

Cherchez la femme dans les archives de l'AMSAB (Find the woman in the AMSAB archives)

Paule Verbruggen, with the co-operation of Rita Calcoen, Martine Vermandere and Michel Vermote

Although the women's movement has long been overlooked in historical writing, in recent years it has received considerably more interest among historians. Logically, there has also been an increase in the interest in the source material upon which research depends. A wonderful initiative in this respect is the compendium that was issued in 1993 under the leadership of Miet Smet (1). For the first time, an attempt was made to make a complete catalogue of every kind of record of women that could be found in Belgium from 1830 on. AMSAB was also accorded a place in the compendium.

Unavoidably, however, empty spaces and gaps remain: some people never responded and others refused to co-operate with the project in any way. There are also the many women who were active in one or other women's organisation (and who also kept records), but have disappeared into anonymity. For AMSAB in particular, another reason the overview is not complete is because the many archives that have not yet been processed – understandably, as they are difficult to consult – were given only a brief description in the compendium, if any. Moreover, in recent years AMSAB has continued to seek information and we have obtained new and interesting archives.

This is why we at AMSAB thought it useful to make yet another contribution to the sources of women's history. In doing so, we are also including the archives that have not yet been processed in order to be able to present a complete overview of our archive files. Within the foreseeable future, however, these will have to be processed in preparation for the "We are the new sex" project in 1998. This contribution is also partially intended to outline the context in which the processed archives should be placed. It goes without saying that this is only meant to be a rough outline, in which the emphasis is placed on the organisational development of the socialist women's movement. While going through the relevant literature (see bibliography), we were struck by how many gaps and vague or incoherent elements still remain in the historiography of the socialist women's movement. This overview of sources is therefore also a stimulus for researchers to make a new and more profound analysis of a number of aspects of the women's movement.

The first general conclusion is that little material is available for the period leading up to the First World War. It is true that "women's issues" only became an item on the socialist agenda rather late. In fact, the Belgian socialists were initially strongly influenced by Proudhon's anti-feminism. Neither the programme of the Flemish socialist party, nor that of the *Parti Socialiste Brabançon* (1877), nor that of the BSP (*Belgische Socialistische Partij* [Belgian Socialist Party]) (1879) or that of the BWP [*Belgische Werkerspartij* [Belgian Workers' Party]] (1885) devoted a single letter to the emancipation of women. They only contained the demand for the abolition of female labour.

This does not mean that the women labourers did not unite themselves. In 1861, the women cotton weavers were already members of the Ghent weavers' union and in 1871 women were admitted to the Brussels shoemakers' union. In 1870 in Montignies-sur-Sambre, a small health insurance company for women was set up with the name "*Les Prévoyantes*" ["The Providents"]. Through their involvement with the trades unions, women also became interested in politics: thus separate women's divisions already came into being during the First International, this being the one from Verviers, with Marie Mineur and Hubertine Ruwette, among others, the most notable figures. In 1878 in Ghent, a first attempt was made to politically unite women, but it did not lead to an independent organisation. In 1885, the female members of the socialist co-operative *Vooruit*

[Forward] formed another circle in which women's rights were discussed in addition to consumer interests. A year later, the first socialistic propaganda club for women was established in Ghent. The driving forces behind this initiative were the Dutch journalist Nellie van Kol and the Ghent Socialist Emilie Claeys (2). The same year in Brussels, a women's division of the BWP was started, and Antwerp followed in 1887. From 1900, women's divisions were set up in all neighbourhoods of Ghent, which were centralised in the *Gentse Federatie van Vrouwengroepen* [Ghent Federation of Women's Groups], a division of the men's federation. In 1901, a *Nationale Federatie van Socialistische Vrouwen* (SV) [National Federation of Socialist Women] was established, with Isabelle Gatti de Gamond as first national secretary. The intention was to unite the existing women's groups and those still to be formed. The movement had little stability until the First World War. One serious anticlimax was the decision of the *Federatie van Socialistische Vrouwen* [Federation of Socialist Women] in 1902 to put off the fight for women's suffrage, giving priority to the fight for a one man/one vote system. This ambiguous attitude would continue to characterise the socialist women's movement. Denise De Weerdts speaks of an "identity crisis" in which the loyalty to one's class was greater than the loyalty to one's own sex (3). In fact, socialist women avoided the label of "feminist" because to them, the concept had a "bourgeois" connotation. In any event, the political emancipation of women was certainly not one of the party's causes. The principle of equal rights was written into the party manifesto, but the prevailing opinion was that women were not suitable for political struggle due to their lack of a political education. In 1912, a committee was set up to study the problem of the organisation of women in the party. What appeared from the committee's report was primarily the need for more collaboration between the various women's federations, from which arose the suggestion to establish a national women's secretariat. With the First World War, however, everything came to a standstill.

The archival material from the period leading up to the First World War that is kept in the AMSAB consists mainly of unconnected gleanings. Thus in the archives of the Préfecture de Police de Paris we find a short report on the Verviers women's conference in 1872 and on the creation of a women's division in Liège in 1873 (4). The (unprocessed) archives of Henriette D'Hollander-De Backer contain the meeting minutes of the Heuvelpoort neighbourhood women's club for the period 1911-1914 (5). In the BWP archives, we find references to the *Nationale Federatie van Socialistische Vrouwen* for the years 1901 and 1911. In the same archive, in fact, there are repeated references to women's suffrage in the period from 1900 to 1939 (6). In addition, we also have access to non-socialist documents: in the (unprocessed) archives of Denise De Weerdts is a book containing the meeting minutes for the *Commission de Bienfaisance* [Charity Committee] of the *Ligue Belge des Droits de la Femme* [Belgian Women's Rights League] (7). In the same gift we find the copies of the Bieswal sisters' diary and a notebook written by Marie De Croy in prison during the First World War (8).

After the First World War, the women's movement followed the path it had chosen: it continued to work closely with the party, but had to find its own means of support. The BWP continued to refuse too large a political involvement for women, but the women's movement did become useful for recruiting political propagandists. With the introduction of women's voting rights for the municipal elections in 1921, however, the grasp on the female electorate had to be strengthened. No autonomous women's organisation yet existed, despite the fact that some groups such as the *Socialistische Vrouwen van Gent* [Socialist Women of Ghent] resolutely supported the creation of such an organisation. After all, the strength of the labour movement lay in its unity. At the national convention of the *Socialistische Vrouwen* [Socialist Women] in June 1920, it was decided that women would remain members of the same political organisations as men. In each district, however, an action committee was set up to conduct propaganda campaigns. The district committees were required to designate one representative per province and in turn these nine representatives, together with the secretaries of the *Algemene Raad* [General Council], the

Syndikale Kommissie [Trades Union Committee] and the so-called “*Nationaal Komitee*” [“National Committee”] or “*Landsraad voor Vrouwenactie*” [“National Council on Women’s Affairs”] from the *Federatie van Coöperatieven* [Federation of Co-operatives]. In practice, however, little was seen of real national action; the organisational form differed from region to region.

The women’s movement had an especially strong base in Flanders. On the initiative of Alice Heyman, women’s groups were established throughout the entire province from a base in Ghent, which in 1919 were united as the *Vlaamse Vrouwenfederatie* [Flemish Women’s Federation]. In February 1920, the provincial federation numbered about 20 affiliated groups, with 3,000 members. After the convention of June 1920, the *Vlaamse Vrouwenfederatie* was disbanded, making way for local “*vrouwenaktiekomitees*” [“women’s action committees”].

Nonetheless, the political education of women ran less smoothly than had been expected, which is why other forms of organisation were sought in order to enlist more women in the movement. Specifically, the health insurance organisations (*mutualiteiten*) were considered. After all, women who became members received practical social benefits such as compensation in the case of illness, allowances for births and marriage, etc. The idea of raising women’s political awareness through the health insurance organisations was actually initiated by Leona Dupuis. In 1913, she had already set up a separate women’s division within the *Nationaal Verbond der Socialistische Mutualiteiten* (NVSM) [National Association of Socialist Health Insurance Organisations] in Mons. As of 1919, various other cities followed, especially in Wallonia and Brussels. In 1922, at the initiative of Arthur Jauniaux, the Women’s Division of the NVSM was officially established within the NVSM, with which the various existing federations were associated. The SVV (9) was regionally organised, with local branches. Important action items of the SVV were the introduction of children’s holidays, the fight against alcohol consumption and the introduction of insurance for women with newborns.

For their part, as a political women’s movement, the SV would primarily concentrate on the fight for civic and political rights for women, the access to all occupations and economic equality. Where possible, they strove to work together with the SVV. From September 1922, the *Nationaal Komitee voor Vrouwenactie* [National Committee for Women’s Affairs] was made up of the party’s district secretaries and the federal secretaries of the SV. In addition, an executive committee or office was formed, consisting of: one woman representative per province, the secretary of the BWP’s *Algemene Raad*, the secretary of the co-operative and the secretary of the *Syndikale Kommissie*, two woman representatives of the SVV, the national secretary of the SV (Alice Heyman at the time) and Marie Spaak in her function as Senator. An impressive collaboration on paper, but in practise the women’s movement grew into an inextricable knot. In various boroughs, different women’s groups came into being alongside one another, and were even in competition with one another; the same women often had a seat in the administrative organs of various factions.

In addition to the SV and the SVV, in January 1923 a *Coöperatieve Vrouwenbeweging* [Co-operative Women’s Movement] was also created by representatives from groupings of co-operative members. The movement was initially strongest in Wallonia, especially in Liège. Besides the national operations, regional factions that called themselves guilds were also active. As for the trades unions, there existed no separate women’s organisation. The recruitment of women through the trades union was extremely difficult, although after the war the number of woman members had increased considerably. Many women probably did not see the benefit of a separate trades union organisation, again because of the concept of class solidarity.

In the meantime, it was also becoming increasingly obvious that the SV was not managing to organise itself as effectively as the SVV. Through the concrete benefits that the SVV offered its

members (children's holidays, infant welfare consultations, etc.), they gradually surpassed the political groups in membership figures. In Dendermonde and West Flanders, this even led to a complete merging of the SV with the SVV.

At the party conference of October 1936, specific attention was paid to the reform of the women's movement, with an emphasis on more unity. In practice, however, reorganisation was put on the back burner. In 1936, the *Koöperatieve Vrouwenbeweging* [Co-operative Women's Movement] did receive its own national secretariat and the co-operation between the three national organisations (SV, SVV, *Koöperatieve Vrouwenbeweging*) became more closely-knit. With the outbreak of the Second World War, however, all co-operation ceased. Only the SVV continued to work underground.

Els Witte writes about the period between the two World Wars: "Neither the SV nor the SVV could expand into an autonomous organisation with its own feminist goal. Although a number of prominent women actually argued for this, the party had no or insufficient means at its disposal, so that even planning in the medium term was impossible and the women's unions remained entirely dependent on the good will (or should we say the unwillingness?) of the male BWP members" (10).

The source material for the period between the World Wars is even more extensive. In the archives of the Ghent-Eeklo BWP federation, good source material on the SV can be found from the reorganisation phase from 1920-1925, both nationally and for the Ghent-Eeklo federation (11). Also important are the BWP archives (12), where information can be found on the *Nationaal Komitee voor Vrouwenactie* for the period from 1921 to 1936.

As far as local women's activities are concerned, in the archives of the Deinze BSP branch (13) is a book of minutes of meetings of the local women's association from 1924 to 1937. In the (unprocessed) archives of the Vilvoorde BSP branch (14), we find a cashbook on the social activities of the local women's association from 1933 to 1938. In the archive of Frans Block (15), there is also a cashbook from the local Hemiksem women's group (which belonged to the Antwerp federation) for the period from 1922-1939. Also interesting is the small archive of the socialist women's choir De Dageraad-Leuven, with books of minutes of meetings for the period between 1923 and 1948 (16).

As for the SVV, we have the copies of SVV-national's meeting minutes from 1937 to 1966 at our disposal (17). Also in the archives of the BWP, we find information about the SVV for the years 1927, 1928 and 1937-1939 (18). In the archives of the Ghent-Eeklo Bond Moyson federation are reports and notes of the Ghent SVV federation between 1925 and 1932 (19). The archives of the *Federatie van Socialistische Mutualiteiten van Zuid-en Midden West-Vlaanderen* [Federation of Socialist Health Insurance Organisations of South and Central West Flanders] contain the minutes of the West-Flanders SVV federation for the period from 1933-1938 (20). Further, there is the archive of the *Femmes Prévoyantes Socialistes* (FPS) [Provident Socialist Women] of Vorst/Forest (in Brussels) with interesting material on the FPS's operations between 1936 and 1940 (21).

For documentation on female labour in the period between the two World Wars, the archive of Edward Anseele Sr may be consulted. There, we also find a volume of annotated extracts from "*De Stem der Vrouw*" ["The Woman's Voice"] (22).

After the war, the *Nationaal Vrouwenaktiekomitee* [National Women's Action Committee], which had been disbanded during the war, was not immediately re-established. For its part, the SVV attempted to set itself up as the only socialist women's movement, an idea that had been developed

during the war by Arthur Jauniaux, National Secretary of the NVSM. This proposal was met with general approval amongst the party leaders, but came up against resistance from a number of SV district federations in Ghent, Antwerp, Brussels and Liège. The party executive committee tried to set up a new national committee for women's affairs, but the deliberations between the SVV and SV were called off. In practice, what it boiled down to was that the SVV effectively became the women's movement of the party and that the *Socialistische Vrouwen* "disappeared into the twilight". In 1949, the SVV numbered approximately 240,000 members, and the SV still 35,000. Strong SV groups remained in two district federations, namely in Ghent and in Antwerp. Sint-Niklaas also retained active women's operations. In Ghent, Amanda Foket was the key figure of political operations, and in Antwerp, Mathilde Schroyens. In spite of their repeated appeals to breathe new life into the political women's movement, no clear reaction from the party was forthcoming.

Influenced by the second wave of feminism (see below) at the beginning of the seventies, in 1973 a number of socialist women founded the non-profit organisation "*Nationale Socialistische Vrouwenbeweging*" ["National Socialist Women's Movement"] (abbreviated SV), which was primarily active in the socio-cultural arena. A change in mentality also became apparent at the head of the party: at the 1977 convention, the first open debate in many years took place on the role of women in the party. On the Flemish side, in May 1978 a *Stuurgroep van BSP-Vrouwen* [Steering Committee of BSP Women] was set up, which formulated suggestions and proposals concerning the presence of women in the party. This steering committee was made up of representatives from existing women's organisations and woman members of parliament, experts and party leaders. In 1979, they organised a workshop on "Socialist Women 1980". The ideas and proposals formulated there made a definite contribution to the official recognition of a political women's movement and the guaranteed presence of women (min. 25%) in the new party regulations that were approved by the SP convention in March 1980. After another year of preparatory work, the *Nationale SV-Vrouwencommissie* [National SV Women's Committee] was officially inaugurated by Karel Van Miert in June 1981.

The SVV, which in the meantime had grown considerably and become well organised, also fell under the influence of the second wave of feminism. On the one hand, their main emphasis remained on themes related to women's responsibility as caretakers and the importance of the family, but on the other hand there was an increase in the resistance against measures that put checks on female labour. The SVV also supported the principle of equal pay for equal work.

The women's movement's most productive sphere of activity was the trades union. At the beginning of the 1960s, women's committees came into being at the heart of various union federations, which investigated the problems of female labour and formulated recommendations. In addition to these, interprofessional women's committees were also established and they placed more emphasis on the training and instruction of women activists. In December 1964, another working group was set up within the ABVV-national organisation (*Algemeen Belgisch Vakverbond* [General Belgian Trades Union Federation]) that expanded into a something of a women's committee without a clear structure. The new impetus that the 1966 strike at FN-Herstal gave to women's trades union action (and that resulted in the establishment of the "Equal pay for equal work" action committee), eventually led to the establishment of a *Nationale Vrouwencommissie* [National Women's Committee]. This committee was made up for two thirds of representatives from the women's committees founded within the union federations and for one third of representatives from women's committees in the regional branches. In 1976, a decision was made to establish a *Bureau van de Vrouwencommissie* [Office of the Women's Committee], which would be the link between the national union leaders and the committee. The union's women's activities

succeeded in achieving important results with regards to equal pay for equal work, accessibility to the labour market, vocational training, working conditions, family leave, etc. In 1990, the national women's committee of the ABVV was disbanded because women were thought to be sufficiently represented within the trades union.

After the war, the co-operative women's movement also resumed operations and got off the ground in Flanders. The first women co-operatives's guild was set up in Ghent, and was quickly followed by another in Menen. Nonetheless, membership always remained higher in Wallonia than in Flanders. At the beginning of the 1970s, the *Koöperatieve Vrouwenbeweging* was absorbed by the mixed *Koöperatieve Verbruikersunie* [Co-operative Consumer Union].

As was briefly mentioned above, in the 1970s a number of feminist action committees came into being, of which the Dolle Minas (who called themselves the Marie Mineurs in Wallonia) and the *Pluralistische Actiegroepen* (PAG) [Pluralistic Action Committees] were the first and formed the origins of the second wave of feminism. This was a spontaneous protest movement with little theoretical basis that was primarily supported by young intellectuals and came into being outside the traditional structures. Dolle Mina especially did not want to disconnect women's issues from the fight against capitalism. The PAG was less radical and endeavoured to bring feminists together over party lines. In 1972, the *Vrouwen Overleg Komitee* (VOK) [Women's Consultative Committee] was established in order to create a feminist debate in Flanders. They organised the first women's day that same year. In 1977, the *femsocbeweging* [feminist socialist movement], which would remain active into the 1980s, grew from the collaboration of the leftist action committees.

In some organisations, the archive material for the post-war period has been very well preserved, while that of others has come to us only in bits and pieces. The latter is certainly the case for the archives of the national activities of the *Socialistische Vrouwen*. In the archives of BSP-national (23), we find documents from the years 1961-1962 that testify to the difficult situation within the political women's movement. Further, there are reports, correspondence and membership lists of the national women's committee between 1970 and 1975, during the time that the women's activities within the party began to regain vitality. Also interesting are the office records of the BSP from 1945 to 1978, in which women's issues are sporadically referred to (24). Further, there are the archives of the *Socialistische Vrouwen*, which contain material on the period between 1973 and 1979 (25). The (unprocessed) archive of Denise De Weerdts contains items about the *SV-Vrouwencommissie* and on the women's issues working group of the SEVI (1974-1989) (*Studiecentrum Emile Vandervelde Instituut* [Emile Vandervelde Institute Study Centre]) (26). In the archives of the *Socialistische Jonge Wachten* [Young Socialist Guard] are a few reports of the women's committee of the youth section of the Socialist party between 1949 and 1951 (27).

As far as the federal or local activities of the SV are concerned, archive material is also scattered here and there throughout the AMSAB archives. We have a fairly coherent body of information at our disposal for Ghent, in particular the archives of the *Socialistische Vrouwen-Gent*, with reports and correspondence from the *Gentse Federatie van Socialistische Vrouwengroepen* [Ghent Federation of Socialist Women's Associations] between 1945 and 1947 (28). In the archives of the Ghent-Eeklo BWP federation are items related to the reorganisation of the socialist women's movement in Ghent between 1950 and 1958 (29). In the (unprocessed) archive that Amanda Foket donated to us, we find reports, accounting documents, correspondence and records related to the activities of the SV in Ghent between 1950 and 1980 (30). In the (unprocessed) archive of Henriette D'Hollander-De Backer are records of the *SP-Vrouwen* of Ghent-Eeklo between 1981 and 1994 (31). Finally, there is also material on the women's activities of a number of Ghent

neighbourhood clubs, namely on the *Vrijheid door Broederschap* [Freedom through Brotherhood] neighbourhood club between 1971 and 1988 (32) and on the Jef Van Der Meulen neighbourhood club between 1983 and 1988 (33).

For *SV-Antwerpen*, the most important material is located in the archive of Vogelina Dille-Lobe (34). Items from the SV between 1955 and 1966 are also located in the archives of the Antwerp SP federation (35). In the archives of the *Jongsocialisten* [Young Socialists], we find annual reports of the *SV-Antwerpen* between 1972 and 1976 (36). Further, the archives of the *Centrum voor Economisch en Sociaal-Cultureel Onderzoek* (CESCO) [Centre for Economic and Socio-Cultural Research] may be a useful source of documentation on the history of the Antwerp socialist women's movement (37). We also have material at our disposal regarding the Brussels SV, however this information has not yet been processed (38).

And then there are the fragments of archive material from local socialist women's federations: the archives of the Geraardsbergen women's federation between 1948 and 1955 (39), of the Hemiksem women's group between 1936 and 1965 (40), the Lokeren women's federation between 1955 and 1958 (41), of the Kruibeke women's federation between 1956 and 1960 (42), of the Stuivenberg women's group (43) and of the Deinze women's activities (SV, SVV and *Samenwerksters* [Women Co-operators]) between 1956 and 1964 (44). Among the unprocessed archives, we find items on the *Socialistische Vrouwengroep van Vilvoorde* between 1967 and 1976 (45).

For the sake of completeness, we would also like to mention that we have a small amount of archive material from the international socialist women's movement. In the archive of the national BSP are items on the International Council of Social Democratic Women from the 1950s and the beginning of the 1960s (46). We also find items from the International Council of Social Democratic Women in the archive of Vogelina Dille-Lobe (47).

As for the SVV-national, we mentioned above that we have access to copies of minutes of meetings up to 1966. Further, there is little to be found on the national activities of the SVV in the AMSAB archives, but for some federations and branches, on the other hand, much information is available.

A few items on the Ghent-Eeklo SVV federation are located in the archives of the Ghent-Eeklo Bond Moyson federation (48). Of greater interest is the (unprocessed) donation by the Ghent SVV federation, containing reports, correspondence and records of their activities between 1970 and 1990 (49). For the West Flanders/South and Central West Flanders SVV federation, we hold the records from between 1945 and 1991 (50), for the Bruges-Ostend SVV federation there is (unprocessed) archive material including records, files and correspondence between 1968 and 1979 (51) and for the Sint-Niklaas SVV federation, we have the records from 1945 to 1960 (52). On the Antwerp SVV federation, material can be found in the archive of Ward Cassiers for the period just after the war (53), in the archives of the Antwerp SP federation for the period from 1949-1952 (54) and especially in the archive of Vogelina Dille-Lobe for the period between 1953 and 1976 and between 1985 and 1991 (55). In the unprocessed archives, we find further material on the Lissewege SVV branch from 1946 to 1990 (56), the Wondelgem SVV branch from 1948 (57) and the Melle SVV branch (58).

For the women's activities in the trades unions, we have very good sources at our disposal. The most important archives are those of the *ABVV-Vrouwencommissie* – as yet unprocessed – with reports, correspondence, records and other documentation for the period between 1970 and 1990 (59). In addition, interesting items on the activities of the *Nationale Vrouwencommissie* between 1970 and 1981 are also located in the archives of ABVV-national (60). We also have access to archival information from the women's committees of a number of trades union federations and regions, namely from the ACOD-national (*Algemene Centrale der Openbare Diensten* [General

Trades Union Federation for Public Services]) women's commission between 1979 and 1981 (61), from the Antwerp ACOD-LRB (*ACOD- Lokale en Regionale Besturen* [ACOD-Local and Regional Councils]) between 1980 and 1981 (62), from the women's committee of the PMB (*Provinciale Metaalbewerkerbond* [Provincial Metalworkers' Federation]) Antwerp branch for 1981 (63), from the women's committee of the TACB (Socialist textile workers' union) Ghent branch between 1972 and 1977 (64), from the regional women's committee of Limburg in 1988 (65) and from the regional women's committee of Sint-Niklaas between 1979 and 1981 (66).

Finally, concerning the co-operative women's movement, we possess practically nothing on the *Nationaal Verbond der Coöperatieve Vrouwenbonden* [National League of Co-operative Women's Federations] (67). We do have extremely valuable (unprocessed) archive material on the activities of *De Samenwerksters te Gent* [The Ghent Women Co-operators] for the period between their foundation and 1995 (68).

Of interest for the history of the women's movement in West Flanders, and in general for that matter, are the memoirs of Sirène Blieck, of which the AMSAB holds copies (69).

Over the last few years, we in the archive department have begun more actively prospecting for material on the second wave of feminism. Our interest here is primarily in leftist or progressive organisations. During our search, we were struck by how many women had simply thrown their archive material away. Nonetheless, up to now we have been able to get our hands on a number of small high-quality archives.

One extremely rich archive is that of Marthe Vandemeulebroeke, one of the founders of the Equal Pay for Equal Work action committee (70). A number of ex-Dolle Minas from Ghent have also donated their (as yet unprocessed) archives. The most interesting material comes from Godelieve Van Geertruyen because it contains the complete series of records of the Dolle Mina-Ghent meetings between 1976 and 1982, of Fem-soc between 1977 and 1981 and of the *Linkse Vrouwen Eenheid* (LEV) [Leftist Women's Union] between 1979 and 1981 (71). Nadine Crappé (72), Leen Mestdagh (73), Chantal De Smet (74) and Greta Craeymeersch (75) also have archive material on Dolle Mina, in addition to documentation on a number of subjects such as abortion, female labour, contraception, etc. The archive of Marijke Colle also reflects her active involvement in the women's movement (abortion committee, *Vrouwen tegen de Krisis* [Women against Crisis], etc.) (76). In the archive of Lin Rosier, we find material on the feminist movement in Aalst (77). In the (unprocessed) archive of Rita Van Gael are records from the Ninove women's centre for the period between 1977 and 1983 (78). The archive of Nadya De Beule also contains documentation on feminism (79).

A number of these women were also active in the women's committees of smaller leftist parties. We find documents on the women's committee of the RAL (*Revolutionaire Arbeiders Liga* [Revolutionary Workers' League] in the archives of Marijke Colle and Leen Mestdagh, as well as that of Fons Van Cleempoel (80). Regarding the women's committee of the RAL, the archives of the Belgian branch of the Fourth International (81) are certainly also worthy of examination. These archives also contain items about the women's movement and women's liberation during the 1970s. For the *KPB-Vrouwencommissie* (*Kommunistische Partij van België* [Belgian Communist Party]), we find material in the archives of Nadine Crappé and Chantal De Smet, of Louis Roth (82) and of Jaak Withages (83).

The Elcker-ik Leuven archives are extremely interest regarding the women's movement in Leuven (84). Other archives containing material on the women's movement in recent decades are the

archive of Rudi Van Doorslaer (85) and the archive of Michel Oukhow (with a survey on Dolle Mina) (86).

As regards the theme of sexual education and family planning, the archives of the FGSO (*Federatie der centra voor Geboortenregeling en Sexuele Opvoeding* [Federation of Centres for Birth Control and Sexual Education]), which contain information from between 1953 and 1994 (87), certainly merit mention. Also interesting regarding this topic is the archive of Willy Calewaert (88).

For the homosexual and lesbian movement, we have the archives of De Rooie Vlinder at our disposal, which contain documents from the years between 1976 and 1981 (89).

In 1996 the non-profit organisation *Fonds Suzan Daniel Homo/Lesbisch Archief- en Documentatiecentrum* [Homosexual/Lesbian Archive and Documentation Centre] was established with the intention of collecting and processing all sources of information on the homosexual and lesbian movement. Later on an agreement was arranged between Amsab, Kadoc (*Katholiek Documentatie- en Onderzoekscentrum* [Catholic Documentation and Research Centre]), the *Archief en Documentatiecentrum voor Vrouwengeschiedenis* [Archive Centre for Women's History] and ROSA *Documentatiecentrum voor Gelijke Kansen, Feminisme en Vrouwenstudies* [Documentation Centre for Equal Chances, Feminism and Women's Studies], with support of the *Liberaal Archief* [Liberal Archive], the ADVN (*Archief en Documentatiecentrum voor het Vlaams-nationalisme* [Archives and Documentation Centre for Flemish Nationalism]).

In conclusion, we would also like to mention that the audio-visual department has an extremely extensive collection of photographs from the socialist women's movement. From the second wave of feminism, however, almost nothing remains (90). The women at the time were almost certainly too busy taking action to think of taking photos.

(1) Flour E., Jacques C., Bronnen voor de geschiedenis van de vrouwenbeweging in België. Repertorium van archieven (1830-1993). Brussel, 1993. Zie bespreking in AMSAB-Tijdingen, nr. 4, 1996.

(2) De briefwisseling van Nellie van Kol met Emilie Claeys bevindt zich in het Internationaal Informatiecentrum en Archief voor de vrouwenbeweging in Amsterdam.

(3) D. De Weerdt, C. Galle, SV : 100 jaar socialistische vrouwenbeweging. Brussel, SV, p. 13.

(4) AMSAB, Archief nr. 193 (microfilm).

(5) AMSAB, S/96/091.

(6) AMSAB, Archief nr. 118 (microfilm). De index op dit archief is nog niet volledig afgewerkt, maar kan al geraadpleegd worden in de leeszaal.

(7) De Liga voor de Rechten van de Vrouw was een pluralistische feministische organisatie die vooral opkwam voor de juridische gelijkheid van man en vrouw. De socialistische vrouwenbeweging distancieerde zich echter van die organisatie van "burgerlijke feministen".

(8) AMSAB, S/95/165.

(9) Wij gebruiken hier reeds de benaming "Socialistische Vooruitziende Vrouwen", maar die zou pas courant worden in de jaren dertig. Zie : C. Bavegems, Bijdrage tot de geschiedenis van de socialistische vrouwenbeweging : 1919-1940. Onuitgegeven Licentiaatsverhandeling, VUB, p. 48.

(10) E. Witte, De socialistische vrouwenbeweging tegen de achtergrond van de maatschappelijke evolutie. In : Rapporten en perspectieven omtrent vrouwenstudies. VUB-Press, 1988, p. 104.

- (11) AMSAB, Archief nr. 32. Voor een gedetailleerde beschrijving van het archief, zie Repertorium van archieven voor de vrouwengeschiedenis, pp. 163-164.
- (12) AMSAB, Archief nr. 118 (microfilm).
- (13) AMSAB, Collectie nr. 77.
- (14) AMSAB, S/93/136.
- (15) AMSAB, Archief nr. 58.
- (16) AMSAB, Archief nr. 94.
- (17) AMSAB, Archief nr. 171.
- (18) AMSAB, Archief nr. 118 (microfilm).
- (19) AMSAB, Archief nr. 8.
- (20) AMSAB, Archief nr. 146.
- (21) Dit archief is één van de vele die ondertussen door AMSAB in Moskou gemicrofilmd konden worden. De inventaris zal binnen afzienbare tijd raadpleegbaar zijn.
- (22) AMSAB, Collectie nr. 60. Deze collectie wordt herwerkt.
- (23) AMSAB, Archief nr. 75. Voor een gedetailleerde beschrijving van het archief, zie repertorium pp. 162-163.
- (24) AMSAB, Archief nr. 75.
- (25) AMSAB, Collectie nr. 82. Voor een gedetailleerde beschrijving van het archief, zie repertorium pp. 166-167.
- (26) AMSAB, S/95/165.
- (27) AMSAB, Archief 37. Voor een gedetailleerde beschrijving van het archief, zie repertorium pp. 165-166.
- (28) AMSAB, Archief nr. 13. Voor een gedetailleerde beschrijving van het archief, zie repertorium pp. 167-168.
- (29) AMSAB, Archief nr. 32. Voor een gedetailleerde beschrijving van het archief, zie repertorium pp. 163-164.
- (30) AMSAB, S/92/037.
- (31) AMSAB, S/96/091.
- (32) AMSAB, archief nr. 18 (Wijkclub Vrijheid door Broederschap).
- (33) AMSAB, Archief nr. 50 (Hacquaert Armand).
- (34) CLM, Archief nr. 28. Voor een gedetailleerde beschrijving van het archief, zie repertorium pp. 177-178.
- (35) CLM, Archief nr. 43.
- (36) AMSAB, Collectie nr. 41.
- (37) CLM, Archief nr. 7.
- (38) AMSAB, S/94/088 (Bonnijns Rik).
- (39) AMSAB, Archief nr. 33.
- (40) AMSAB, Archief nr. 58 (Block Frans)
- (41) AMSAB, Archief nr. 181 (SP-afdeling Lokeren).
- (42) CLM, Archief nr. 36 (SP-afdeling Kruibeke)
- (43) CLM, Archief nr. 25 (Polak Jos en Suetens Jeanne). Voor een gedetailleerde beschrijving van het archief, zie repertorium p. 177.
- (44) AMSAB, Archief nr. 77 (BSP-afdeling Deinze).
- (45) AMSAB, D/93/009 (Gelders Frans en Thérèse).
- (46) AMSAB, Archief nr. 75.
- (47) CLM, Archief nr. 28.
- (48) AMSAB, Archief nr. 8.
- (49) AMSAB, S/93/121. Voor een gedetailleerde beschrijving van het archief, zie repertorium p. 168.

- (50) AMSAB, Archief nr. 146 (Federatie van Socialistische Mutualiteiten van Zuid- En Midden West-Vlaanderen).
- (51) AMSAB, S/94/073.
- (52) AMSAB, Archief nr. 206 (Federatie van Socialistische Mutualiteiten van het Waasland).
- (53) CLM, Archief nr. 41.
- (54) CLM, Archief nr. 43.
- (55) CLM, Archief nr. 28.
- (56) AMSAB, S/93/009 (Rosson François).
- (57) AMSAB, S/93/145 (SP-afdeling Wondelgem).
- (58) AMSAB, S/96/155 (SP-afdeling Melle).
- (59) AMSAB, S/94/103.
- (60) AMSAB, Archief nr. 144 (in voorbereiding, reeds raadpleegbaar).
- (61) AMSAB, Archief nr. 46.
- (62) CLM, Archief nr. 6.
- (63) CLM, Archief nr. 38.
- (64) AMSAB, Archief nr. 147.
- (65) AMSAB, Archief nr. 161.
- (66) AMSAB, Collectie nr. 96.
- (67) Er zit wat materiaal in het (onverwerkt) archief van Febecoop en bij Henriëtte D'Hollander-De Backer, maar het grootste deel bevindt zich nog bij Febecoop in Brussel.
Zie repertorium, pp. 100-102.
- (68) AMSAB, S/91/166, S/95/085, S/96/091.
- (69) AMSAB, Los Archief 89/30.
- (70) AMSAB, Archief nr. 156. Voor een gedetailleerde beschrijving van het archief, zie repertorium pp. 168-169.
- (71) AMSAB, S/96/068.
- (72) AMSAB, S/94/091.
- (73) AMSAB, S/95/081.
- (74) AMSAB, Archief nr. 108 en S/94/108. Voor een gedetailleerde beschrijving van het archief, zie repertorium p. 164.
- (75) AMSAB, D/95/003.
- (76) AMSAB, S/94/062. Voor een gedetailleerde beschrijving van het archief, zie repertorium pp. 250-251.
- (77) AMSAB, Archief nr. 103. Voor een gedetailleerde beschrijving van het archief zie repertorium p. 166.
- (78) AMSAB, S/93/168.
- (79) AMSAB, D/94/007.
- (80) CLM, in voorbereiding.
- (81) AMSAB, Archief nr. 45.
- (82) CLM, Archief nr. 30.
- (83) CLM, Archief nr. 44.
- (84) AMSAB, S/88/061, in voorbereiding.
- (85) AMSAB, Archief nr. 72.
- (86) CLM, Archief nr. 23.
- (87) AMSAB, Archief nr. 168.
- (88) CLM, Archief nr. 20.
- (89) AMSAB, Archief nr. 22.
- (90) Greta Craeyeersch heeft wel een aantal fotoalbums over de acties van Dolle Mina in haar bezit.

<http://www.socialhistoryportal.org/sites/default/files/amsab-vrouwen.pdf>

Last modified: 2002