

Workshop

The Congo Free State across Languages, Media and Cultures : What archives and collections have to say.

October 18th 2017

History and Politics Service at the Royal Museum for Central Africa, Belgium

NWO project with Open University, Amsterdam

Co organized with the Center "Ecritures", Université de Lorraine

Scientific committee: P. Van Schuylenbergh & M. Leduc-Grimaldi (RMCA), P. Halen (U. Lorraine); Sarah de Mul (Open U in Amsterdam)

Abstract

Launched at Uppsala University in September 2014, 'The Congo Free State across Languages, Media and Cultures' is a research initiative funded by the NWO (the Netherlands), Uppsala University, the Royal Museum for Central Africa, Tervuren, and Leeds Beckett University. This workshop is the last opportunity for the partners involved in the project to develop and share their findings with the public and peers.

This symposium explores the Congo Free State under Leopold II (1885-1908) as a space of transnational encounter through an analysis of its representation across languages, media and cultures. As such, the collections and archives focusing on this period of time, or revisiting the memory of this period at a much later period bring to light new considerations, and help to better envision the impact memory and history may have on specific groups across Europe and Northern America. Though the RMCA is closed for renovation, the workshop will be held at the Museum, offering the audience a key opportunity to discuss specific issues, and scrutinize various types of collections including manuscript archives dating prior 1908, movies, photographs, paintings, sculptures etc. connected to the Congo Free State period or recalling its memory. Thus this international workshop, with its scientific European threefold poles, will benefit the collection and current research ongoing at the RMCA as well as strengthen a European network.

9 am: welcome

9,15am: Opening, Dr G. Gryseels

Chair1st session: Patricia Van Schuylenbergh RMCA

9,30

Luis Angel Bernardo y Garcia, State Archives of Belgium (in French)

Topic: Historical archives available to researchers in Belgium on the Congo Free State.

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M. Leduc-Grimaldi, RMCA, Belgium

Topic: From the Archives: An international team at the service of the Comité du Haut Congo / CFS

10,30

Pierre-Luc Plasman, Catholic University Louvain la Neuve (in French)

Topic: The CFS: Léopold II et l'administration congolaise aux prises avec leurs contradictions

11-11,15 short break

11,15

Robert Burroughs, Leeds Beckett University

African Agency in the Movement for Congo Reform: Behind the Casement Report

11,15

Gert De Wolf and Sarah De Mul Open University of the Netherlands

The 'Tilkens Affair' by an analysis of the correspondence between E.D. Morel and Edouard Tilkens

12,15: Q&A morning session

Lunch break: 1-2pm

Chair2nd Session: Stephen Donovan, Uppsala Universiteit

2pm

David Gordon, Bowdoin College, USA

Topic: Myth Models and the Archives: Kurtz and Prospero in the Historiography of the Congo Free State

2,30

Julien Volper, RMCA, Belgium (in French)

Topic: On Storm as a collector in the CFS

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Maarten Coutenier, RMCA, Belgium

Archives, Memory and Performance. Tensions of European and African Empire in Bunkeya, Lofoi and Lukafu

3,30-3,45 short break

3,45

Pierre Halen, University of Lorraine, France, Research Center "Ecriture", co-organization

Topic: Imagining the posterity of 'Heart of Darkness' in Literature & Movies (in French)

4,15

Debra Silverman, UCLA, USA

Topic: Image Force: How the Congo Free State shaped Architecture, Modernism, and Monarchy in King Leopold's Belgium, 1885-1908

4,45

Bambi Ceuppens, RMCA, Belgium

Topic: The Congo Free State in the renovated display at the RMCA (2018 and on)

5,15: Q&A afternoon session