



**Louise Ballière**

**18 décembre - 16H00**

**Salle Polyvalente du Learning Center Christine de Pizan**



La Rectrice de l'Université catholique de Louvain fait savoir que L soutiendra publiquement sa dissertation : **Remembering the Good or the Bad. Collective memories related to collaboration and colonisation as historical injustices in Belgium (1944/1960-2020)**

pour l'obtention du grade de Doctorat en Histoire, histoire de l'art et archéologie .

#### **Abstract**

Over the past seventy-five years, the collaboration during the Second World War and the colonization of the Congo have been scrutinized in Belgium more than once. Especially since the turn of the century, when both events began to be regarded as historical injustices committed by Belgium as a nation, debates on their course, reinterpretations, and instrumentalizations have proliferated in public discourse. Using a comparative long-term approach, this thesis explores how social groups in Belgium have represented such controversial aspects of their in-group's history over the past seven decades.

First, a discourse analysis of memory narratives in contemporary newspapers and history textbooks traces the changes and continuities in the social representations of collaboration and colonisation, from 1944 and 1960, respectively, to 2020. These representations are then assessed against their sociohistorical and discursive backgrounds at regional, national and transnational levels, showing how evolving perceptions of immorality have interacted heavily with collective memories of both events.

Subsequently, by comparing these narrative constructions and the meanings attributed to them, the thesis studies the memory mechanisms through which communities in Belgium have addressed reminders of historical immorality at given times. As such, the research examines how practices and ideas on how to engage with historical injustices have shifted since the Second World War against various sociohistorical and discursive contexts, as well as changes in the temporal and emotional distance from the events in question..

Le jury est composé de Mesdames et Messieurs :

Prof. Anne-Sophie GIJS (UCLouvain), Promotrice et Secrétaire du jury

Prof. Valérie ROSOUX (UCLouvain), Co-promotrice

Prof. Laurence VAN YPERSELE (UCLouvain), Présidente du jury et lectrice

Prof. Marnix BEYEN (Universiteit Antwerpen), Lecteur extérieur

Prof. Jeffrey OLICK (University of Virginia), Lecteur extérieur