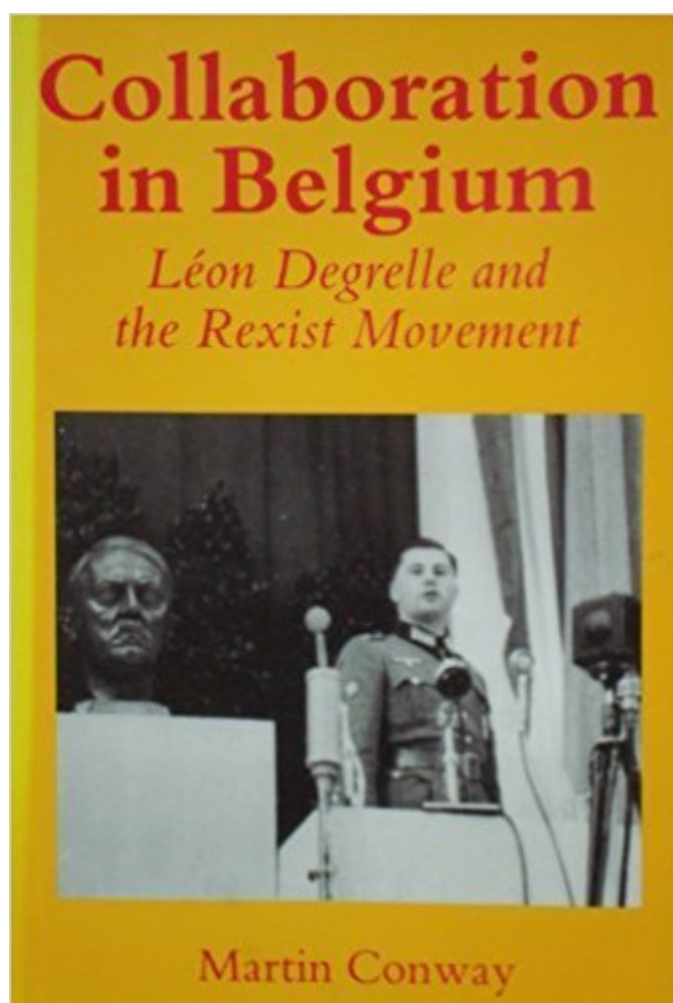


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Collaboration In Belgium: Leon Degrelle And The Rexist Movement, 1940-1944



Synopsis

This book examines the history of political collaboration in Belgium during World War II. The Rexist movement was founded in the early 1930s by Leon Degrelle as a movement of "renovation" and "conquest", and it was gradually transformed into a political party which won 11% of the vote in the general election of 1936. After the German blitzkrieg which overwhelmed Belgium in May 1940, Degrelle and the Rexistists declared open support for the Nazis, founding a volunteer army which fought on the Eastern front, and eventually receiving the Iron Cross with Oak Leaves for his efforts in supporting the Nazis. After the fall of the Reich, Degrelle fled to Spain where he continues to live today. Conway has based this account of a little-known part of the history of World War II on a comprehensive examination of the Belgian and German records, as well as personal interviews with Degrelle himself and other surviving Rexistists.

Book Information

Hardcover: 384 pages

Publisher: Yale University Press (November 24, 1993)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0300055005

ISBN-13: 978-0300055009

Product Dimensions: 1.5 x 6.5 x 9.5 inches

Shipping Weight: 1.9 pounds (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 3.7 out of 5 stars 2 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #1,377,857 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #110 in Books > History > Europe > Belgium #12124 in Books > History > Military > World War II #119171 in Books > Biographies & Memoirs

Customer Reviews

I don't enjoy saying this about a book that was obviously the result of lot's of work. It is a professional effort; yet one gets the impression that event's are being observed through binoculars at a distance of 500 meters.(Well, it is about the war). Perhaps other's will like it. I hope they will. Degrelle, in this book, can't buy a break. This remarkable man is a nobody, an egotist, a criminal, over-rated and he thought he was more important than he was. It should be subtitled: Biography of "Someone Not Worth Thinking About". And Oh; the Rexist Party was an extremist party with no support. It's a hit piece that reads as a professionally-produced PhD thesis. The author, (or is it his mentor?) is apparently emotionally involved in the subject. The reputed "winners" write the histories;

but must we be constantly reminded on every page?

An excellent scholarly work that shows a different perspective on a little known chapter in history. One can dislike Degrelle for who he was and what he did, but one should not confuse dislike for 'Collaboration with the Nazis' as a theme with dislike for Conway's efforts with this book. It shows that Degrelle was no mere puppet, but that the Rexist political movement in Belgium had a considerable following before Hitler ever came to power. It also exposes the often one-sided narrative on the activities of Belgium's Pierlot Government in exile, which hid out in London for the majority of the war, living off of the wealth of the Belgian Government's gold reserves and other national riches that it was able to smuggle to England in its flight while normal Belgians were left to contend with occupation and the confiscation of their property and food by the invaders. Meanwhile, King Leopold was labeled as a "collaborator" for refusing to abandon his people.

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