

Round-table of International Network of Museums for Peace – INMP on the occasion of the WILPF centenary conference:

'Vivid memories of 1915'

How can we use historical films for education on women, peace and human rights?

28th April, 4 – 6 pm (optional working session 6 – 7.30 pm), Bertha von Suttner Building, Laan van Meerdervoort 70 The Hague (near the Peace Palace). Organized by Marten van Harten M.A., historian and advisor INMP.



Left to right: Jane Addams, Alice Hamilton, Aletta Jacobs and filmmaker Wilbur Durborough in Berlin in front of Adlon Hotel, May 1915

Background

The Round-table was offered by INMP on the occasion of the WILPF centenary celebration, 25th – 29th April 2015, in particular the unveiling of a bust of Aletta Jacobs in the Peace Palace, the second woman to receive this distinction after Bertha von Suttner in 2013. <http://www.denhaag.nl/en/residents/to/Bust-of-Aletta-Jacobs-in-Peace-Palace.htm>

The search for visual materials of the International Congress of Women in The Hague in April 1915 was part of preparations of the Hague Peace Trail, a historical route developed by INMP in the frame of the European project *Discover Peace in Europe* (EU Lifelong Learning program), with partners in Berlin, Vienna, Budapest, Paris, Torino and Manchester. Memories of the Women's Peace Mission to capitals of warring countries, May – July 1915, can serve as a connector between educational activities in these cities.

<http://inmp.net/index.php/projects/discover-peace>

As an outreaching activity at the Peace Trail, INMP facilitated a festive '*Tribute to Aletta Jacobs*', by the International Women's Alliance and platform Wo=men in front of the Peace Palace on 25th April. Participants of the WILPF Centenary Congress were greeted with 20 historical portraits of 'women of 1915', also of lesser known activists and women who were inhibited to come to The Hague. A video report (in Dutch) was shown at local TV <http://stadsdeeljournalscheveningen.nl/video/>.

Purpose

The moving images of Aletta Jacobs and the Women's Peace Mission in Berlin, May 1915, have become iconic for the WILPF centenary in 2015. With support of educational partners, INMP successfully appealed to the U.S. Library of Congress for restoration of the original World War One documentary by Wilbur Durborough, *With the Germans on the Firing Line* (1915), expected to be completed in Autumn 2015. This film offers an incentive to search for visual methods of peace education, enabling next generations to understand the long tradition of *Women's Power to Stop War* (the slogan of the WILPF centenary), prior to UN Security Council Landmark Resolution 1325 (2000).

Presentations– minutes

4.00 – 4.15 Welcome and introduction of participants.

A number of participants (18) of the WILPF centenary conference, from various countries, were gathered for this meeting: UK, Norway, Austria, Germany, Australia, United States, Italy, the Netherlands (for a list see below). We began with a brief introduction by all who were present.

4.15 – 4.30 Peter van den Dungen and Marten van Harten (INMP), Historical films and peace remembrance, the value of images of Aletta Jacobs ('With the Germans on the Firing Line', 1915) and Bertha von Suttner ('Lay Down Your Arms', 1914)

Marten emphasizes the importance to address next generations with a culture of peace remembrance. Film and other visual media can act as eye-openers to various public target groups.

The documentary by Wilbur Durborough, 'With the Germans on the Firing Line' (1915) is currently being restored. The U.S. Library of Congress aims to premiere Durborough's film at the [Giornate del Cinema Muto](#) in Pordenone, Italy, 3-10 October 2015. Now it is important to share the film with as many people as possible and to use it on more occasions. Historical context and facts on Durborough can be used to create stories and connect past and present through documentary film and other visual media. Durborough was a pioneering American film maker, allowed to film at both frontlines during the Great War. The film is in fact against war by showing the atrocities of war, cf. Marten's blog (in Dutch) for Atria Center of Gender studies <http://www.atriaontmoet.nl/blog/filmpremiere-%E2%80%99meet-dr-jacobs-berlin%E2%80%99>

An example are images of a charity action in Berlin for blind and wounded soldiers, shortly after the introduction of gas warfare (Ieper/Ypres, 24th April 1915) and the early WILPF campaigns to ban chemical weapons. Peter informs us that a small INMP exhibition on this topic is being displayed at the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) in The Hague (Nobel Peace Prize 2013), on the occasion of the WILPF centenary. http://www.criticalpast.com/video/65675026875_Her-Excellency-Von-Inhe-taking-blind-soldiers-for-an-outing_bus_cup-saucers_army-troop

The rediscovered historical footage shows Dutch feminist Aletta Jacobs and her American colleagues Jane Addams (Nobel Peace Prize 1931) and Alice Hamilton in front of the Brandenburger Gate in Berlin on 24th May 1915, entering talks with government leaders on the peace resolutions of the Women's Congress. Thus this film is an important documentary source on political rights of women in international relations, pre-figuring UN Security Council Landmark Resolution 1325, and can be considered a centenary present to WILPF. <http://inmp.net/index.php/component/content/article/63-news/film-tv-internet-2/147-first-moving-pictures-jacobs-and-addams-discovered>

Many more women can be written into stories on peace. Maria van Reigersberg (1589-1653, see figures) for example, was married to Hugo Grotius (Dutch propagator of peace through justice in the 17th century), also acting as his manager and correspondent. Her action to liberate Grotius from a fortified prison, hiding him in a book trunk, has been transmitted by poetry and arts, and can also feature in film historical documentaries on women and peace.



Left: A statuette of Maria, produced by the Dutch Porcelain Manufacture Oud Loosdrecht, c. 1782-1784. Right: Maria on a 17th-century Dutch engraving.

Peter points out the importance of film as new medium in the first decades of the 20th century, and its early use for anti-war propaganda. Bertha von Suttner's novel *Die Waffen Nieder!* (1889; *Lay Down Your Arms*) was turned into a film in 1914 by the Danish director Holger Madsen, with moving images of Bertha at her desk, finished before the start of the war. A rare public screening of the film took place during the centenary of Bertha's death (21st June 2014) in Vienna and The Hague, in the frame of the Bertha von Suttner Project. <http://forwardintolight.com/The%20Film/index.html>

Discussion:

Participants gave different examples of the importance of visualization of peace and the use of visual media to support peace education. It was remarked that the use of appealing visual media is not new: 'Use a picture. It's worth a 1000 words', according to journalist and newspaper editor Arthur Brisbane in 1911.

Peter also points to peace memorials as important visual media, opposed to war memorials. USA diplomat Edward Lollis is collecting images of peace memorials worldwide, see his book (2013): We are encouraged to inform him about any peace monument that is not included yet.

Monumental Beauty

Peace Monuments and Museums Around the World

By Edward W. Lollis

http://www.peacepartnersintl.net/monumental_beauty.htm

These visual media show that the language of peace is not just, or not only, the negation of the language of war, but should be considered as an approach in itself, a positive approach.

4.45 – 5.00 Charlotte Bill (Clapham Film Unit), Screening of 'These Dangerous Women' (2015), re-enactment of the UK women's delegation in 1915

The fragment of Durborough's film with Aletta Jacobs has been used for the first time in the new film by Charlotte Bill *These Dangerous Women* (2015), shown at the WILPF centenary conference in World Forum. The film shows a re-enactment, covering the 24 UK women who managed to get passports to travel to the International Women's Congress in The Hague in April 1915, the obstacles posed by the naval blockade and also the envoys who criss-crossed Europe. We all saw and very much enjoyed the film. It is for free on YouTube, Facebook, WILPF website. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oa2xYvXwGiw>

The film mixes historical sources with our own times. Director Charlotte also lead the women-'actors' make up their own role and approach to the historical persona they were asked to represent or play. A limitation was posed by donor demands, to restrict the scope of the film to UK women. However, it showed the transnational character of the Congress, for instance 'sneaking in' the Hungarian Rosika Schwimmer as initiator of the Peace Mission.

5.15 - 5.30 Eugenia Paulicelli (Queens College and City University of New York), Women's rights, fashion and early cinema; case study on Rosa Genoni, Italian co-founder of WILPF

Eugenia presented her forthcoming book on Rosa Genoni, the Italian co-founder of WILPF and envoy of the Women's Congress (annex 2). She told us about the efforts of Rosa Genoni to establish Italian fashion as serious business, from the World Exhibition in Milan 1906 onward. Rosa became a pioneer of the later Italian fashion industry and for worker's rights and women's rights. She also propagated the education of labourers. Inspired by Italian Renaissance art, she worked to reconcile peace, women's rights and beauty.

In her speech at the Women's Congress in 1915, Rosa repeatedly used the word 'grace'. Her work influenced the role of women in early Italian cinema, as we can see in the dressing style of diva's like Lyda Borelli. A memorable example is the film '*Rapsodia satanica*' by filmmaker Nino Oxilia (who died at the front in 1915), showing a female Faust. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=w6yrz1Zbqdw>

Note by Eugenia and Peter: archives still hold much more historical material to be researched (a.o. Rosika Schwimmer's archive in New York Public Library). A highly visible example is Rosika Schwimmer's initiative of the Peace Ship, sponsored by industrialist Henry Ford, sailing from New York to Europe in 1915-1916 to further permanent mediation. There were many journalists on board, and it is worthwhile to search for materials in (film) archives. Despite enquiries by film historians and the help of the Ford Museum, findings are still limited to a short newsreel of the Peace Ship (showing Ford but not Schwimmer), and numerous stills <http://www.britishpathe.com/video/oscar-ii-denmark/query/travel>



Lyda Borelli wearing one of Rosa Genoni's designs.
(Photo Credit: Varischi & Artico, Milano, published in Rosa Genoni, *Per una moda italiana*, 1910)



Rosika Schwimmer, 1914.

Another example is the archive of Erich Maria Remarque (New York University Fales Library); his novel was the basis of the famous antiwar film 'All Quiet on the Western Front' (1930), that still serves peace education today. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wYDpiOJRokQ&index=3&list=PLtrvnMgGzAkjdtWYgXo77vjRjcOCO6I>

5.30 – 5.45 discussion

Practical follow-up: How to use heritage elements and media in the near future. The release of Durborough's film in Italy in October 2015 can serve as a starting point for screenings and production of educational tools, such as museum apps. The participants intend to keep in touch as a contact group, exchanging information and promoting further searching, preservation and educational use of historical films (list below).

We ran a bit late and ended the meeting around 6.30 PM.

After the roundtable, an informal talk was held about the role that the INMP secretariat in The Hague could and should play for facilitating this process.

Report: Marjan Groot

List of participants

	Name		Organization	Country
1	Marten	Harten van	INMP	Netherlands
2	Peter	Dungen van den	INMP	UK
3	Jalka		Konfliktkultur	Austria
4	Victoria	Bell	Student	Australia
5	Kate	Laing	Student	Australia
6	Eugenia	Paulicelli	Queens College	US
7	Helen	Kay	WILFP UK	UK
8	Anne	Scott	WILFP UK	UK
9	Charlotte	Biill	Clapham Film Unit	UK
10	Heide	Schütz	Frauennetzwerk	Germany
11	Iwona	Fluda	Swiss Peace Council	Switzerland
12	Giovanna	Pagani	WILPF Italy	Italy
13	Anne	Kjelling	WILPF Norway, INMP	Norway
14	Olivier	Mesker	Movies that Matter	Netherlands
15	Marjan	Groot	Leiden University	Netherlands
16	Liska	Blodgett	Vienna Peace Museum	Austria
17	Willem	van der Ham	Stichting TOEN	Netherlands
18	Petra	Keppler	IWA	Netherlands
Absent (prenotice)				
19	Hope	May	Bertha von Suttner Project	USA
20	Candice	Alihusain	Peace Palace Library	Netherlands
21	Mineke	Bosch	Groningen University	Netherlands