

COLLOQUE INTERNATIONAL "Héritages coloniaux en Belgique" INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE "Colonial Legacies in Belgium"



ULB



28 JAN : Conférence d'ouverture - Opening lecture

29 JAN : Panels "Controverses postcoloniales" et "Ex-coloniaux" -
Panels "Postcolonial Controversies" and "Ex-Colonials"

30 JAN : Panels "Décolonisation de l'espace public" et "Universités
et histoire coloniale" - Panels "Decolonisation of Public Space"
and "Universities and Colonial History"



REGISTRATION



28,29 & 30 JANUARY 2026
ULB, Campus du Solbosch
Building S, Room Somville

WEDNESDAY 28 JANUARY

OPENING LECTURE

ULB, Campus du Solbosch
Bâtiment B (B1.315)

17h30 Introduction d'**Anne Weyembergh**, Vice-Rectrice aux relations extérieures et à la coopération

17h40 Presentation of HERICOL and CONCILIARE

18h Keynote by **Ana Lucia Araujo** (Howard University): "A Past that Won't Go Away"
Discussion by Liliane Umubyeyi (African Futures Lab)

19h30-21h Drink (hall du bâtiment K)

Ana Lucia Araujo : "A Past that Won't Go Away"

Abstract : This lecture explores how demands of symbolic and material reparations for slavery, the Atlantic slave trade, and European colonialism are tied to the latest wave of demands of restitution of African art and cultural heritage and the wave to take down pro-slavery and pro-colonial monuments that reached its summit in 2020. The lecture explores how a growing knowledge about the history of slavery and the implementation of symbolic reparation initiatives, especially through art, and in some rare cases the of material and symbolic reparations, can contribute to heal the wounds of past human atrocities, not through passive acceptance of this painful past, but by instigating awareness and promoting the fight against racial injustice and racial inequalities.

Bio : Ana Lucia Araujo is a social and cultural historian writing transnational and comparative history of the global African diaspora. She is a Full Professor of History at the historically Black Howard University in Washington, DC, United States. Her work examines the history of slavery and the Atlantic slave trade and their present-day legacies, including calls for reparations for slavery and colonialism, as well as the memory, heritage, material, and visual culture of slavery.

Discussant: **Liliane Umubyeyi** is a Rwandan Rule of Law and Access to Justice researcher and practitioner. Prior to establishing African Futures Lab in 2021, Liliane worked over 6 years in the field of international development (United Nations, Lawyers without Borders, International Center for Transitional Justice, and the American Bar Association) on projects concerning access to justice for marginalized groups, transitional justice, and gender justice. This professional background and her lived experience in Africa (Rwanda, South Africa, Central African Republic) and in Europe (Belgium, France) inform her thinking about the decolonization of development policy, the decolonization of international law and justice systems, and the possibilities for repairing historical and contemporary racial violence. Liliane holds a PhD in Social Sciences from the Ecole Normale Supérieure de Cachan (France) and in Law from the Université Saint Louis Bruxelles (Belgium), and her dissertation focused on apartheid victims' mobilizations in South African and American courts.

THURSDAY 29 JANUARY
PANELS “POSTCOLONIAL CONTROVERSIES” AND
“EX-COLONIALS”

ULB, Campus du Solbosch
Bâtiment S, salle Somville

9h-12h

Panel “**Controversies**” (english)

Chair: **Laurent Licata** (ULB)

Marti Luntumbue (ULB) : “Concealing and Acknowledging: A Socio-History of the Controversy over Belgium’s Involvement in the Assassination of Patrice Lumumba”

Alana Osbourne (Radboud University) : Expertise and Parliamentary Inquiry into the Colonial Past

Riley Linebaugh (University of Potsdam) : “Postcolonial Controversies: International Archival (B)Orders”

Discussant : **Inari Sakki** (University of Helsinki)

14h-17h

Panel “**Ex-coloniaux**” (français)

Chair: **Amandine Lauro** (FNRS/ULB)

Abdellali Hajjat (ULB) : “Socio-histoire des ex-coloniaux belges du Congo : trajectoires sociales et engagements”

Victor Peirera (Université de Pau) : “Les commerçants portugais au Congo belge”

Félicien Faury (CNRS) : “Les pieds-noirs et l’extrême droite française”

Discutante : **Raphaëlle Branche** (Université Paris Nanterre)

- [Panel «**Controversies**» \(english\)](#)

Marti Luntumbue: Concealing and Acknowledging: A Socio-History of the Controversy over Belgium’s Involvement in the Assassination of Patrice Lumumba

Abstract : Belgium’s involvement in the assassination of Patrice Lumumba has never been in doubt among progressive circles. The extent of this involvement, the identification of the various actors, and the precise reconstruction of the events leading to the Congolese Prime Minister’s death, however, long remained obscure and contested. This opacity cannot be reduced to a mere lack of information; it also stems from the implementation of mechanisms designed to sustain strategic ignorance and thereby neutralize the political and moral implications of this colonial crime. By retracing the main stages of the controversy and mobilizing the concepts of politics of ignorance and recognition, this paper analyzes how the narrative of Congo’s decolonization was persistently shaped by public and private actors to minimize the political cost of the assassination and preserve the symbolic legitimacy of the Belgian state on both national and international stages. The analysis draws on archival research and twenty-five semi-structured interviews that shed light on the political, administrative, and symbolic mechanisms through which ignorance is produced, institutionalized, and reproduced around this pivotal episode in Belgian colonial history.

Bio : Marti Luntumbue is a PhD researcher at the Université libre de Bruxelles (ULB) and a member of the Groupe de recherche sur les Relations Ethniques, les Migrations et l’Égalité (GERME). He is finalizing a doctoral dissertation in socio-history under the supervision of Abdellali Hajjat on the historical and memorial controversy surrounding the assassination of Patrice Lumumba in postcolonial Belgium.

Alana Osbourne : Expertise and Parliamentary Inquiry into the Colonial Past

Abstract : This presentation uses the Belgian Parliamentary Commission on the Colonial Past to reflect on how expertise is constituted within parliamentary inquiry. It examines who comes to count as an expert and what forms of work this designation entails. Drawing on theories of non-performativity, the presentation opens up questions about the role of expertise in shaping ideas of success and colonial reckoning.

Bio : Alana Osbourne is a researcher whose work bridges anthropology, critical geography, post-colonial studies, and Black studies. She examines how coloniality is materially and affectively lived in urban worlds, with ethnographic work on the commodification of violence in Kingston's tourism industry and on urban inequalities in Kingston and Brussels. Her current projects explore colonial continuities in contemporary Europe: one follows Belgium's Parliamentary Commission on its colonial past and related grassroots memory practices, while the other investigates the ties between museums, inorganic matter, and outer-space travel.

Riley Linebaugh : Postcolonial Controversies: International Archival (B)Orders

Abstract : This presentation provides an overview of the development of the International Council on Archives and its role mediating custodial disputes over colonial archives, wherein former colonies petitioned the return or relocation of records pertaining to their lands and peoples and former colonial powers largely refused. It considers the period from the 1940s through 1980s to trace the notion of the 'migrated archives' and debates over their rightful custody and location. After providing a historical background to the problem, this presentation offers some reflections on more current questions regarding the location, control over, and use of colonial-era documents.

Bio : Riley Linebaugh is a postdoc in Global History at the University of Potsdam. She works on the social history of female secretaries in the British Empire, legal accountability for colonial atrocities (currently the Bengal Famine of 1943), and the history of colonial archives and their contestation. She holds a PhD in History from the University of Giessen, an MA in Archives and Records Management from UCL, and a BA in History from the University of Michigan. Her book, *Curating the Colonial Past: The 'Migrated Archives' and the Struggle for Kenya's History*, came out with Cambridge University Press in October 2025.

Discussant : **Inari Sakki** is Professor of Social Psychology at the University of Helsinki, specializing in societal and political social psychology. Her research interests include political discourse, nationalism, European identity, populism, and collective memory, as well as history teaching through discursive, visual, and multimodal methodologies. She has led several projects on representations of history, nationalism, and populism, funded by the Academy of Finland. Her work has been published in international peer-reviewed journals across disciplines.

- Panel « **Ex-coloniaux** » (français)

Abdellali Hajjat : Socio-histoire des ex-coloniaux belges du Congo : trajectoires sociales et engagements

Résumé : L'objectif de cette communication est de présenter les éléments d'une sociohistoire des « ex-coloniaux » comme groupe social dans une perspective de longue durée et comme acteurs associatifs et politiques jouant un rôle déterminant dans les controverses postcoloniales. Sur la base d'une enquête sociohistorique qualitative et quantitative, nous nous interrogerons sur les caractéristiques sociales des ex-coloniaux et leurs trajectoires sociales après l'indépendance du Congo en 1960. Il s'agit ensuite de revenir sur les principaux aspects de l'engagement associatif et politique des ex-coloniaux. Une attention particulière sera portée à l'Union royale des pays d'Outre-mer (UROME), devenue Union royale Belgo-Africaine (URBA).

Bio : Abdellali Hajjat est chargé de cours en sociologie à l'Université libre de Bruxelles et membre du Groupe de recherche sur les relations ethniques, les migrations et l'égalité. Il est porte-parole du projet ARC HERICOL : Héritages coloniaux en Belgique.

Victor Pereira : Les commerçants portugais au Congo belge

Résumé : En concevant le personnage du commerçant Oliveira de Figueira que l'on retrouve dans l'album *Les cigares du pharaon*, Hergé s'est probablement inspiré de portraits, publiés dans la presse belge, de commerçants portugais vivant au Congo belge. Oliveira da Figueira est présenté par des populations sillonnant le désert comme le « blanc qui vend tout ». Il est débrouillard, astucieux, ne rechigne pas à entrer en contact avec les populations colonisées. Telle est l'image des commerçants portugais qui s'est construite par les autorités belges au Congo : des intermédiaires qui posséderaient un capital et une expérience spécifiques pour commercer avec les populations colonisées. Ma communication, basée sur des sources portugaises et belges, prétend esquisser une généalogie de cette représentation du commerçant portugais au Congo belge.

Bio : Victor Pereira, docteur en histoire de l'Institut d'Études Politiques de Paris, est maître de conférences à l'Université de Pau et des Pays de l'Adour et actuellement chercheur de l'Institut d'Histoire contemporaine de l'Université Nouvelle de Lisbonne. Il travaille sur les migrations portugaises à l'époque contemporaine.

Félicien Faury : Les pieds-noirs et l'extrême droite française : pistes de réflexion à partir d'une enquête dans le Sud-Est de la France

Résumé : Cette présentation propose quelques pistes de réflexion sur les traces de l'héritage colonial au sein de l'extrême droite française, à partir du cas des Français-es rapatrié-es d'Algérie, dits « pieds-noirs ». Différents travaux ont souligné la sur-représentation du vote pour le Rassemblement national (RN, ex-« Front national ») chez les pieds-noirs et leurs descendant-es. D'autres recherches ont insisté sur la forte présence de pieds-noirs au sein de l'appareil militant du FN-RN, notamment dans certains milieux partisans comme dans le sud-est de la France. Cette présentation entend prolonger ces recherches à partir d'une enquête de terrain menée en région Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur, à la fois auprès d'électeurs et électrices ordinaires (non professionnalisé-es politiquement) et auprès de militant-es et cadres élu-es du FN-RN. On reviendra sur l'influence du rapatriement sur les comportements électoraux en faveur de l'extrême droite, ainsi que sur la présence persistante de pieds-noirs (ou descendant-es) au sein du FN-RN, ce qui se traduit dans les mobilisations politiques locales du parti. On s'interrogera en conclusion sur le fait que certains schèmes socio-politiques liés à l'héritage colonial français semblent partagés au-delà des seuls groupes « ex-coloniaux » – ce qui pose la question de l'impact de la colonisation sur le groupe majoritaire en son entier en France, que la focalisation sur les seuls pieds-noirs peut parfois tendre à occulter.

Bio : Félicien Faury est sociologue et politiste, chargé de recherche au CNRS et chercheur au Cesdip (Centre de recherches sociologiques sur le droit et les institutions pénales). Ses travaux portent sur l'extrême droite contemporaine, les comportements politiques, le vote, le militantisme. Il a récemment publié *Des électeurs ordinaires. Enquête sur la normalisation de l'extrême droite* (Seuil, 2024), « Racisme et vote d'extrême droite » (*Sociétés contemporaines*, 2024), « Retour sur la conscience sociale triangulaire » (*Savoir/Agir*, 2025).

Discutante : **Raphaëlle Branche** est professeure d'histoire contemporaine à l'Université de Paris Nanterre et membre de l'Institut des Sciences Sociales du Politique.

FRIDAY 30 JANUARY
PANELS “DECOLONISATION OF PUBLIC SPACE” AND
“UNIVERSITIES AND COLONIAL HISTORY”

ULB, Campus du Solbosch
Bâtiment S, salle Somville

9h-12h

Panel “**Decolonisation of public space**” (english)

Chair: **Mathew Stanard** (Berry College)

Jean Illi (ULB): “Public Space: The Double Swing Door of the Belgian (De)Colonial Debate. A Socio-Anthropology of How Brussels Authorities Address the Decolonial Public Problem”

Sasha Newell (ULB): “Colonial Clutter: Belgian Monuments, Family Mementos, and the Everyday Ruins of Empire”

Rosa Cabecinhas (University of Minho): “Memory activism and the decolonization of public space”

Discussant: **Sandrine Colard** (Rutgers University)

- [Panel «Decolonisation of public space» \(english\)](#)

Chair: **Matthew G. Stanard** is Professor at Berry College in Georgia (United States), where he teaches courses on European history and the history of colonization and decolonization in Central Africa. His latest book is entitled *Decolonising Europe? Popular Responses to the End of Empire* (2020, co-edited with Berny Sèbe, University of Birmingham, UK).

Jean Illi: Public Space: The Double Swing Door of the Belgian (De)Colonial Debate. A Socio-Anthropology of How Brussels Authorities Address the Decolonial Public Problem

Abstract : In 2020, the launch of the HERICOL project coincided with the growing visibility of the colonial question in Belgian society and, above all, with its decolonial critique. In the wake of the Black Lives Matter mobilizations against police violence and, more broadly, against structural racism in Western societies, this decolonial momentum brought discourses and policy measures responding to critiques of Belgian coloniality onto the public agenda. Several institutions seized upon this hot topic, which for a time became unavoidable in public debate. The HERICOL research project embodies one facet of this institutional enthusiasm for the colonial question. Through the lens of academic research, one of its components focuses on a privileged arena of this debate: public space. Long mobilized to foster Belgian popular support for the colonial project, public space has, since the fall of the empire, become the site where postcolonial memories and identities assert themselves and where the contestations they carry crystallize. As a symbol of colonial continuities in contemporary Belgian society, the omnipresent colonial material in Brussels’ public space—once an imperial showcase—lies at the heart of the decolonial debate. As a governable space historically devoted to managing memorial controversies, public space has become the main locus of institutional engagement with the debate, now framed as a public problem. Through conferences and educational activities, commissions and working groups, expert reports and inventory studies, the “decolonization of public space” has emerged as a legitimate category of public action.

14h-17h

Panel “**Universités et histoire coloniale**” (français)

Chair: **Marti Luntumbue** (ULB)

Amandine Lauro (FNRS/ULB): “Fragments pour une histoire des projections africaines de l’ULB (Congo, Rwanda, Burundi, années 1950)”

Emery Kalema (Africa Institute, Sharjah): “Les étudiants africains à l’ULB dans les années 1950”

Damiano Mastaci (Université de Genève): “Vers une histoire (post)coloniale du paysage universitaire de Genève”

Discussant: **Benoît Henriët** (VUB)

Drawing on socio-anthropological fieldwork conducted across four distinct sites—the “Decolonization of Public Space” project led by the Brussels-Capital Region (2020–2025), the mixed participatory commission on colonial traces in the public space of Etterbeek (2022–2023), the commemorative ceremony for soldiers of the Congo’s Force Publique in Schaerbeek (since 2008), and the removal of Emile Storms’ bust from Square de Meeûs in Ixelles (2022)—this presentation analyzes, from complementary angles, the agenda-setting and treatment of the colonial question through the lens of public space in Brussels. It examines the origins of this privileged framing of public action, the political and symbolic stakes it entails, as well as the horizons it opens—or closes—making public space the double swing door of the Belgian decolonial debate.

Bio : Jean Illi is a PhD candidate in anthropology at the Université libre de Bruxelles (LAMC) and a member of the HERICOL project on colonial legacies in Belgium. His research focuses on how public authorities in Brussels (municipal and regional levels) address claims related to Belgian coloniality, particularly through the management of public space.

Sasha Newell : Colonial Clutter : Belgian Monuments, Family Mementos, and the Everyday Ruins of Empire

Abstract : The matter of colonialism’s past continues to matter in Belgian debates of the present, especially since 2020. Until now, this debate has mostly focused upon material traces within public space, and whether they should be preserved as documentation of history or removed entirely as offensive propaganda. I seek new perspectives on the politics of colonial memory and public space by theorizing monuments and the collective memory of colonialism in terms of affective reactions and non-conscious semiosis rather than discourse. In particular, I approach these sites of collective tension through an ethnographic comparison with colonial objects in the home, drawing on house-based interviews with Belgians whose families lived in the colonial Congo and as student ethnographic writing on colonial objects in their own lives. I employ these portraits of family relationships with objects and narratives as an entry point towards understanding the ambivalent collective relationships with colonial materialities and the sometimes invisible, sometimes intrusive presence of Belgium’s imperial past. Colonial clutter is everywhere around us, and just like everyday household clutter, many do their best to ignore it, some want to hoard everything indiscriminately, while still others smother under the oppressive weight of all this accumulated debris.

Bio : Sasha Newell is Professor of Anthropology at the Laboratoire d’Anthropologie des Mondes Contemporains at the Université Libre de Bruxelles since 2017. His research focuses on material culture, imaginations of modernity, affect, and semiosis: largely in Côte d’Ivoire and the United States. He is the author of *The Modernity Bluff: Crime, Consumption, and Citizenship in Côte d’Ivoire* (University of Chicago, 2012), and editor of *Of Hoarding and Housekeeping: Material Kinship and Domestic Space in Anthropological Perspective* (Berghahn, 2023). He is currently writing about digital culture in Côte d’Ivoire, domestic accumulation in US homes, and the social life of the material traces of colonialism in Belgium.

Rosa Cabecinhas : Memory activisms and the decolonization of public space: Fostering societal change through participatory cultural interventions

Abstract : European societies are replete with afterlives of colonialism, which manifest themselves in a set of structural inequalities. In Portugal, the legacies of the Empire are particularly evident in media and the public spaces, namely in what concerns monuments and toponymy, which convey a hegemonic representation of the Nation as pioneer of European colonial expansion, obliterating the most brutal aspects of colonialism and the agency of former colonized peoples. In this presentation, we will discuss some recent cases of memory activism, and the role of public artistic interventions for the resignification of monuments, bringing light to some histories that have long been obliterated from the public space, contributing to promote more plural and inclusive societies.

Bio : Rosa Cabecinhas holds a PhD in Social Psychology of Communication, she is professor at the Social Sciences Institute and researcher at the Communication and Society Research Centre, University of Minho. She has been coordinator of the interdisciplinary PhD Program in Cultural Studies and coordinator of several research projects. She was Vice-Chair of the Cost action 1205 “Social psychological dynamics of historical representations in the enlarged Europe”. Her research interests focus on intergroup relations, social representations, memory, migrations, diversity and social change. Currently, she is Principal Investigator and Workpackage leader in the European research consortium CONCILIARE – Confidently Changing Colonial Heritage (Horizon Europe).

Discussant : Sandrine Colard is Associate Professor of African Art History. She holds a Ph.D. in art history from Columbia University, and a M.A. in Africana Studies from New York University. Prior to joining Rutgers-Newark, she was a post-doctoral fellow at the Institut National d’Histoire de l’Art (INHA, Paris, France) and a Provost Post-doctoral Fellow at the NYU Tisch School of the Arts. Dr. Colard is a historian of modern and contemporary African arts and photography, with a focus on Central Africa. Her scholarly interests include post-colonialism in the arts, portraiture, vernacular photograph, the representation of gender and domesticity, and the globalization of the contemporary art scene.

- Panel « Universités et histoire coloniale » (français)

Amandine Lauro : Fragments pour une histoire des projections africaines de l'ULB (Congo, Rwanda, Burundi, années 1950)

Résumé : Cette communication vise à présenter quelques résultats d'une enquête historique sur l'histoire coloniale de l'Université libre de Bruxelles. Plus spécifiquement, la présentation se focalise sur l'histoire des projections africaines de l'ULB dans le contexte du colonialisme tardif, en suivant les trois missions fondamentales de l'université — enseignement, recherche, service à la société — et leurs articulations sur les terrains du Congo, du Rwanda et du Burundi. À rebours d'une historiographie qui a surtout examiné l'histoire coloniale des universités au prisme du racisme interne aux institutions universitaires européennes, des retombées financières de l'empire ou des colonies envisagées uniquement comme laboratoires de recherche, la présentation s'intéresse prioritairement aux multiples formes et incarnations (institutionnelles, savantes et politiques) des déploiements de l'ULB en Afrique centrale, ainsi qu'aux tensions qui les ont traversées, à un moment de forte expansion de l'expertise coloniale portée par un marché de la connaissance d'une ampleur sans précédent. Ce faisant, il s'agit aussi de mettre en perspective les spécificités de l'ULB vis-à-vis d'autres pôles d'expertise coloniale en Belgique et dans d'autres (ex-)empires, afin de mieux saisir les logiques communes et les singularités qui structurent ces déploiements/projections.

Bio : Amandine Lauro est Chercheuse Qualifiée du FNRS à l'Université libre de Bruxelles où elle enseigne l'histoire de l'Afrique, du genre et de la colonisation. Elle est également directrice du centre de recherche AGS (Atelier Genre(s) et Sexualité(s)). Spécialiste du Congo belge, ses recherches se situent au carrefour de l'histoire du pouvoir colonial et de l'histoire du genre et des sexualités. Elle est l'une des co-promotrices du projet HERICOL; au sein de ce projet, elle se concentre sur l'histoire des liens entre les universités (en particulier l'ULB) et le projet colonial belge.

Emery Kalema : Les étudiants africains à l'ULB dans les années 1950

Résumé : In this presentation, Emery Kalema focuses on African students from the Belgian colonies in Central Africa at the Université libre de Bruxelles (ULB) in the 1950s, their relationship with colonisation, the price they paid for being among the first to attend a university at that time, and the ways in which their quest for education became entangled with much larger systems of power. Drawing on archival materials from ULB and Katholieke Universiteit Leuven (KU Leuven), as well as a corpus of interviews with former students and a range of theories on race and « bêtise coloniale » (colonial stupidity), Kalema argues that colonisation, as experienced by the first African students at ULB, was a form of exclusion whose cost exceeded comprehension. By situating the metropolis and the colony within the same analytical framework, Kalema prompts profound questions about the nature of power and its relationship to knowledge and authority.

Bio : Emery Kalema is an Assistant Professor of History at The Africa Institute, Global Studies University, Sharjah, United Arab Emirates. He holds a Ph.D. from the University of the Witwatersrand in South Africa. He was a Postdoctoral Fellow at the Institut de Sociologie at the Université libre de Bruxelles in 2021-2022. His research focuses on power, violence, memory, trauma and suffering. His monograph, *Violence and Memory: The Mulele "Rebellion" in Postcolonial Congo* will be published by Duke University Press in Fall 2026.

Damiano Mastaci : Vers une histoire (post)coloniale du paysage universitaire de Genève : du "paradigme racial" aux "héritages problématiques"

Résumé : Cette communication vise à poser les premiers jalons d'une histoire coloniale et postcoloniale du paysage universitaire genevois. Après avoir dressé un état des lieux des recherches existantes et situé le cas de Genève dans le contexte plus large du "colonialisme sans colonies" suisse, elle présentera deux études de cas. La première analysera la prégnance du paradigme racial et colonial dans les "sciences de l'enfant", un domaine de recherche particulièrement développé à Genève dans les premières décennies du XX^e siècle. La seconde examinera les reconfigurations qui s'opèrent à la suite des processus de décolonisation, en analysant notamment comment la ville essaie de s'affirmer comme un pôle de formation pour les étudiants africains.

Bio : Damiano Mastaci est enseignant-chercheur à l'université de Genève. Ses travaux portent sur l'histoire de l'éducation, de l'enfance et de la science en Europe et en Afrique coloniale. Il est notamment l'auteur d'*Internationaliser l'éducation. La France, l'UNESCO et la fin des empires coloniaux en Afrique (1945-1961)*, ouvrage paru aux Presses universitaires du Septentrion en 2023, ainsi que le coéditeur de *Genève (post)coloniale. Les ambivalences d'une ville suisse et internationale* (Georg, 2025).

Discutant : Benoît Henriët est professeur d'histoire contemporaine à la Vrije Universiteit Brussel. Il est le principal investigator du projet Foragency: Foraging, Colonialism and More-than-Human Agency in Central Africa, financé par un ERC Starting Grant.