ W.K.N. Schmelzer, 'De mogelijke invloed van de kleinere staten in het huidige wereldbestel', *Internationale Spectator* 26 (1972), p. 797.
- ³¹ Bert Kreemers, *Hete Hangijzers: De aanschaf van Nederlandse gevechtsvliegtuigen* (Amsterdam: Balans, 2009). For more recent developments surrounding the F-35 Joint Strike Fighter see Giles Scott-Smith and Max Smeets, 'Noblesse Oblige: The Transatlantic Security Dynamic and Dutch Involvement in the JSF', *International Journal Special Issue: The International Politics of the F-35 Joint Strike Fighter* (Kim Nossal and Srdjan Vuletic, eds.), 68 (2013), pp. 40–69.
- ³² See also David J. Snyder, 'The Problem of Power in Modern Public Diplomacy: The Netherlands Information Bureau in World War II and the Early Cold War', in Brian Etheridge and Ken Osgood (eds.), *The United States and Public Diplomacy: New Directions in Cultural and International History* (Leiden: Brill, 2010), pp. 57–80.
- ³³ For a good example of this that stretched through the Cold War period, see Giles Scott-Smith and David J. Snyder, 'A Test of Sentiments: Civil Aviation, Alliance Politics, and the KLM Challenge in Dutch-American Relations', *Diplomatic History* 37 (2013), pp. 917–945.
- ³⁴ See for instance Duco Hellema, 'The Politics of Asymmetry: The Netherlands and the United States since 1945', in Krabbendam, van Minnen and Scott-Smith, *US-NL*, pp. 579–96, which avoids any analysis of what asymmetry meant in practice other than a simple imbalance of power.
- ³⁵ Frijhoff, p. 11.
- ³⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 13; Wim van Noort and Rob Wiche, 'Nederland: een voorbeeldige natie', in van Noort en Wiche (eds.), *Nederland als Voorbeeldige Natie* (Hilversum: Verloren, 2006), p. 14.
- ³⁷ N.C.F. van Sas, 'De kracht van Nederland: nationaliteit en buitenlands beleid', in van Sas (ed.), *De kracht van Nederland: Internationale positie en buitenlands beleid* (Haarlem: Becht, 1991), p. 10.
- ³⁸ See Cees Wiebes and Bert Zeeman, 'Benelux', in David Reynolds (ed.), *The Origins of the Cold War in Europe:*

International Perspectives (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1994), pp. 167–193.

³⁹ See for instance P.R. Baehr et al., *Elite en buitenlandse politiek in Nederland: Een onderzoek naar de structuur, houdingen en opvattingen van de Nederlandse buitenlands-politieke elite* (The Hague: Staatsuitgeverij, 1978).

⁴⁰ See for instance Kim van der Wijngaart, *Bondgenootschap onder spanning: Nederlands-Amerikaanse betrekkingen, 1969–1976* (Hilversum: Verloren, 2011), p. 183. Similar incidents occurred during the George W. Bush administration.

⁴¹ Ingeborg Philipsen, ‘Diplomacy with Ambiguity: The History of the Bilderberg Organisation 1952–1977’, Ph.D. dissertation, University of Copenhagen, 2009.

⁴² Tity de Vries, ‘The Absent Dutch: Dutch Intellectuals and the Congress for Cultural Freedom’, in Giles Scott-Smith and Hans Krabbendam (eds.), *The Cultural Cold War in Western Europe, 1945–1960* (London: Frank Cass, 2002), pp. 254–268.

⁴³ Jeanne A. K. Hey, ‘Luxembourg’s Foreign Policy: Does Small Size Help or Hinder?’ *Innovation: The European Journal of Social Science Research* 15, No. 3 (2002): 211–25.

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