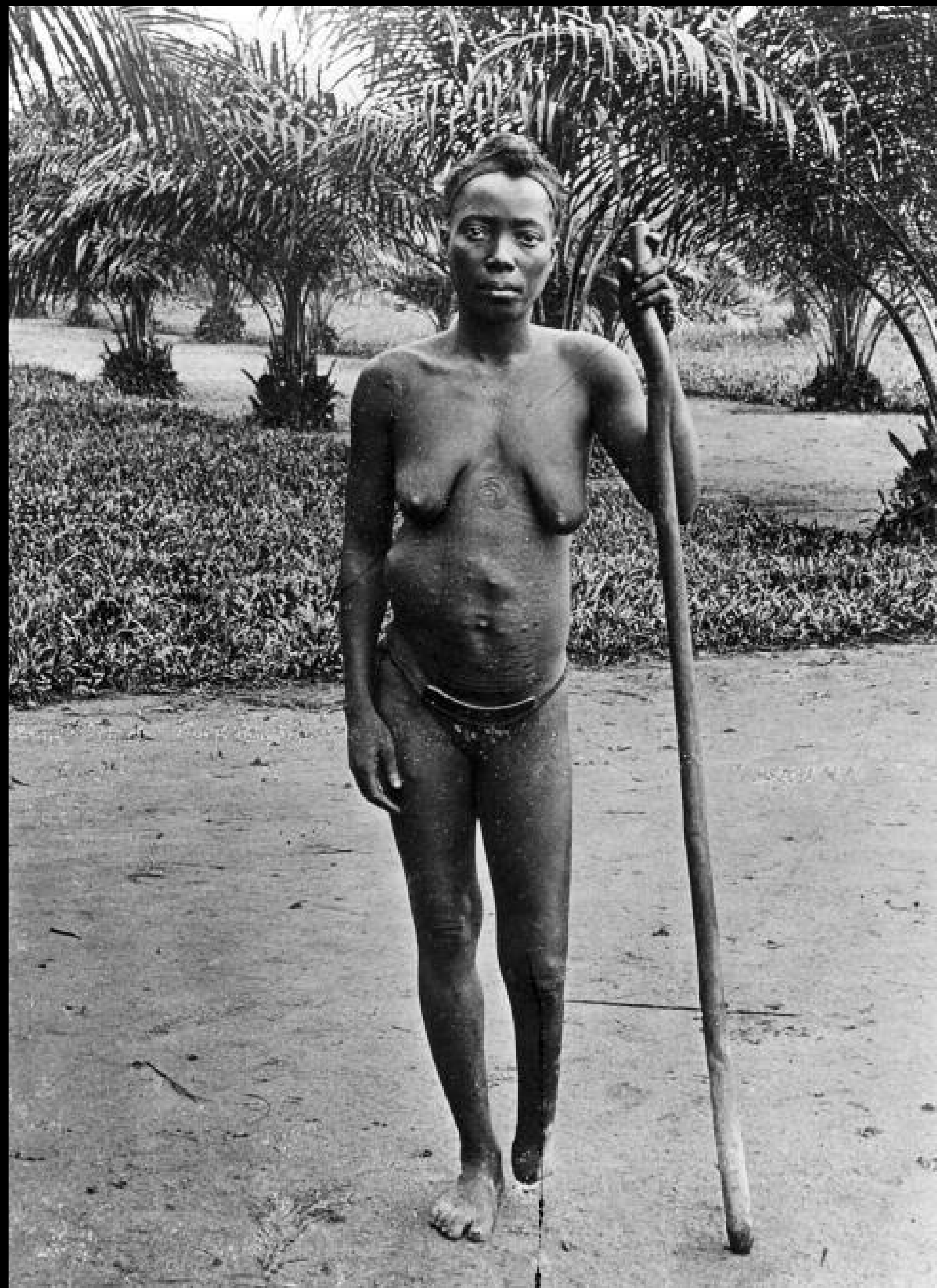

Girl with amputated foot, mutilated by sentries from a rubber concession.

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Equator District A young man and woman with severed arms. Mola's hands, seated, were destroyed by gangrene after being tied too tightly by soldiers. Yoka's hand, standing, was cut off by soldiers wanting to claim him as killed.

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REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO

In the early 1900s, the missionaries Alice Seeley Harris and her husband, Reverend John Harris, produced what was probably the first photographic campaign in support of human rights. A significant moment in the history of photography.

The Harris Lantern Slide Collection was, at the time of its presentation in Europe and America, a radical and significant shift in the representation and understanding of the impact of colonial violence in the Congo. Instead of the charade of civilisation that masked the Belgians' presence in the Congo, these photographs exposed the deep-rooted hypocrisy of so called colonial benevolence.

The legacy of Belgian state-controlled violence in the Congo would tragically re-emerge after the Congo gained its independence in 1960, with the removal from power and assassination of the newly independent state's first legally elected prime minister, Patrice Lumumba. In January 1961 he, along with two other government ministers, Maurice Mpolo and Joseph Okito, was shot, buried, exhumed, moved to a more remote location, cut into pieces and his body parts then thrown into a barrel of sulphuric acid. An act fully supported by the Belgian authorities.

A most extreme form of cultural erasure.

Mark Sealy

Photographs

All photographs by Alice Seeley Harris and John Harris, except front cover and page 5.

Photographs reproduced by kind permission of Anti-Slavery International.

The photographs of Alice Seeley Harris and her husband John Harris constituted part of what was probably the first orchestrated multimedia campaign against widespread human rights abuses.

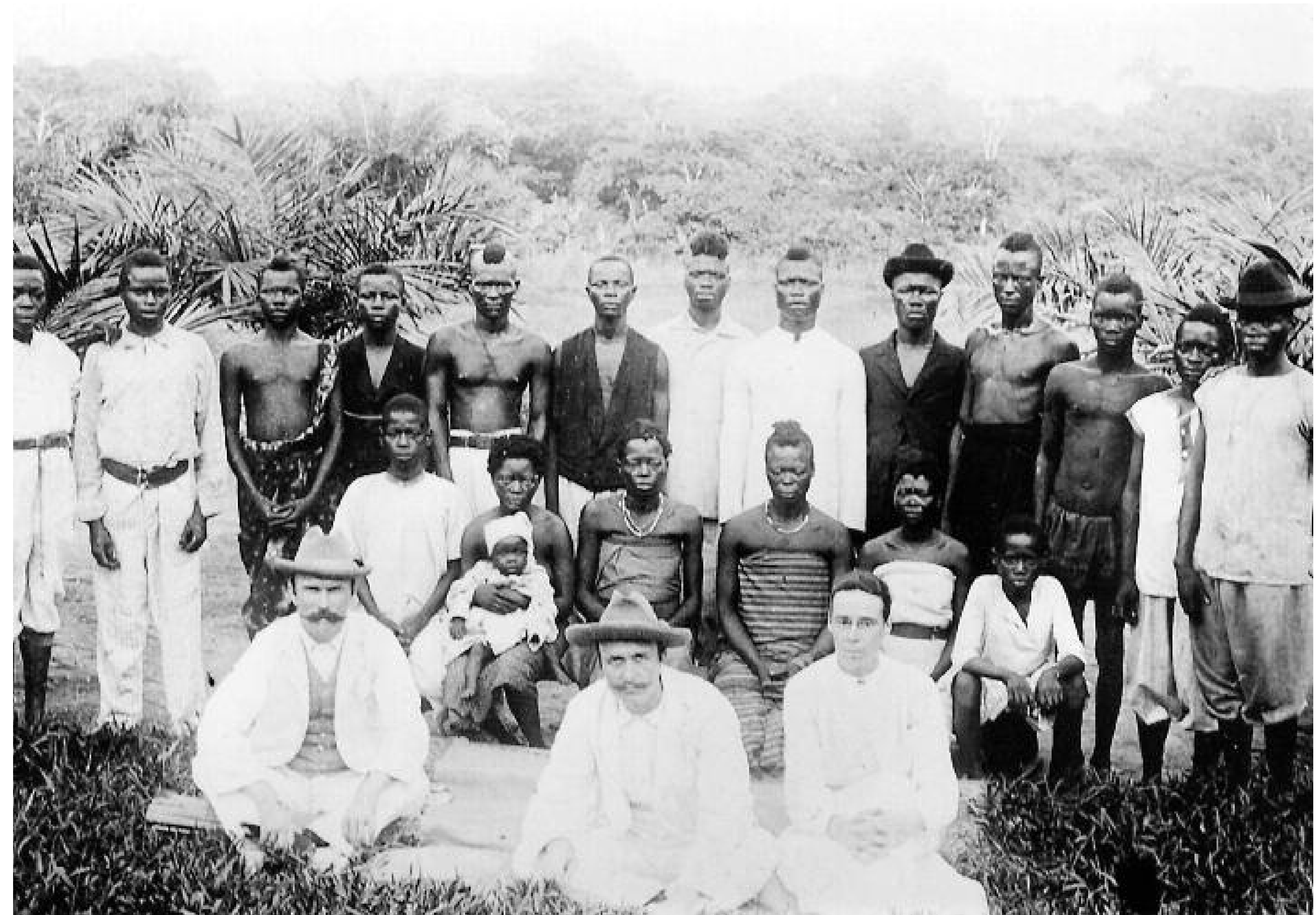
Nsongo District

Two British missionaries with Congolese men holding the severed hands of two men (Lingomo and Bolenge) from their village, murdered by rubber sentries from the Anglo-Belgian India Rubber (ABIR) company.

Baringa Isekausu whose hand was chopped off by Ikombi, one of the rubber concession's sentries.

THE KODAK ON THE CONGO
The Childhood of Human Rights

Sharon Sliwinski



The Reverend John Harris (left front) and Alice Seeley Harris (right front) with a group of indigenous people on their visit to the Belgian Congo.

The history of the Victorian Age will never be written: we know too much about it.
Lytton Strachey, *Eminent Victorians*

One of Hannah Arendt's few glaring mistakes was her assertion that crimes against humanity were crimes that only appeared when the Nazi regime attempted to exterminate the Jewish people in the middle of the twentieth century.[1] The error does not, of course, undo her insight about the importance of the concept. As she rightly argued, such crimes are an "attack upon human diversity as such, that is, upon a characteristic of the 'human status' without which the very words 'mankind' or 'humanity' would be devoid of meaning."[2] This concept makes visible, in other words, the fact that people must be actively judged human to enjoy the benefits associated with such a title. Although human rights appear to establish and operate from the abstract category of the human, in practical terms, such a category simply does not exist.

As a matter of fact, George Washington Williams, a Black American, Historian journalist, minister, and lawyer, first conceived of "crimes against humanity" in 1890, some fifty years before Auschwitz.[3] The charge was levelled against King Leopold II of Belgium and it referred to atrocities occurring in his personal colony, the Congo Free State. In 1906, E.D. Morel echoed the accusation in his book *Red Rubber* where he alludes to "a crime unparalleled in the annals of the world."[4] In his unfinished and posthumously published, *History of the Congo Reform Movement*, Morel expressly names "a great crime against humanity."[5] The crimes in the Congo would have been familiar to Arendt: the unlawful seizure of land and property, forced labour, horrific torture, and systemic murder. But some of the atrocities were unique: the widespread use of a hippo-skin whip called a chicotte, hostage taking as strategy to enforce labour, and the methodical severing of human hands.

Due to a steady trickle of reports at the turn of the last century, Leopold's treatment of the indigenous population in his colony had become a matter of great controversy in Europe and the United States. In 1904, E.D. Morel, together with Roger Casement, British Consul to the Congo Free State, mounted an organized campaign in Britain that became the largest humanitarian movement in the world during the late Victorian era. Bolstered by the legendary activism of abolitionists, the Congo Reform Association (CRA) stands among the earliest critics of empire and advocates a secular human rights ideology. Both Casement's 1903 Congo Report and Morel's prodigious collection of writings on the subject offer a complex indictment that can be regarded as a forerunner for the work of present day humanitarian groups like Human Rights Watch and Amnesty International.

What is invariably underplayed in the histories of this movement is the impact of photography. The CRA was not only the largest humanitarian movement of the era, it was also the first humanitarian movement to use atrocity photographs as a central campaign tool. Crimes occurring in far away places were made publicly visible for the first time in history. The presence of photography in the twentieth century's first great human rights movement is not coincidental. Indeed, this historical campaign shows that the very recognition of what we call human rights is inextricably bound to an aesthetic experience. The conception of rights did not emerge from the abstract articulation of an inalienable human dignity, but rather from a particular visual encounter with atrocity. Moreover, the proximity between the ideal of human rights and representations of their abuse suggests that this rights discourse serves principally as a response to the witnessing of traumatic violence. Universal human rights were conceived by spectators who with the aid of the photographic apparatus were compelled to judge that crimes against humanity were occurring to others.

The story of this recognition is complicated, however, by the fact that the presentation of atrocity within the Congo reform movement took two distinct forms. This dual treatment, in turn, produced two discrete articulations of human rights. On the one hand, international investigators like Roger Casement publicized photographs of maimed and dismembered Congolese (children in particular) as forensic evidence of colonial brutality. In this case, the images were meant to serve as incontrovertible proof that atrocity was occurring in Leopold's colony. On the other hand, missionary reformers were simultaneously delivering thousands of lantern lectures—illustrated with the very same images—throughout Europe and North America. In contrast to the tone of a criminal investigation, these lectures took the form of phantasmagoric theatrical productions: the missionaries appealed to a mythic ideal of universal human dignity, and ultimately used the Congo crisis to promote their missionary ambitions for central Africa.

While one may be hesitant to recall this difficult moment from the history of human rights, there is no doubt these conflicts continue to exert an effect. Contemporary human rights discourse still mythologizes the idea of an inalienable human dignity. Michael Ignatieff, for one, begins his Tanner Lectures by arguing that human rights represent moral progress, and specifically, progress from the

Equator District Man being flogged with a chicotte (posed picture) by a Congo State soldier.

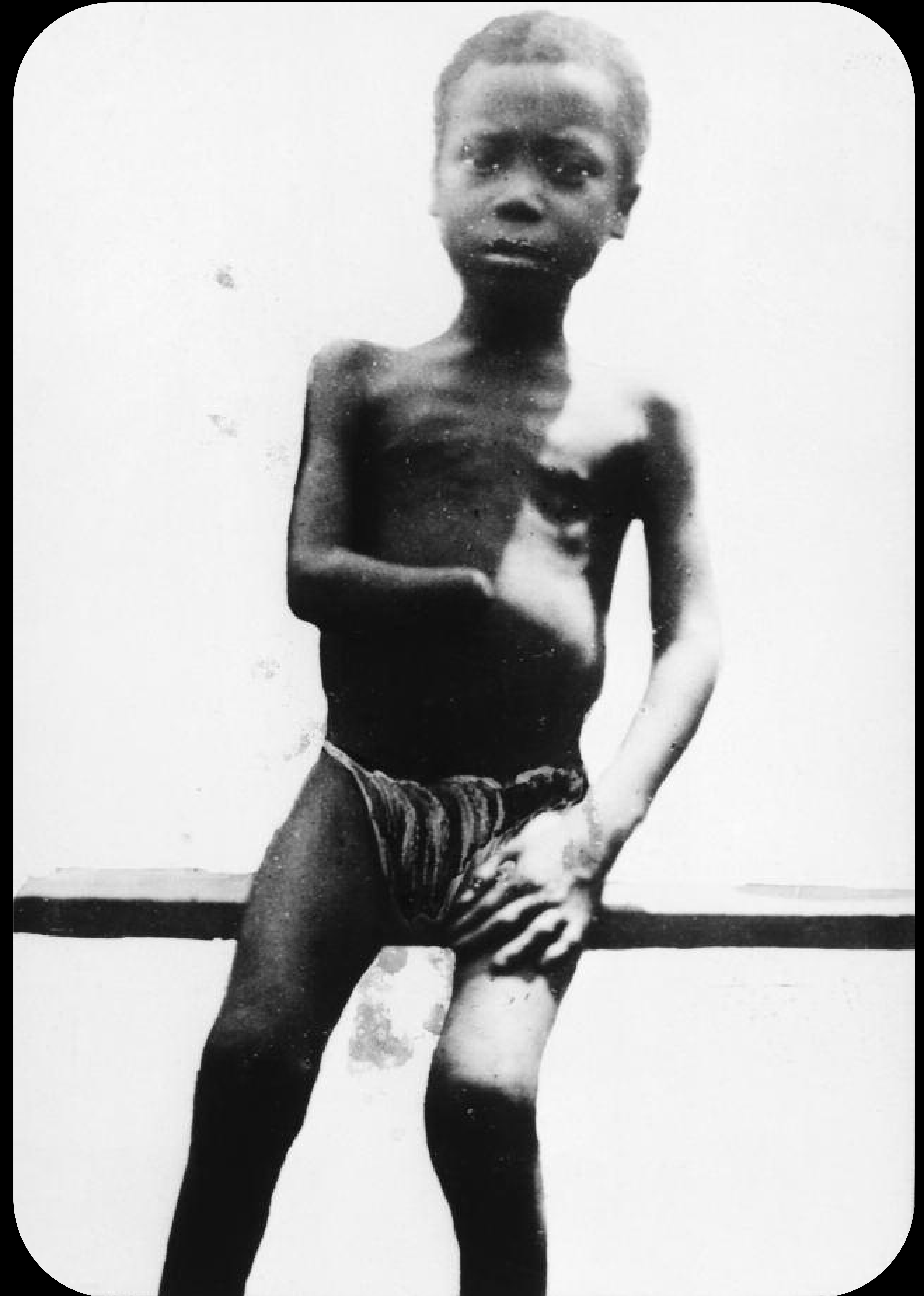
disaster that was the Holocaust.[6] Through a kind of sleight of hand, he subsumes the record of horrific social breakdown under a triumphal portrait of the present as morally developed. Ignatieff is not alone in this view. This version of human rights discourse is, at its root, an elaborate fantasy of moral progress, a fantasy that vigorously defends against any significant recognition of the human capacity for barbarity. We should not give up on this discourse, of course, but as Walter Benjamin sagely advises: "The current amazement that the things we are experiencing are 'still' possible … is not philosophical. This amazement is not the beginning of knowledge—unless it is the knowledge that the view of history which gives rise to it is untenable."[7]

Atrocities of the Congo Free State

It is not without trepidation that one delves into this history. The colonial period of the Congo involves murder, slavery, the unbridled plundering of natural resources, a fanatically cruel monarch, and the complicated, ambivalent efforts of white reformers. The history of the colonial rule in the Congo has been told many times before, by many different people, beginning with a rich collection of memoirs, studies, travelogues, and polemics written by those who were, in one way or another, participants in the events.[8] But despite the abundance of literature, this history remains at the edges of contemporary consciousness. The Congo is seldom listed among the twentieth century's genocides despite the fact millions of Congolese people were systematically exterminated during the period of terror between 1890-1910.[9]

The story perhaps begins in 1876 when King Leopold II, the constitutional monarch of Belgium, invited an international scientific conference to Brussels to consider the best means by which to open up the centre of the "dark continent" to European civilization. This conference was launched under the cloak of humanitarianism, although Leopold had long been dreaming of colonial expansion for Belgium. One result of the conference was that Leopold assumed presidency over the International Association for the Exploration and Civilisation of Central Africa. As president, he quickly enlisted the services of the celebrated explorer, Henry Morton Stanley, who had just crossed the interior of Africa, discovering the course of the Congo River. Leopold sent Stanley back into the Congo region in 1879, and again in 1882, under the guise of a second organization, *Comité d'Etudes du Haut Congo*, to make treaties with chiefs and generally establish a plausible economic basis in Africa "pending developments on the European chessboard" as Morel put it.[10] The Comité was quickly replaced by another mysterious body, called the *Association Internationale du Congo*, of which Leopold was the secret and sole stockholder. The King's agents crisscrossed Europe and the United States begging for recognition of the Association's blue flag as an "independent state." This was done largely by stressing the philanthropic mission of the Association and by presenting the treaties made with the native chiefs as the basis for a free trade confederation.

The infamous Berlin Conference, or "scramble for Africa" as it has come to be known, served as the next dramatic move on the chessboard. On 26 February 1885, the General Act of Berlin was signed, recognizing the Congo Free State, and so making Leopold sole trustee for almost one million square miles of African territory and guardian of the entire population of Africans who resided there. Or, as Article Seven of the Berlin Act put it: "All the Powers exercising sovereign rights or influence in the aforesaid territories bind themselves to watch over the preservation of the native tribes, and to care for the improvement of the conditions of their moral well-being, and to help in suppressing slavery, and especially the slave trade."[11] By rhetorically positioning himself within Europe's ongoing campaign against Arab slavery, Leopold's interests in the Congo were widely believed to be humanitarian. His real aim, however, was to make the Congo Free State a financial success. This required heavy investment for infrastructure in the region and Leopold used his personal fortune and borrowed copious amounts from the Belgian government. When Europe discovered the usefulness of rubber—first for the pneumatic bicycle tire, then for hoses, tubes, washers, and eventually the automobile tire—Leopold began to see incredible returns on his investment. Between rubber and Leopold's control of the ivory trade, the Congo Free State became the single most profitable colony in Africa.[12]



Equator District A young boy with a severed hand, mutilated by Congolese militias after his father failed to meet his rubber quota.

Lokonal Three head sentries of the ABIR with a prisoner.

Bauliri Manacled members of a chain gang at Bauliri. A common punishment for not paying taxes.

The process of extracting rubber was, however, an arduous, labour intensive undertaking. In the Congo rain forest, rubber came from a long vine that twined upwards around a tree, sometimes up to a hundred feet or more to where it could reach sunlight. To harvest this wild rubber, one had to climb the tree, slash the vine and collect the sap in a vessel. Leopold created a series of concession companies to administer this activity. In 1888 a labour-contract system was installed in tandem with the establishment of the Force Publique. This armed force of native troops who were under the command of European officers was the main weapon in the campaign of terror that Leopold unleashed. In just two years the labour system became a systematic repression that seemed less a matter of rubber extraction than an international operation of incalculable brutality. To meet the outrageous quotas of rubber Leopold demanded, Belgian officers used the Force Publique to attack a village, then loot, maim, and take hostages until the requisite amount had been collected from the community members.

Early humanitarian response

Tales of the indiscriminate violence perpetuated by Leopold's regime began to reach American and European ears through several sources. One of the first was George Washington Williams who travelled to the Congo in 1890. Having already written a massive volume on the history of African Americans, Williams hoped the Congo would serve as a base for his next research project. Nearly one hundred years after slavery had been rendered illegal throughout the Western world, Williams expected to find a benevolently governed African society. What he actually witnessed was a hell Joseph Conrad described so economically in his novella *Heart of Darkness*.[13] In his Marlow-like journey up the Congo River, Williams watched two Belgian officers wager £5 on whether their rifles could reach a trader in his canoe downriver: "Three shots were fired . . . and the trade canoe was transformed into a funeral barge." He watched as a Belgian steamer approached the shores of a village where "a large crowd of men, women and children, [were] laughing, talking and exposing their goods for sale." The soldiers on the steamer formed lines, "levelled their guns and fired, and the people fell dead, and wounded, and groaning and pleading for mercy." A "most revolting scene" ensued when the Belgian officers quarrelled over the selection of women that were left alive.[14]

Williams's shock quickly became outrage. He wrote an "Open Letter to King Leopold II of Belgium" which was first published in the *New York Herald* in July of 1890 and widely reprinted throughout the United States and Europe. It remains a model for present day social-justice organizations: public accusation armed with measured and detailed testimonial account. The letter levelled twelve specific charges against Leopold's government including: deceit, fraud, arson, the capturing of women "for immoral purposes," the raiding and massacring of whole villages, excessive cruelty to prisoners including "condemning them, for the slightest offences, to the chain gang, the like of which cannot be seen in any other Government in the civilised or uncivilised world," and "engaging in wholesale and retail slave-trade." In short, Williams declared Leopold was "waging unjust and cruel war against the natives."[15]

Remarkably, Leopold successfully fended off Williams's and others' public accusations until 1903 when humanitarian pressure eventually led to a parliamentary debate on the Congo in the British House of Commons. One result of this debate was to send a British Consul to investigate the region. Roger Casement's report, based on this investigation, was published (with heavy editing by the British Government) in 1903. The main body of the report together with several photographic "inclosures" paints an equally appalling picture of the unrelenting oppression of the Congo State system.

Among the report's description of the decline of human and animal populations, crippling taxation of natives, and provision of slave labour, Casement's most scandalous criticism was twofold: his confirmation of the Congo Free State's use of the local police (the Force Publique) for hostage taking, and the documentation of one particular mutilation that became the icon of Leopold's entire colonial regime: the cutting off of hands. Casement's report suggests that officers routinely demanded proof of native deaths from the Force Publique in the form of a human hand, or more specifically, a right hand. Each bullet issued to the Force Publique, Casement reports, was to be accounted for in this manner. The report's first reference to this widespread practice comes from a Government informant,[16] but more strikingly there are several detailed accounts of particular cases: one of a boy named Epondo,[17] and another of Mola Ekilite who had both hands taken.[18] The fourth enclosure of Casement's report includes a statement from Mola himself, taken some years after the attack and recorded through a translator. This testimony provides one of the rare instances in this history where a Congolese voice is recorded, although Mola (or perhaps the translator) refers to himself in third person throughout and the weight of the "I" feels palpably absent:

> State soldiers came from Bikoro, and attacked the Bwanga towns, which they burned killing people…. From that they went on to Mokili…. The soldiers took prisoner all the men left in the town, and tied them up. Their hands were tied very tight with native rope, and they were tied up outside in the open; and it was raining very hard, and they were in the rain all the time and all the night, their hands swelled, because the thongs contracted. His (Mola's) hands had swelled terribly in the morning, and the thongs had cut into the bone . . . Mola's hands were so swollen that they were quite useless. The soldiers seeing this, and that the thongs had cut into the bone, beat his hands against a tree with their rifles, and he was released. He does not know why they beat his hands. The white man "Ikatankoi" was not far off, and could see what they were doing. Ikatankoi was drinking palm-wine while the soldiers beat his hands off with their rifle-butts against the tree. His hands subsequently fell off (or sloughed away).[19]

The case is particularly haunting because Casement is unclear—due to the translation—whether Mola's hands had been cut off or beaten off or simply fell off due to the tightness of the ropes. One can imagine his reluctance to quiz the boy about the details.

One other artefact haunts this testimony: Mola's photograph. Shortly after the attack, Mola was found and taken in by a nearby Mission. Casement follows up Mola's statement by interviewing one of the missionaries, Mr. Clark. Mr. Clark reports that he had petitioned the local authorities for restitution on Mola's behalf some years ago when he first found the boy. Uncannily, Casement remembers that he himself had transported Clark's letter ("in entire ignorance of its contents") during an earlier visit to the Congo. Clark, receiving no acknowledgement, addressed a second appeal to the Central Administration at Brussels, this time "inclosing a photograph of the maimed or mutilated boy."[20] The second appeal also met with silence. In fact, the only acknowledgement Mola's story drew was from a Brussels newspaper, which within a week of Clark's dispatch, published a paragraph to the effect that "an American missionary was going about with a faked-up photograph purporting to be that of a native of the Congo who had been mutilated by Government soldiers."[21]

The photograph, a copy of which Casement included in his original report, shows Mola seated sideways on a modern-style chair. Another child with a similar injury, Yoka, stands next to him. Both children are wearing white clothing against which they hold their mutilated limb so the injury stands out in sharp relief. A wooden structure is visible in the background through the foliage. The author of the

Nsongo District Nsala of Wala with the severed hand and foot of his five-year-old daughter murdered by ABIR militia. This was all that remained of a cannibal feast following the murder of his wife, son and daughter.

photograph is unnamed, however Casement's report refers to Reverend W.D. Armstrong as having produced the photograph of Epondo, as well as images of several other victims and it seems plausible that Armstrong also took the photograph of Mola. The two subjects' poses express striking similarity, and Armstrong was known to instruct each of his subjects to wrap a white cloth around himself to create a "backdrop" for the mutilated limb.

Photography was used to document other incidents of such mutilation. Alice Harris, a British Missionary at Baringa, some 1,200 miles inland in the territory of the Congo Free State, was also taking pictures of atrocities with an early Kodak dry plate camera. In May 1904, two young men suddenly arrived at her mission station, attempting to convey some pressing news. Harris surmised that a detail of African "sentries" of the Anglo-Belgian India Rubber Company had attacked a village in the vicinity for failing to provide the company with rubber in accordance with its assigned tax. The two men were on their way to the local agent to protest against the attack, bearing proof of their claims in a small bundle of leaves. At Harris's request, one of the men who identified himself as Nsala opened the bundle and displayed the freshly cut hand and foot of a small child. Harris gathered from Nsala's explanation that the sentries had killed his wife and daughter, and then devoured them, leaving behind only the daughter's hand and foot. Appalled by this revelation, Harris persuaded the man to pose with the child's remains for a photograph.[22]

Harris's image is remarkably calm given the story of its taking. Nsala is centrally figured, sitting in profile on what looks like a thatched veranda, gazing at two small objects lying in front of him. A potted cactus is positioned at his back. Two other men look on from a careful distance, one stands with his arms crossed protectively against his chest. It is a formally posed, almost peaceful image. Painful scrutiny is required to make out the items in front of Nsala. The object closest to him appears to be his daughter's foot, lying on its side, severed end tipped towards the camera; the object furthest is Boali's little hand, resting palm side down. These tiny body parts explode the peaceful composition of the image and illustrate an uncanny inversion of the typical representation of the injury: rather than picture a child with missing limbs, here Nsala poses with the remains of his missing child. Missing is not really the right word—Boali is more than simply absent from the scene—but then perhaps there are no words which could appropriately signify the palpable affect of her non-existent presence.

When John Harris, Alice's husband, returned that evening and viewed the photograph that Alice had since developed, he immediately wrote to the Director of the Congo Balolo Mission: "The photograph is most telling, and as a slide will rouse any audience to an outburst of rage, the expression on the father's face, the horror of the by-standers, the mute appeal of the hand and foot will speak to the most skeptical."[23] This response to the image bears significance. Upon seeing the picture, John Harris immediately imagined the photograph's effect on an *audience*. That is to say, the image seemed to pull away from the place of its registration to be imaginatively transported before the public. The camera's intervention in these atrocities pushed the question of ethical response out of the arena of immediate interaction (in this case between Alice Harris and Nsala, or perhaps between the missionary station and the local authorities) to become a relationship between photograph and spectator. Similar to how the emergence of the concept of crimes against humanity presupposes the prior emergence of humanity as such, the photograph presupposed the prior existence of a mass public that could witness the event. Moreover, the image demands a specific affective approach. John Harris imagined this photograph could command a resolute sense of moral outrage, even in the most skeptical viewer. He imagined, in other words, that the image was a powerful tool that could arouse public judgement.

The "incorruptible kodak"

Indeed, these photographs did set off an explosion in the public realm, first through Casement's report, which served as a precedent in its treatment of the photograph as forensic evidence for the alleged acts of atrocity. As Kevin Grant suggests, the images Casement included were "simultaneously to embody the humanity of the Congo people and the inhumanity of a regime that literally consumed them in its accounting." By the time the report was published, a broad British lobby group had already assembled against the Congo Free State. The group was made up of members of the Aborigine's Protection Society, members of the Liverpool, Manchester, and London Chambers of Commerce and concerned citizens. Because of his position in Government, Casement could not assume the role of primary spokesman for the group. Instead, he convinced Edmund Dean Morel, an aspiring journalist who had begun to suspect the systemic oppression based on his own experience as an employee of a shipping company that did business in the Congo. The Congo Reform Association (CRA) was officially born in an inaugural meeting on 23 March 1904 when some 2,000 people crowded into Liverpool's Philharmonic Hall. At this first meeting, the CRA determined that its central task was to disseminate information about the Congo State through publications and public meetings. Photographs were considered central tools in this strategy. Morel's monthly journal, *The West African Mail*, regularly ran reprints of the images Casement brought back as well as several dozen photographs by Alice Harris.[25] Morel also published two books containing photographic reproductions, *King Leopold's Rule in Africa* and *Red Rubber*, and the group enlisted several famous writers to lend their pens to Congo reform.

Red Rubber, the more widely read of Morel's books, first appeared in 1906 and was enthusiastically reviewed by all sections of the press. The original cover had an illustration by F. Carruthers Gould depicting a scene from the Egyptian Book of the Dead in which the soul was weighed. In this version, a crowned and sceptered King Leopold sits on one end of Anubis's scale and a single black hand rests on the other. Two small figures hold up their mutilated limbs for the Egyptian god to consider. Not having the language of "genocide," the reformers often appealed to the cultural memory of the Israelites' suffering in Egypt as a way to characterize the extent of the atrocities occurring in the Congo.[26] The text of *Red Rubber* piles evidence on top of evidence of the abuses: testimony from travellers of the 1890s, summaries of Casement's report and the various parliamentary debates, eye-witness testimony from missionaries, and even a study of the profits of the system by a professor of the Free University of Brussels. This evidence is presented not merely as a catalogue of atrocities but as overwhelming proof that "a crime unparalleled in the annals of the world" was occurring in the Congo Free State.[27] The basis of Morel's articulation of Leopold's regime as "criminal" rested primarily on his radical conception of the Congolese as possessing certain inalienable rights, in particular the right to property and control over their labour: "The Congo native, like the native of every part of the African tropics, must be protected in his rights in land, property, and labour. All those rights have been swept away from him by the most colossal act of spoliation ever imagined by mortal man."[28] Morel conceived of the right to trade as an elementary function of humanity, the basis of the recognition of possession of property and freedom itself. Throughout all of his writings, however, Morel grounded his charge against Leopold on the language of the Berlin Act, often recalling Article Seven where the material and moral wellbeing of the native tribes was legally guaranteed.

Although his appeal for the rights of the Congo inhabitants to live free from oppression sounds strikingly similar to the Universal Declaration written some forty years later, Morel petitioned on the basis of a legal precedent rather than on a transcendental ideal of human dignity. It is perhaps this grounding that allowed him to conceive of Leopold's actions as a "crime against humanity." Morel understood, like Arendt reflecting on the Nazi regime some sixty years later, that such atrocious crimes were unique in that the violence represented not only the killing of other human individuals for human reasons, but an organized attempt to eradicate the very concept of the human being. Although Leopold's actions undoubtedly had devastating physical and psychological affect on the Congolese peoples directly, they were not limited to them. In some more precise sense, these crimes were an attack on the very notion of humanity. Without mythologizing the events, what the concept crimes against humanity makes evident is this disparity between mere criminality and the facts of an organized system of terror. Leopold's actions, like the Nazis after him, simultaneously overstepped and shattered any and all legal systems. Conceptualizing crimes against humanity, therefore, represents a radically creative response to such horror by inaugurating a new organization of human responsibility.

Beyond Morel's directly political demand for intervention on Congo affairs, *Red Rubber* also made a more deliberate effort to arouse the emotions of its readers.

The site where Patrice Lumumba, Maurice Mpolo and Joseph Okito were executed and first buried.
Photograph by Sammy Baloji (Untitled), Katanga Province, Democratic Republic of Congo, January 2010.

Commissioned by Autograph ABP. Sammy Baloji was born in 1978 in the Democratic Republic of Congo.
He lives and works in Lubumbashi. His first one person show in the UK was presented at Dilston Grove,
London in June 2010 by Autograph ABP.

Equator District A young boy forced to collect rubber for the ABIR. The rubber quotas imposed on the indigenous population were so great that, as in this picture, the rubber vines were cut down rather than waiting for them to be tapped. As a result hardly any vines were left around the rubber stations.

This was achieved through a highly polemical writing style as well as the use of atrocity photographs. "For six years I have appealed to the head," he remarked soon after completing the book, "and now I am appealing to the heart, the head having been captured."[29] As with King Leopold's Rule in Africa, several full-page reproductions illustrate the text, accompanied by short titled captions. But while the earlier text used images of Congo life largely for illustrative purposes, the images in *Red Rubber* all depict suffering: "Impongi, a boy of Illnega, Mutilated by State Soldiers", "Isekansu Mutilated by Sentries for Shortage in Rubber", "Barnegro Chiefs Showing Their Emaciated Condition", and "Section of Village Burned by Raiders." The photographs serve as devastating confirmation of Morel's evocative descriptions, piercing the reader visually. Morel's conclusion, which is accompanied by the final photograph in the book, provides the most expressive appeal:

> Nothing impractical, nothing unrealisable is being demanded on behalf of the Congo natives. No grandmotherly legislation, no sentimental claims are being urged in their interest. Only justice. They have been robbed of their property. We demand that their property shall be restored to them. They have been robbed of their liberty. We demand that their liberty shall be restored to them. They are bound in chains. We demand that those chains shall be rent asunder. For fifteen years they have been degraded, enslaved, exterminated. We demand that this shall stop, not fifteen years, or five years, or one year hence: but now.
>
> The "Congo Free State" has long ceased to exist. It has given place to a political monster and international outlaw. Of that political monster and international outlaw, but one thing can be said or written, *Delenda est Carthago*.
>
> The reek of its abominations mounts to Heaven in fumes of shame. It pollutes the earth. Its speedy disappearance is imperative for Africa, and for the world.[30]

The image that punctuates these final paragraphs is Alice Harris's photograph of Nsala sitting on the veranda looking at his daughter's severed hand and foot. More than any other, this image seems to encapsulate the sentiments of the Congo Reform Association. The profound silence of the image seems to retain a surcharge of meaning that cannot be reduced to semantic content. In the public reception of the image, its effect became collective and social, but also a image in the mind of the spectator. This use of the photograph as evidence of atrocity is here less a matter of juridical proof than psychically arresting, marking these atrocities as socially and psychologically meaningful.

Bolomboloko Lomboto shot in the wrist and hand by a rubber concession sentry and permanently disabled as a result.

Other reform literature made similar use of this and other atrocity photographs. *King Leopold's Soliloquy*, which Samuel Clemens published under his pen name Mark Twain in 1906, also featured several woodcuts of the images taken by the missionaries from the Congo Balolo Mission, including the image of Nsala. As the title suggests, Twain's polemical text is a long monologue written from the point of view of Leopold himself as he fusses and fumes about the state of his colony. Near the end of the soliloquy, Leopold actually remarks on the reform movement, and in particular on Morel. "This Morel is a reformer; a Congo reformer. That sizes him up."[31] Leopold also addresses Morel's newspaper *The West African Mail*: "supported by the voluntary contributions of the sap-headed and the soft-hearted; and every week it steams and reeks and festers with up-to-date 'Congo atrocities'.... I will suppress it . . . it should not be difficult for me to suppress a newspaper."[32] At this point, Leopold's manic train of thought is broken as he studies "some photographs of mutilated Negroes." Twain writes that the king throws the pictures down and sighs:

> The kodak has been a sole calamity to us. The most powerful enemy indeed. In the early years we had no trouble in getting the press to "expose" the tales of mutilations as slanders, lies, inventions of busy-body American missionaries and exasperated foreigners.... Yes, all things went harmoniously and pleasantly in those good days.... Then all of a sudden came the crash! That is to say, the incorruptible kodak – and all harmony went to hell! The only witness I couldn't bribe. Every Yankee missionary and every interrupted trader sent home and got one; and now – oh, well, the pictures get sneaked around everywhere, in spite of all we can do to ferret them out and suppress them.[33]

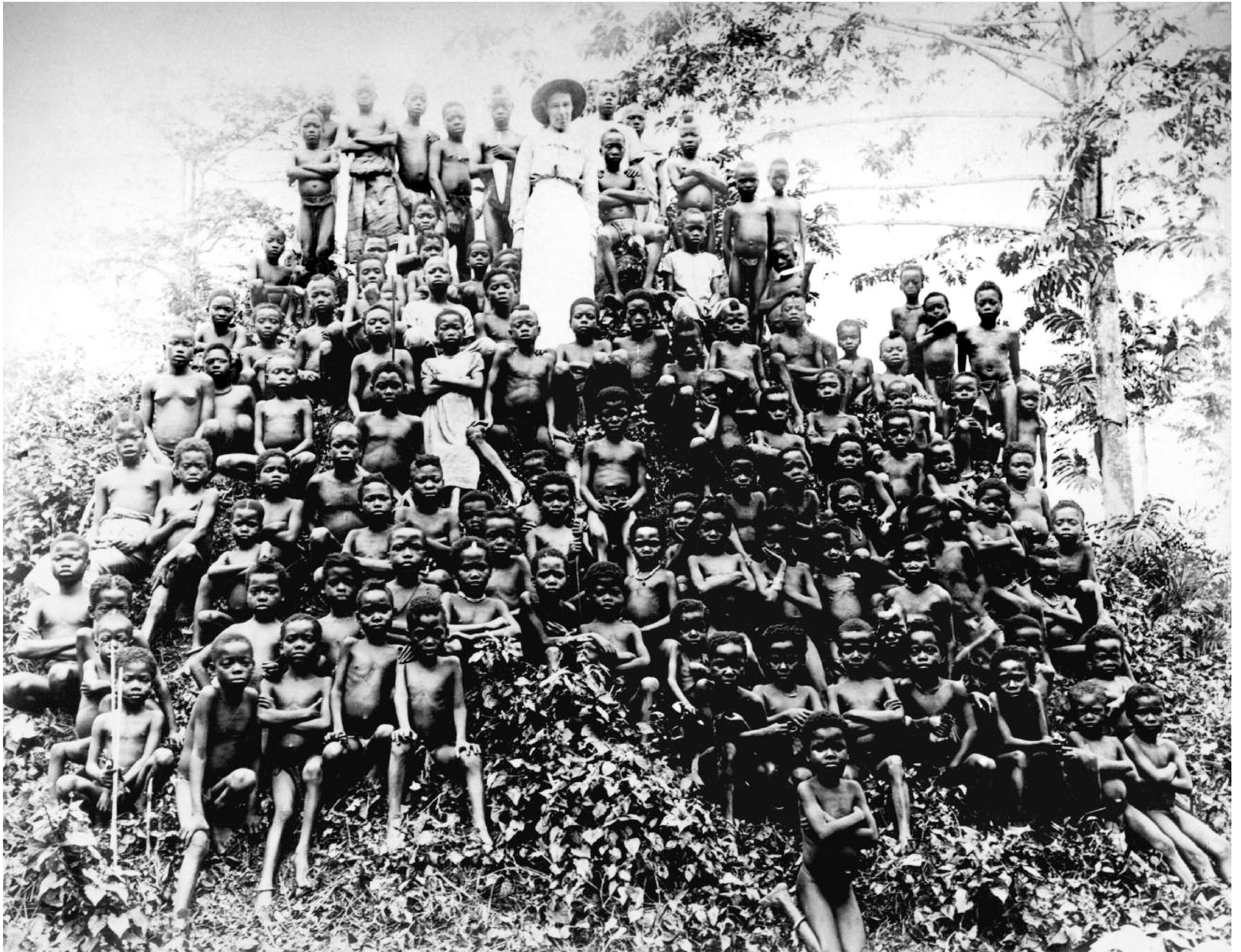
Twain emphasizes that it is the camera's particular exposure of atrocity that turned the tide in Congo reform. The "incorruptible kodak" facilitated feelings of moral outrage because the photograph bears an inextricable relationship to the faculty of moral judgement, appealing as it does to the spectator's conscience. The collection of writings from the Congo Reform Association represents one of the first vigorous articulations of modern human rights — what perhaps could be called the childhood of human rights — however this articulation emerged from a particular visual encounter with the abuse of rights. These early atrocity photographs helped illuminate the fact that the Congolese people had been grossly violated, and in turn organized the possibility for recognition of these abuses as criminal. The reformers conceived of rights in direct response to the suffering registered by the camera's lens, a form of compassionate responsiveness to that moment in which human dignity was perceived to be lost. As a direct result of the reformer's public use of the photographs, the smouldering Congo crisis was transformed into a fierce bonfire. During the first decade of the Twentieth Century, no issue so thoroughly occupied British public imagination as Congo reform.

The phantasmagoric other

As remarkable as the effects of these photographs were, their psychical force also resists an unequivocal reading. Far from transparent historical evidence, many theorists have painstakingly described the role of photography as a tool of empire, "capturing" panoramic views of foreign lands as well as ethnographic specimens of "primitive races" and "exotic beasts."[34] Although this era of colonial expansion saw the emergence of the modern concept of the "other," an emergence that was deeply dependent on photographic technology, this other was constructed for Western audiences for both public and private consumption. Nearly all photographs of Africa from this period are products of colonial agents in one way or another, and the missionaries who sought to arouse interest and maintain support at home through the use of such images share this ambivalence.

As early as 1890, missionaries were delivering lantern slide lectures in Europe and North America to promote the interests of their respective projects. One enthusiastic minister, Dr. Guinness, regularly gave a lecture entitled "A Reign of Terror in the Congo" that drew thousands of spectators. A strong evangelical tone was set at the outset of these lectures with organ music, prayers and hymns. The narrative opened with an overview of the land and peoples of the Congo, followed by a heroic account of European exploration and Leopold's philanthropic efforts. In a regular lecture, this would be followed by a focus on the savagery of the Congolese (highlighting practices of cannibalism, slavery, and polygamy) that would serve as fuel for the importance of Christian conversion. As the controversy surrounding Leopold's administration rose, the savagery of "the native" was followed by a discussion of the savagery of the Congo Free State administration, the missionaries' atrocity photographs illuminating the atrocities committed by agents of the government.[35]

Although Casement relied heavily on information and support from missionaries in his report, including the use of their photographs, these allies to Congo reform deeply troubled E.D. Morel. He expressed concern, and, at times, outright aversion to religious ideology serving as fuel for reform sentiments. Nevertheless, the



Alice Seeley Harris with a large group of Congolese children.

Democratic Republic of Congo, Illinga
A young boy (Impongi) with a severed hand and foot, mutilated by sentries after his village failed to meet its rubber quota. He was a witness before Leopold's Commission of Enquiry which was an unsuccessful attempt to refute Roger Casement's damning report to the British government on human rights abuses in the Congo.

A portrait of British abolitionist Edmund. D. Morel sitting at a desk. E.D. Morel, a journalist and leading figure in the abolition movement, founded the Congo Reform Association and set up his own newspaper, *The West African Mail*, which publicised a campaign against slavery in the Congo.

missionaries and their photographs became a central arm of the Congo Reform Association, and in part, responsible for its popular success. Specifically, Kevin Grant suggests that "John and Alice Harris changed the course of the Congo reform campaign" by appealing to Britain's "Christian conscience," and the "right tool" for hitting that spot "was the lantern slide image of atrocity."[36] Once back from the Congo, the Harris's took over from Dr. Guinness, giving over three hundred lectures (and arranging many others) in the Association's first year of operation alone. In America they addressed more than two hundred public meetings in forty-nine cities. By all accounts, the lantern lectures had an incredibly dramatic impact on people. Adam Hochschild reports that in one meeting in Chicago, an elderly woman who had been born a slave tried to donate her life savings to the cause of Congo reform, although the Harris's would only accept one dollar.[37] Standard lectures, accompanied by slides, were prepared for ministers to use in their sermons throughout Europe and North America. The Harris's further organized Town Hall meetings as forums for the establishment of CRA auxiliaries. These auxiliaries managed fund-raising, distributed literature, and produced lantern lectures for local churches.

Magic lantern shows, however, were not new to European or American audiences. A prototype of the modern slide projector, the magic lantern, was invented in the Seventeenth Century by Athanasius Kircher. Using a concentrated beam of light, it projected small images that were painted on a glass plate onto a large screen or sheet. In Paris in 1798, Etienne-Gaspard Robertson took this technology to another level when he unveiled his "Phantasmagoria Show" at the Pavillon de l'Echiquier in Paris. Essentially a multi-media stage production, Robertson's show served as a form of popular culture in Europe for several decades. Using a technically advanced magic lantern mounted on wheels, the showman created projections of ghosts, skeletons, and the heroes of history (Rousseau, Voltaire, Robespierre, and Jean-Paul Marat), in an effort to thrill paying audiences in a darkened theatre for an hour and a half. He also added special effects — lightning, thunder, smoke and music — to enhance the eerie atmosphere. The phantasmagoria made its way to England in 1802 when a Parisian, Paul de Philipstal, offered similar shows at the Lyceum Theatre, making it a staple of popular entertainment in London (he later took the show on tour to Edinburgh and Dublin with his partner Madame Tussaud). The phantasmagoria reached more audiences in the Victorian era with the popularization of miniature versions, available to every middle-class household. Terry Castle recalls the opening pages from *Remembrance of Things Past*, in which Proust describes being given a magic lantern in his childhood as a cure for melancholia. Unfortunately, the device produced nothing but further sorrow by transforming young Marcel's room into an uncanny and terrifying world.[38]

An uncanny legacy permeates the Congo reform movement via the Association's lantern lectures. Aside from Morel and Twain's books, knowledge of the suffering occurring in the Congo arrived largely through the movement's massive public meetings, a central part of which was the lantern lecture. These highly structured "shows" could be considered a derivative of phantasmagoria: scripted horror narratives illustrated with sixty photographic slides, of which perhaps a half dozen represented various atrocities, interspersed with hymns, prayers, and melodramatic evangelical appeals, all of which meant to elicit a strong emotional response. Criticism of such phantasmagoric forms often focus on its effect of inducing reverie, or a generally detached relationship to reality. For Walter Benjamin, this "reifying representation of civilization" epitomized the nineteenth century mode of experience: a veil of illusion through which one perceived the world.[39] This reverie, in turn, limits the spectator's ability to respond, limiting the capacity for responsibility. In this respect, phantasmagoric forms do not sit well with ethical concerns. As Simon, DiPalantonio and Clamen suggest, in phantasmagoria an item of information arrives and passes away with a fleeting momentary fascination, "its urgent and frightful address instantly replaced by another item," leaving the basic assumptions of the spectator "intact." Despite being deeply moved, such an appeal "fails to call spectators into question" in any radical way.[40] The phantasmagoric form, in short, can be charged with promoting misrecognition, a denial of the other's radical difference.

Certainly it can be said the Congo Reform Association's lectures structured a relationship to its subjects that betrayed the incommensurability of the others' particular experiences. The maimed children's stories were obsessively repeated at hundreds thousands of meetings, although usually without proper names. The individuals became characters that were meant to stand in for the millions of people that the CRA claimed had been executed or maimed. Isolated from their own verbal testimony in the context of the lantern lecture, these figures perhaps only serve as "standardized objects" or "thematic events."[41] That is, the individual's particular injuries were abstracted into one undifferentiated, exchangeable injury: the cutting off of black hands. This strategy enabled the CRA to transform particular cases into a recognizable standard from which the spectator could make a universal judgement about the rights of others. Universal judgements, however, subsume the particular case under a general rule and in this case this general rule was a markedly Christian notion of duty and responsibility. This transcendent appeal mythologized human rights, divorcing them from the particularity of the other's suffering. The lectures' discursive framing transformed the fundamental moral relationship between "I and Thou" into a relationship of "I and Them," that is, into a relationship between an "I" and an abstracted category that confines the thou to an "it." Subsequently, it could be argued that the missionaries did not stray far from a kind of spectatorial lust evident in imperialist interest in Africa.[42]

By 1907, a rift had developed between E.D. Morel and the missionary reformers. Morel was convinced that the missionaries had allied themselves with the Congo Reform Association only in order to expand their evangelical work, and had no interest in securing the inhabitants' human or property rights. As this dissension split the ranks of the reformers, Leopold eventually bowed to mounting international pressure and in 1908 sold the Congo Free State to the Belgium Government. In turn, the Belgian Parliament granted new stations to the Congo Balolo Mission. In gratitude, the Mission's Home Council instructed its missionaries to stop publicizing evidence of atrocities. An incensed Morel appealed to the Mission: "The Belgian Government is doing its utmost to undermine the British movement for a radical alteration of this fundamental inequity by throwing sops to British Missionary Societies."[43] Morel's appeals only deepened the growing rift.

Due to these increasingly personal exchanges, John and Alice Harris left the Congo Reform Association in 1910 and became Joint-Organizing Secretaries of an amalgamated Anti-Slavery and Aborigines' Protection Society. British interest in the Congo fizzled and in 1913 the CRA declared victory by default, despite the fact it continued to receive reports of misgovernment in the Congo. The CRA disbanded and surplus funds were given over to Morel to write a history of the Congo reform movement. By the time World War I arrived, he had produced a full-blown account of Leopold's exploits and humanitarian protests up to the time of

A group of Bongwonga rubber workers.

the Reform Association's founding in 1904. Morel quickly became absorbed into controversies about the aims and question of responsibility for the Great War, openly declaring his view that the war was madness. During this time, Morel's close friend Roger Casement was tried and executed for high treason when he attempted to enlist Irish prisoners of war to fight against British colonial rule.[44] This painful event perhaps explains why he never finished the book.

As the Great War took centre stage, details of Leopold's cruel regime in the Congo dropped from Europe's memory. Signs that this forgetting was actually a repression are evident in the newspaper stories, cartoons, and political speeches during the war which luridly suggested the evil Germans were "torturing" the brave little Belgians. And in a truly uncanny return of the Congo atrocities, Hochschild reports that the Allied press even (falsely) reported that Germans were cutting off the hands and feet of Belgian children.[45] Although reports of abuses from the Congo did drop markedly by 1913, this was probably due less to the reformers' efforts than the shift from wild rubber collection to state cultivation of rubber trees. An imposition of a heavy head tax by the Belgian government forced the Congolese to work these rubber plantations, which on the surface at least, provided an alternative system that drew less protest from humanitarians. Morel's stirring call to recognize the "great crime against humanity" was largely ignored,[46] and from the perspective of the historians, the success of the CRA remains a perpetual question. Once a blazing bonfire, a subject that moved the world like no other for more than a decade, this international human rights movement simply ended. Perhaps, as T.S. Eliot famously alleged, "This is the way the world ends/Not with a bang but a whimper".[47]

The artefacts of this early human rights movement – the photographs and the discourse that mobilized them – perhaps now seem like residues of a distant dream world. Indeed, the CRA captured its generation with a kind of dream power, providing the spectator with a heady illusion of her ability to intervene in distant suffering. This illusion was provided by the phantasmagoric use of atrocity photographs, in particular through the missionaries' lantern slide lectures. Mola's wounds and Nsala's mute grief was presented in tandem with powerful verbal appeals intended to stir the audiences' sense of duty and responsibility. Relying on the photographs' ability to provoke spectators' affect, the missionaries wove a powerful myth that proposed this painful encounter with atrocity could be transformed into meaningful action. Indeed, the CRA perhaps helped invent the belief – so ubiquitous today – that the liberation of strangers' suffering is in the hands of distant spectators.

Contemporary calls for human rights still often unconsciously borrow from this form. Such calls similarly utilize atrocity photographs, demand intervention, and rely on transcendental notions of dignity and duty. That is, current human rights discourse presents a familiar dream of liberation and redemption from the violence and aggression that has ruined the world. As in all dreams, a potent wish drives this discursive formulation: the wish to put an end to the suffering witnessed through the camera's lens. As laudable a dream as it may be, without historical insight, without the recognition of this dream as a dream, human rights discourse, Walter Benjamin might say, forgets its own history and sinks into an ever-deeper sleep.

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An ivory store

Notes

[1] Hannah Arendt, *Eichmann in Jerusalem: A report on the banality of evil*, (New York: Viking Press, 1994), 268.

[2] Arendt, *Eichmann in Jerusalem*, 268-9.

[3] George Washington Williams. "Letter to the American Secretary of State" [1890]. In *Aux Origines de L'État Indepéndeant du Congo*, Edited by François Bontinck, (Leopoldville: L'Universite Lovanium de Leopoldville, 1966), 449. Credit must go to Adam Hochschild who identified this first use of the phrase "crimes against humanity" in his book *King Leopold's Ghost: A Story of Greed, Terror, and Heroism in Colonial Africa*, (New York: Mariner, 1999), 112.

[4] E.D. Morel, *Red Rubber* [1906], (New York: Negro Universities Press, 1969), xxviii.

[5] In William Roger Louis and Jean Stengers, eds., E.D. Morel's *History of the Congo Reform Movement*, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1968), 167.

[6] Michael Ignatieff, *Human Rights as Politics and Idolatry*, Edited by Amy Gutmann, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2001).

[7] Walter Benjamin, "On the Concept of History," *Selected Writings Volume 4*, 1938-1940, Edited by Howard Eiland and Micahel W. Jennings, Translated by Harry Zohn, (Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press, 2003), 392.

[8] The bibliography of scholarship on the colonial period of the Congo's history is enormous and the list that follows features the key English texts relied on in this chapter. The original material consists of the documents from those who were participants to the events: Roger Casement, *Congo Report*, Republished in Seamas O. Siochain and Michael O'Sullivan, (eds.), *The eyes of another race: Roger Casement's Congo report and 1903 diary*, (Dublin: University College Dublin Press, 2003); Joseph Conrad, *Heart of Darkness* (1899), Edited by Robert Kimbrough, (New York: Norton, 1988); E.D. Morel, *King Leopold's Rule in Africa* (1904), (New York: Negro Universities Press, 1970); *Red Rubber; History of the Congo Reform Movement*; and Mark Twain, *King Leopold's Soliloquy: A Defense of his Congo Rule* (1906), (New York: International Books, 1970). The secondary list comprises the studies and narratives published subsequently: Robert Benedetto (ed.), *Presbyterian Reformers in Central Africa: A Documentary Account of the American Presbyterian Congo Mission and the Human Rights Struggle in the Congo, 1890-1918*, (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1996); Catherine Ann Cline Ann, *E.D. Morel 1873-1924: The Strategies of Protest*, (Belfast: Blackstaff Press, 1980); Martin Ewans, *European Atrocity, African Catastrophe: Leopold II, the Congo Free State, and its Aftermath*, (London: Routledge, 2002); John Hope Franklin, *George Washington Williams: A Biography*, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1985); Kevin Grant "Christian Critics of Empire: Missionaries, Lantern Lectures, and the Congo Reform Campaign in Britain," *The Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History 29* no. 2 (2001); Adam Hochschild *King Leopold's Ghost*; Sven Lindqvist, *Exterminate All the Brutes*. Trans. Joan Tate, (New York: The New Press, 1996); Georges Nzongola-Ntalaja, *The Congo from Leopold to Kabila: A People's History*, (London: Zed Books, 2002). Síocháin and O'Sullivan's general introduction to the recently published version of Casement's report was also invaluable. Glaringly absent from the list of original texts, however, are African voices. This absence exists in part because aside from Roger Casement's attempt to record the testimony of those maimed individuals he encountered directly, there are simply no accounts (oral or written) from any Congolese person during the Free State's regime. In literature from later periods, a steadily growing condemnation of both the Free State's regime and Belgian's subsequent rule is evident. Early on in the Congo's independence movement, the first Prime Minister, Patrice Lumumba, was optimistic about relations with the Belgians and even argued against "raking up past mistakes" (See *Congo, My Country*, Translated by Graham Heath, (London: Pall Mall Press, 1962), 13). But just a year later in his Independence Day speech, Lumumba had adopted a anti-colonial position, calling upon memories of (among other injustices) "the humiliating slavery which was imposed on us by force."

[9] Lemkin's term is generally applied to the mass killing of Armenians by Ottoman Turks between 1915-1920, the Nazi Holocaust, the Khmer-Rouge's massacre of Cambodians between 1975-1979, the organized ethnic cleansing of Bosnian Muslims and Croats by Serbs, in the former Yugoslavia throughout the early 1990's, and Rwanda, where almost one million Tutsis and moderate Hutus we systematically murdered in 1994.

[10] E.D. Morel, *King Leopold's Rule in Africa*, 9.

[11] Cited in Morel, *King Leopold's Rule in Africa*, 6.

[12] Thomas Pakenham offers precise figures in *The Scramble for Africa*, (London: Weidenfeld & Nicholson, 1991), 524.

[13] Although Conrad's celebrated novella was first published in 1899, it was undoubtedly based on his service on English ships in the Congo in 1890.

[14] George Washington Williams [1890], "Open Letter to King Leopold II of Belgium," In Franklin, *George Washington Williams*, 251.

[15] Williams, "Open Letter," 243-254. Williams, already in ill health and weakened from his Congo trip, died on August 2, 1891 at forty-one years of age. In many ways, public accusation about Leopold's rule in the Congo died with him until the CRA was formed nearly a decade later.

[16] Roger Casement, *Congo Report*, 72.

[17] Casement, *Congo Report*, 110-115.

[18] Casement, *Congo Report*, 159-161.

[19] Casement, *Congo Report*, 159-160.

[20] Casement, *Congo Report*, 160.

[21] Casement, *Congo Report*, 161.

[22] This incident is detailed in Kevin Grant's article "Christian Critics of Empire," 27.

[23] Cited in Grant, "Christian Critics of Empire," 27.

[24] Grant, "Christian Critics of Empire," 33.

[25] The September 1905 issue of *The West African Mail* included what could be called a photo-essay entitled "The Kodak on the Congo." The images are headed up by several quotations from reformers and from Leopold himself about his efforts at "moral and material regeneration" of the "lazy and indifferent" natives. Eight pages of photographs by Alice Harris follow, depicting the sufferings of the Congolese people with extended captions.

[26] In a November 1905 article of *The West African Mail*, the reformers wrote: "All the abuses we have denounced—the appropriation of the land, of the produce of the soil, of the labour of the people, the subjection of the people to a slavery more absolute, more binding, more continuous, than that endured by the Israelites in Egypt; a slavery accompanied by and upheld by atrocities which have never been exceeded in nature or extent—are the necessary sequel to the primary fact, the fundamental purpose, which it is our plain duty to expose and to overthrow" (E.D. Morell "The Great Exposure" *The West African Mail* no. 19 (November 1905): 28). Because they did not have the language of genocide, the Congo reformers needed a historical precedent and so leaned upon the memory of the Israelites' suffering. Indeed, this strategy could be considered a version of Benjamin's dialectical image: an analytic strategy for demystifying the present by use of past examples.

[27] Morel, *Red Rubber*, xxviii.

[28] Morel, *Red Rubber*, xxi.

[29] Cited in Cline, *E.D. Morel*, 60.

[30] Morel, *Red Rubber*, 212-213.

[31] Twain, *King Leopold's Soliloquy*, 67.

[32] Twain, *King Leopold's Soliloquy*, 67.

[33] Twain, *King Leopold's Soliloquy*, 68.

[34] See for instance Elizabeth Edwards, *Anthropology and Photography: 1860-1920*, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1992); David Killingray and Andrew Roberts, "An Outline History of Photography in Africa to ca. 1940," *History in Africa* 16 (1989): 197-208; Paul S. Landau and Deborah D. Kaspin (eds.), *Images and Empires: Visuality in Colonial and Postcolonial Africa*, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002); Nicholas Mirzoeff, "Photography at the heart of darkness: Herbert Lang's Congo Photographs (1909-1915)" In *Colonialism and the Object: Empire, Material, and the Museum*, Edited by Tim Barringer and Tom Flynn, (London: Routledge, 1998) as well as *An Introduction to Visual Cutlture*, (London: Routledge, 1999); James R. Ryan, *Picturing Empire: Photography and the Visualization of the British Empire*, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1997). An exception to this over-arching critical evaluation is Enid Schildkrout, who argues that Herbert Lang's photographs of the northeastern region of the Congo during the period directly after the Free State was handed over to the Belgian government (1909-1915) manage to transcend the anthropological gaze and should be read as works of art (see "The spectacle of Africa through the lens of Herbert Lang: Belgian Congo photographs 1909-1915," *African Arts* 24 no. 4 (October 1991): 70-87). While there is not space to address the critiques of the Congo reformers at length here, it is important to note that the photographic evidence of the Congo reform campaign did not go unchallenged at the time. Officials for the Congo Free State refuted the reformers claims in a monthly periodical titled "The Truth About the Congo." In the case of Epondo, for instance, the State asserted that his hand had not been cut off by a state sentry, but bitten off by a wild boar. They even published a doctored photograph that featured E.D. Morel standing over a boar carcass, gun in hand, with a caption: "A photographic proof – Mr. Morel has just killed Epondo's wild boar" (the image is discussed and reprinted in Grant "Christian Critics of Empire").

[35] See Grant "Christian Critics of Empire" for more detail on the content of the missionaries' lectures.

[36] Grant, "Christian Critics of Empire," 41.

[37] Hochschild, *King Leopold's Ghost*, 242.

[38] Terry Castle, "Phantasmagoria: Spectral Technology and the Metaphorics of Modern Reverie," *Critical Inquiry* 15 (1988): 42.

[39] Walter Benjamin, "On Some Motifs in Baudelaire," (1939) in *Illuminations: Essays and Reflections*, Edited by Hannah Arendt and translated by Harry Zohn, (New York: Schocken Books, 1988), 14.

[40] Simon, Roger I., Mario DiPaolantonio, and Mark Clamen, "Remembrance as Praxis and the Ethics of the Inter-Human," *Culture Machine* 4 (2002). Available online: http://culturemachine.tees.ac.uk/frm_f1.htm, 8.

[41] Simon, DiPalantonio, and Clamen, "Remembrance as Praxis and the Ethics of the Inter-Human," 10.

[42] Although she does not mention the Congo Reform Association, Annie Coombes has shown that missionaries' representations ultimately served imperial interests in *Reinventing Africa: Museums, Material Culture, and Popular Imagination in Late Victorian and Edwardian England*, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1994). The "travelogue" structure of CRA's Congo lantern lectures does bear striking similarity to other imperialist narratives Coombes describes such as the national and international public exhibitions about Africa that were popular at the end of the Nineteenth Century. These massive exhibitions fuelled popular conceptions of Africa, simultaneously constituting scientific investigation, philanthropy, and mass entertainment. One exhibition, The Stanley and African Exhibition mounted in 1890, bears particular interest in regards to the Congo. Stanley's infamous trek to "rescue" Emin Pasha, Governor of Equatoria had captured British popular imagination and the exhibition was no less engrossing. *The Times* proclaimed that "never has there been an Exhibition on anything like the scale of the present." Coombes notes that the viewer was expected to consume the exhibition from the position of explorer and thereby "gain the 'experience' of the seasoned traveler" (69). At the entrance, the visitor would find himself "in the heart of Africa," and having passed through a palisade of tress ornamented with skulls, would arrive at a simulated explorer's camp. After the camp came a comprehensive portrait gallery of European travelers to Africa and a series of historical maps illustrating the progress of European expansion. The exhibition was then divided into five main sections dealing with zoology and exploration, missionaries, the slave trade, and a "Native Section," which displayed raw materials and goods as well as weapons, implements, dress. In another uncanny echo of the CRA's photographs of mutilated boys, two orphaned boys, Gootoo and Inyokwana, also appeared in the 1890 exhibition, serving as living examples of the depravity of slavery.

[43] Cited in Grant, "Christian Critics of Empire," 51.

[44] Casement, an Irish nationalist, went to Germany during the war to enlist Irish prisoners in the cause against British colonial rule. Casement was charged with high treason almost the moment he landed back on Irish soil, the first knight of the realm to be so accused in several hundred years. Money and messages of support arrived from around the world. Several writers including Conan Doyle and George Bernard Shaw petitioned for clemency. Scotland Yard authorities found Casement's personal diaries, which included several entries about his homosexual experiences. They released copies of these to the king, influential citizens, and journalists. The inflammatory content of these diaries effectively sealed Casement's fate.

[45] Hochschild, *King Leopold's Ghost*, 296.

[46] The term did resurface in the Allied denunciation of the Turkish government for the massacre of Armenians in 1915, which they held responsible for "crimes against humanity and civilization." The term was, of course, institutionalized during the Nuremberg trial in 1945.

[47] These are the last lines of T.S. Eliot's 1925 poem "The Hollow Men." The epigraph that heads the poem, "Mistah Kurtz—he dead," is itself an allusion to Joseph Conrad's *Heart of Darkness*. One wonders if Eliot had the Congo crisis in mind when composing this poem.

Anti-Slavery International

is the world's oldest human rights organisation and was created in 1839, the year after slavery was abolished in the British Empire, to continue the fight to end slavery across the world.

Alice and her husband John Harris (who would later become joint secretaries of Anti-Slavery International) first visited the Congo as missionaries and soon began to document the atrocities they witnessed. They toured Europe and the US exposing the reality of slavery in the Congo to tens of thousands of people at over 800 meetings. Alice Harris's shocking photos revealed to the world the horrendous truth of slavery in the Congo and helped bring public pressure and international scrutiny to the situation faced by its people. Her photos were also used in official British Government reports and this sustained pressure helped force King Leopold of Belgium to give up his control over the Congo Free State, which he ran as his private country for his personal profit. During 1885 to 1909, while the King earned the equivalent of $1 billion from profits from forced labour on Congo's rubber plantations and other valuable resources, an estimated 10 million, roughly half of the population, were worked to death, killed, starved or died form disease. Unfortunately, while the situation had greatly improved by 1912 when Alice and John Harris visited the country again, slavery did not disappear from the Congo. King Leopold's subjugation of the Congo had showed that millions of people could be effectively reduced to slavery without formally owning them. Eager to recoup the cost of buying the Congo at a cost of 205 million francs, including 50 million in personal compensation to their King, the Belgian Colonial administration once again extracted forced labour from the local population. Forced labour existed in Congolese mines after 1918 and farmers were forced to grow cash crops which they sold to the Government at set prices. Those who refused or did not take sufficient care of their crops were punished with imprisonment, flogging or fines. Even after the end of colonial rule, slavery has continued to blight the country which first became Zaire and later the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). Ongoing warfare in recent years, especially in the east of the country, has resulted in armed militias forcing men and boys to become porters, laborers, domestics, workers and even soldiers. Women are also forced to work and suffer being forced into sexual servitude. Some have estimated the DRC to be the most resource rich country in the world. It is a source of diamonds, timber and metals including tin and copper. Warring factions fight for control over access to these resources and terrorise local populations. The DRC is also the source of 80 per cent of the worlds' supply of coltan, a mineral used to make resistors in our mobile phones, video games, computers and home electronics. In 2006, the UN estimated that up to 30 per cent of school children in some parts of the Congo are forced to work in the mines. Just as under Leopold's rule, the people of the Congo remain victims of their country's riches.

Paul Donohoe
Anti-Slavery International