

TIM SOENS

Regional Representative Benelux Countries 2019

Short Motivation Statement

As regional coordinator since 2015, it has been an honour to act as link between environmental historians in Belgium, the Netherlands and Luxemburg and the ESEH-board. Environmental historians in the three countries have a tradition of close collaboration, facilitated by our joint Journal for the History of Environment and Society (<https://ojs.ugent.be/jhes>), published since 2016, and in a way succeeding the Dutch-Flemish Jaarboek voor Ecologische Geschiedenis. News about the field is circulated via the annual newsletter, usually in summer: <http://eseh.org/about-eseh/regions/benelux-countries/>. In this newsletter, activities are announced as well as recent publications and PhD's.

As can be seen from my CV, I am connected to the Centre of Urban History of the University of Antwerp (<https://www.uantwerpen.be/en/staff/tim-soens/>). The research line ENVIRHUS I set up in this centre, is strongly focused upon the interaction between Environment and Society, and the comparative approach of nature-induced hazards and disasters, with particular emphasis on the pre-1900 period. As a strong believer in collective research, I am very proud on the 8 PhD's which have been finalized in this research line, with 7 more ongoing. Serving the new generation of environmental historians, that is what we need to do!

Admittedly, the frequency of the newsletter could be higher, but time is lacking, and other channels of information (H-Environment, the general ESEH-newsletters exist). We also do not have the tradition of specific ESEH-Benelux activities, precisely because there are so many occasions in which we meet (ESEH, but also ESSHC, EURHO, EAUH-conferences) etc. Nevertheless, I am always open to suggestions!

For these reasons, and if you all grant me confidence, I'm willing to serve one final term as ESEH Benelux coordinator,

Best wishes, and see you in Tallinn, Tim

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Curriculum Vitae

*1977

Professor (Gewoon Hoogleraar) Centre for Urban History, University of Antwerp (since 2007)
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Tim Soens is teaching Medieval and Environmental History at the University of Antwerp (Belgium), first as assistant and associate professor (since 2007), later as professor (since 2014). In 2006, he obtained his PhD at the University of Ghent with a thesis on flood protection and water management in the late medieval and early Flemish modern coastal plain (Published with Academia Publishers in 2009). While continuing his own research on flood disaster in the North Sea Area, Tim Soens has developed a new research line ‘*Environmental and Rural History of Urbanised Societies*’ within the UA Centre for Urban History. Within this research unit, he supervised nine finalized PhDs, with six more on-going (see-below). Topics investigated range from the political ecology of medieval heathlands, over the urbanisation of nature and urban water supplies to the resilience of estuarine landscapes after flooding. Since 2011, he has been coordinating the FWO-Hercules RI GIStorical Antwerp, a socio-spatial platform for urban history

(<https://www.uantwerpen.be/en/projects/gistorical-antwerp/>),

which uses the potential of GIS (Geographical Information Systems) to integrate all kind of historical data (maps, census data, iconography, address books etc.) at the level of individual houses and households in the city, and hence aims to elaborate a socio-spatial platform for the study of urban history. Within the broader field of environmental history, his social and socio-spatial approach resulted in a clear research profile and international visibility, further strengthened by his coordinating role in international research networks as the European Society for Environmental History (ESEH, acting as coordinator for the BENELUX), the European Social Sciences and History Conferences (ESSHC, acting as coordinator of the Rural History network, together with Dulce Freire, Lisbon) and the Comparative Rural History Network (CORN, as one of the Flemish coordinators).

Publications (last 5 years)

In the period 2013-2018 Tim Soens edited 2 peer-reviewed volumes and authored or co-authored 12 ISI or VABB-peer reviewed journal articles; 12 book chapters in peer-reviewed book volumes and 16 other publications (including a co-authored book and several articles or chapters for broader audiences).

Ten major publications

Soens, Tim; Dieter Schott, Michael Toyka-Seid, Bert De Munck (eds.), *Urbanizing Nature. Actors and Agency (Dis)Connecting Cities and Nature Since 1500*, Routledge, 2019 (9780367110864).

<https://www.routledge.com/Urbanizing-Nature-Actors-and-Agency-DisConnecting-Cities-and-Nature/Soens-Schott-Toyka-Seid-Munck/p/book/9780367110864>

Soens, Tim, "Resilient societies, vulnerable people. Coping with North Sea Floods before 1800", *Past and Present*, 241/1, 2018, pp. 143-177 (<https://doi.org/10.1093/pastj/gty018>)

- Soens Tim, 'Flood security in the Medieval and Early Modern North Sea Area: a question of entitlement?', *Environment and History*, 19 (2013): 209–232
- Soens Tim and De Graef Pieter. "Polder mania or marsh fever? Risk and risk management in early modern drainage projects : the case of Kalloppolder, Flanders, 1649 to 1662", *Agricultural history review*, (2014), p. 231-255
- Curtis, Daniel R., Van Bavel, B. and Soens, T. "History and the social sciences : shock therapy with medieval economic history as the patient", *Social science history*, 40 (2016), p. 751-774 <http://dx.doi.org/doi:10.1017/SSH.2016.30>
- Soens, Tim "Threatened by the sea, condemned by man? Flood risk and environmental inequalities along the North Sea Coast (1200-1800 AD)", in: Massard-Guilbaud (G.) en Rodger (R.) (eds.), *Environmental and social inequalities in the city. Historical perspectives*, Cambridge, White Horse Press, 2011, pp. 91-111. ISBN 978-1-874267-61-4
- Toen, E. and Soens, T. (eds.), *Struggling with the Environment: Land Use and Productivity*, Turnhout, Brepols, XX+499 p, 2015
- Soens, T., *De spade in de dijk? Waterbeheer en rurale samenleving in de Vlaamse kustvlakte (1280-1580)*, Gent, Academia Press, 2009, 359 p.
- Toen, Erik; Borger, Guus; De Kraker, Adriaan; Soens, Tim; Tys, Dries; Vervaet, Lies and Weerts, Henk (eds.), *Landscapes or seascapes? The History of the Coastal Environment in the North Sea Area Reconsidered*, Turnhout, Brepols, 2013 CORN Publication Series 13.
- Soens, Tim and Thoen, Erik "The origins of leasehold in the former county of Flanders", in : B. Van Bavel and Ph. Schofield (eds.), *The development of leasehold in Northwestern Europe, c. 1200-1600*, Turnhout, Brepols, 2008, pp. 31-56 (CORN Publication Series 10)

PhD supervision

A. Completed PhDs:

Eline Van Onacker (UA 2014); Kristof Dombrecht (UGent, 2014); Iason Jongepier (UA 2015); Maïka De Keyzer (UA 2015); Filip Van Roosbroeck (UA 2016); Pieter De Graef (UA 2016); Jim Van der Meulen (UA 2017); Frank Gelaude (UA 2018); Tineke Van de Walle (UA 2019);

B. Currently in Progress:

Ellen Janssens (UA since 2012); Sam Geens (UA since 2014); Rogier Van Kooten (UA since 2016); Stef Espeel (UA since 2016); Nicolas Barla (ULB, since 2016); Jean-Baptiste Ortlieb (UStrasbourg-UA, since 2018); Wout Vande Sompele (UA since 2018).

c. External examiner PhD:

24/02/2015: Lies Vervaet (UGent); 15/09/2016: Jeroen Zomer (RU Groningen); 26/04/2017: Léa Herménault (Paris 1, France); 06/09/2017: Heleen Kole (Utrecht); 21/11/2017: Aurélie Reinbold (Rennes 2, France); 2019/03: Emmanuelle Athimon (Nantes, France).