

University of Wisconsin-Madison
Department of History
Fall 2012-2013

Florence Bernault
4131 Humanities / phone 263-5424
Off. hours: TR 3:10-4:00 pm
(and by appointment)

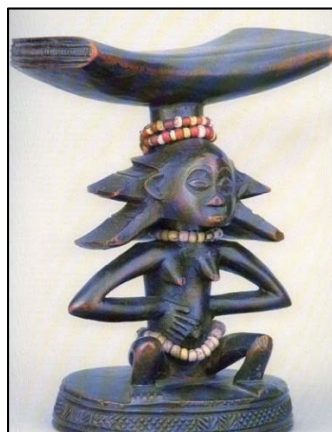
bernault@wisc.edu
Learn@UW : 445



History 445 : Equatorial Africa Since 1500
Tuesday-Thursday, 4:00 pm-5:15 pm, 1131 Humanities

From Joseph Conrad's Heart of Darkness to the current war in Eastern Congo, Equatorial Africa stands in common Western knowledge as the soft-belly of the Continent: a macro-region of long-standing ethnic rivalries, defeated modernity and collapsing nations. Older scholarship on Equatorial Africa emphasized explanations coming from a submission/domination perspective: submission of local societies to a daunting environment; submission of ancient polities to the colonial system; and more recently, domination of civil society by warlords and autocratic regimes.

This lecture will ask you to go beyond this cliché imagery, and to explore the complex history of this region. Recent historiography has recovered the existence of an Equatorial Africa civilization that has survived and innovated for several millenia, while successfully confronting pressures from the Atlantic after 1500. After the colonial conquest at the end of the 19th century, ordinary people resisted the colonial project, adapted to the challenges of every-day life, and invented the features of modern-times in multiple and intricate ways. Today, at a time of wars and deteriorating economic conditions, flourishing religious movements and vivid popular culture place Equatorial Africa among the most innovative areas of the African continent.



Luba Seat - 18th century

Grading

- MAP QUIZ 5%
- MID TERM EXAM (weeks 1-6): 20%
- Take Home Essay One On Cloth (4-5 page): 20%
- Take-Home Essay Two on Explorers and Fang (3-page): 15%
- Take Home Essay Three (6-8 page): 20%
- ORAL PARTICIPATION in Discussion: 20%

WRITTEN ASSIGNMENTS

- Map Quiz. Due in class on 09/18. (5%)
- Take Home Essay One (four to five page, min. 1,000 words, max. 1,300 words, double-spaced). Instructions given in class ahead of time. Due in class on 10/02. (20%)
- MID TERM on course material and readings for weeks 1-5. 10/18 (20%)
- Take Home Essay Two on Primary Sources (two to three-page, min. 750 words-max. 1000 words). Instructions given in class ahead of time. Due in class on 10/25. (15%)
- Take Home Essay Three (six to eight-page essay, min. 1,500 words-max. 2,000 words, double-spaced). A guideline sheet will be handed out ahead of time. Due in class on 11/27 (20%)

2) CLASS PARTICIPATION:

Students are required to attend all lectures. In addition, there will be periodic discussion sessions during which you will be expected to come to class prepared to discuss the week's readings and to actively participate in discussion. Both attendance and participation in discussions will be noted and will be taken into account in calculating your final grade. (20%)

3) GRADUATE STUDENTS should talk to me early in the semester for specific assignments.

Course Regulations

- Attendance is mandatory. You can miss two classes unexcused during the semester-- but not one that features a class discussion (in upper case in the schedule). Three and more unexcused absences will lower your grade.
- No make-ups for being absent, late, or late in turning assignments. Missed exams will only be excused with doctor's notes or other formal documents.
- Late research papers will be marked down a ½ grade (e.g.: from a "B" to a "BC") for each school day missed, and will not be accepted after three school days after the due date (thus marked "F"). Papers or exams put under my office door will not be graded. Papers turned late can be put in my mailbox ONLY if signed, dated and timed by administrator at History Department front desk.

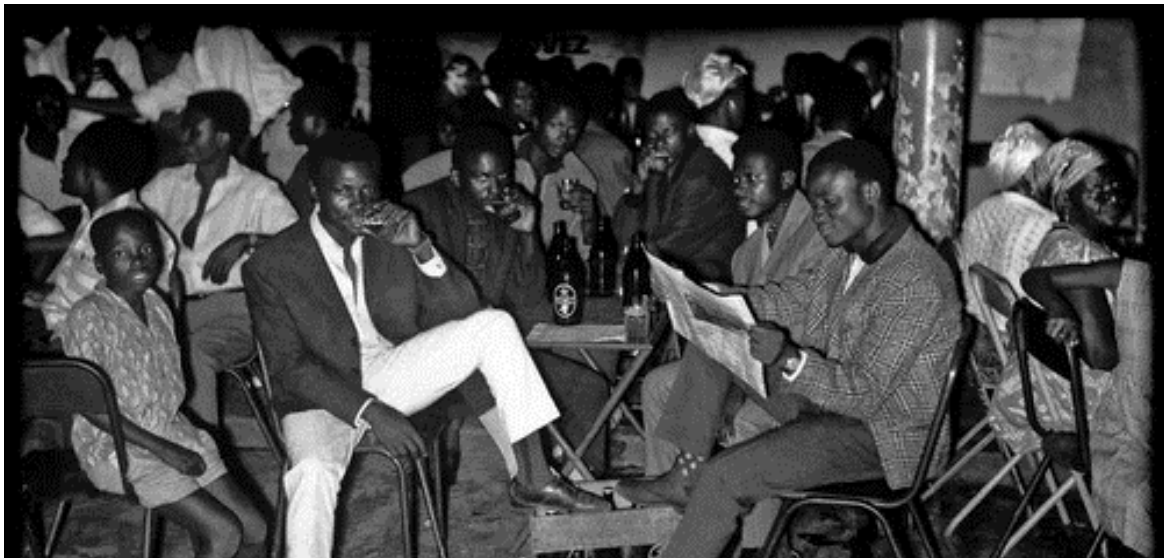
- The length of research papers is mandatory. Any paper more than 3/4 page shorter or longer than the assigned number of pages will be marked down. The police of characters should be no larger than 12, and the margins no wider than 1" (top and bottom), and 1.2" (left and right).
- Written assignments are individual. Collaborative work allowed during the preparation, but not during writing. If you are unsure about what is considered plagiarism, check with me.

Readings

I have collected articles and book chapters and made them available in a reading packet, for purchase at the Humanities Copy Center, Hum. 1650.

The following books are required and available at the University Book Store. They are also on reserve at Helen C. White. Bring readings in class for the appropriate week.

Jan Vansina, *Being Colonized. The Kuba Experience in Rural Congo, 1880-1960* (2010)
Stephanie Nolen, *28 Stories of AIDS in Africa* (2007)



Untitled. Kinshasa in the 1950s (©Jean Depara/Courtesy Galerie Maison Revue Noire).

COURSE SCHEDULE

PART I

Week 1. Introduction

09/04 Introduction

09/06 Bantu Migrations. Mapping Equatorial Africa by 1000

Reading packet: Jan Vansina, The Land and Its Settlement, 35-69
 Jan Vansina, Population and Patterns of Settlement, 79-96 [52 pp]

Week 2. Social Diversity 1000 CE/1500 CE

09/11 Farmers and Hunters-Gatherers

09/13 DISCUSSION Grinker.

Reading Packet: Roy Grinker, Houses in the Rainforest, 1-9, 18-52, & 138-146 [34 pp]

Week 3. The Kongo Kingdom09/18 Rise of Kingdoms – Kongo and Contact with the Portuguese *****MAP QUIZ due in class on 09/18*****

09/20 The Atlantic Trade and the Production of Slaves

Reading Packet: Look at Map on Empires and Kingdoms 1400-1800
 Jan Vansina, Challenge From the Atlantic, 197-237 [30 pp]

Week 4. Equatorial Africa and the Atlantic World

09/25 American Crops, Imports and Social Changes

09/27 DISCUSSION on Slave and Atlantic trade

Reading Packet: Jan Vansina, Raffia Cloth in West Central Africa, 1-19
 Phyllis Martin, Power, Cloth and Currency, 135-147 [31 pp]

Week 5. The Nineteenth Century*****4-5 page TAKE HOME ESSAY ONE ON CLOTH DUE in class 10/02*****10/02 Luanda and Benguela. Transitions in the 19th Century (European Factories)

10/04 DISCUSSION on Elites in Benguela, Luanda and Cabinda

Reading packet: David Birmingham, Slave City: Luanda through German Eyes, 1-17
 Phyllis Martin, Family Strategies, 65-86 [37 pp]

PART II

Week 6. Working with Primary Sources. The Fang People(s) and Europeans

10/09 The Fang: Decentralized Farmers, Migrants and Warriors

10/11 Missionaries, Traders and Explorers

- Reading Packet: J. Fernandez, Narratives of Fang-European Contacts, 1840-1910, 27-48 [21 pp]
Primary Sources [end of reading packet]:
 Paul B. Du Chaillu, Explorations and Adventures in Equatorial Africa (1861), 102-111 & 118-129
 Robert H. Milligan, Fetish Folk of West Africa (1912), 240-245 [25 pp]

Week 7. Mid Term

- 10/16 No Class [prepare for the mid-term]
 10/18 *****MID TERM EXAM IN CLASS*****

Week 8. Explorers and Local Societies

- 10/23 How Did the Conquest Happen? African Resistance
 10/25 DISCUSSION on Primary Sources *****2-3 page TAKE HOME ESSAY TWO ON PRIMARY SOURCES DUE in class 10/25*****

- Reading: Vansina, Being Colonized, Introduction and chapters 1 to 3, 3-85 [82 pp]

Week 9. The Colonial Conquest

- 10/30 Company Rule. Land, Labor and Chiefs
 11/01 DISCUSSION on Vansina (intro to chap. 7) and the Conquest

- Reading: Vansina, Being Colonized, chapters 4, 6 and 7, 86-127 and 150-213 [105 pp]

Week 10. Ideological and Spiritual Encounters

- 11/06 Christianity and Syncretic Cults (Bwiti)
 11/08 Bwiti (ctd) and DISCUSSION on Readings

- Reading: James Fernandez, Reinterpretations of Mission & Bwiti Chapel, 271-87 & 371-412
 Vansina, Being Colonized, chapters 8, 9 and 10, 214-324 [110 pp]

PART III**Week 11. Social Dynamics from the 1930s to the 1950s: I**

- 11/13 Political and Cultural Struggles in Colonial Cities
 11/15 DISCUSSION on Modernity

- Reading: Vansina, Being Colonized, chapter 11 and concl. , 298-331
 Phyllis Martin, Football is King, and About the Town, 99-153 [87 pp]

Week 12. Social Dynamics from the 1930s to the 1950s: II

- 11/20 Women and Gender
- 11/22 Thanksgiving- No Class

Reading: TBA

Week 13. Social Dynamics from the 1930s to the 1950s: III

- 11/27 Politics and Elites. Zaire- Congo DRC : Case Study on Decolonization ***6-8 page
TAKE HOME ESSAY THREE DUE in class 11/27***
- 11/29 DISCUSSION on Women. Zaire/ DRC (ctd)

Reading: TBA

Week 14. Independence and Beyond, 1950s-2000s

- 12/04 The HIV-AIDS Epidemic
- 12/06 DISCUSSION

Reading: Stephanie Nolen, 28 Stories of AIDS in Africa. Read “Lydia Mungherera,”
“Noé Sebisaba,” “Christine Amisi,” 72-112. Choose another two other
stories to discuss. [40 pp +]

Week 15. Conclusion

- 12/11 HIV-AIDS Epidemic. DISCUSSION on 28 Stories of AIDS in Africa
- 12/13 Conclusion