

## VITA

John K. Thornton  
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Department of History  
Boston University  
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## EXPERIENCE

- 2005-2006 and 2014- 17 Director, African American Studies Program, Boston University
- 2003-present Department of History and African American Studies, Boston University, Professor
- 2005 Visiting Professor, Department of African and African American Studies, Harvard University
- 1995-2003 Department of History, Millersville University, Millersville, PA, Professor
- 1990-95 Department of History, Millersville University, Millersville, PA, Associate Professor
- 1986-90 Department of History, Millersville University, Millersville, PA, Assistant Professor
- 1985-6 Department of History, University of Virginia, Charlottesville, Lecturer (one year position, with Assistant Prof. salary)
- 1984-5 Fellow, Carter Woodson Institute, University of Virginia
- 1981-4 Department of History, Allegheny College, Meadville, PA, Assistant Professor (three consecutive one year temporary positions)
- 1979-81 Department of History, University of Zambia, Lusaka, Lecturer Grade II (=Assistant Professor in USA)
- 1972-75 Military Service, USAF Honorably released from Active Duty (Inactive Reserve until 1991).

## EDUCATION

BA: University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, MI, Political Science, 1971

MA: UCLA, Los Angeles, CA, African Area Studies, 1972

PhD: UCLA, Los Angeles, CA, History, 1979 (Supervisor E. A. Alpers)

#### GRANTS AND FELLOWSHIPS

2015-present Associate, W.E.B. Dubois Institute, Hutchins Center, Harvard University

2008-2015 Non-Resident Fellow, W. E. B. DuBois Institute, Harvard University

2005-08 W. E. B. DuBois Institute Research Grant, Harvard University

2001 Gilder Lehman Institute, Mariner's Museum, for research in Portugal

1999 Faculty Assistance Grant, Millersville University, for research in England

1998 Faculty Assistance Grant, Millersville University, for research in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

1996 Faculty Assistance Grant, Millersville University, for research in England

1993 National Endowment for the Humanities Seminar for College Teachers, Johns Hopkins University, Baltimore (8 week program).

1990 Faculty Assistance Grant, Millersville University, for research in Portugal on Angolan demographic history.

1988 National Endowment for the Humanities Summer Stipend (\$3,500). Military Encounters between Europeans and the Indigenous Peoples of the Atlantic zone, 1400-1650.

1984-5 Postdoctoral Fellowship, Carter Woodson Institute (\$20,000), for writing a study of Africa in south Atlantic, 1450-1650 (published as *Africa and Africans in the Making of the Atlantic World*).

1982-4 National Endowment for Humanities, Translations Project Grant (\$18,300), for work translating and editing seventeenth century Italian MS of Giovanni Antonio Cavazzi.

1981 Fundação Calouste Gulbenkian, Research Fellowship (\$1,500), for research on Portuguese missionaries in Africa, 14-17 cents.

#### CONSULTANCIES

- 1992-1999 Consulting Co-Curator, “African Voices” Museum of Natural History, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, DC
- 1993-95 Historical Consultant, “A Slave Ship Speaks: The Wreck of the Henrietta Marie” Mel Fisher Maritime Heritage Museum, Key West, Florida.
- 1999-2007 Historical Consultant, Yorktown-Jamestown Foundation, Williamsburg, Virginia
- 1999-2002 Historical Consultant, “Against Human Dignity” Mariner’s Museum, Norfolk, Virginia
- 2000-2003 Historical Consultant, revision of articles and coverage of Africa in the *Encyclopedia Britannica* (Chicago, IL).
- 2005-2006 Consultant for “African American Voices” PBS special, Kunhart Productions
- 2006-07 Consultant for “Oprah Winfrey” PBS Special, Kunhart Productions
- 2007-2008 Consultant for “African American Lives, Part II” PBS Special, Kunhart Productions
- 2008-2010 Consultant for “Blacks in Latin America” PBS Special
- 2010-2013 Consultant for “Many Rivers to Cross” PBS/Kunhart Productions
- 2007-2018 Consultant for “Mbanza Kongo: Uma cidade de desenterrar por preservar”, Ministry of Culture, Republic of Angola
- 2011-2019t Member and consultant, “KongoKing” University of Ghent
- 2014-16 Consultant for revival of “Roots” The History Channel, A&E Network.
- 2014-17 Consultant for PBS Special, “African Civilizations”

#### LANGUAGE COMPETENCIES

Reading and Speaking: French, Portuguese, Italian, German, Dutch, Kiswahili, Hausa.

Reading only: Spanish (but speak as “Portanhol”), Catalan, Latin, Kikongo

Partial: Kimbundu, Twi, Danish

#### TEACHING AREAS

Africa: All periods, pre-colonial, central Africa and Portuguese-speaking Africa. Includes extensive research experience.

Middle Eastern: Teaching experience in Middle Eastern survey courses.

World history: Experience in teaching world survey, all periods.

Non-Western history: Background and teaching experience in Latin America, Middle East and Africa as well as non-western survey courses and courses on European expansion and Imperialism. Also courses on the history of slavery. Research experience on slave trade, Afro-American, Latin American history

Europe: Background and teaching experience in Medieval and Early Modern Europe, European expansion. Research experience on Portugal (early modern) and expansion.

Other fields: Religious history, mission history, demographic history, social history, teaching experience in military history (all with research experience).

## PUBLICATIONS

### Books

*The Kingdom of Kongo: Civil War and Transition, 1641-1718* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1983). Honorable Mention, Melville J. Herskovits Prize (African Studies Association)

*Africa and Africans in the Formation of the Atlantic World, 1400-1680* (New York and London: Cambridge University Press, 1992, second expanded edition, 1998). Portuguese translation: *África e Africanos na Formação do Mundo Atlântico, 1400-1800* (Rio de Janeiro: Estampa, 2004); Italian translation, *L'Africa e gli africani nella formazione del mondo atlantico, 1400-1800* (Bologna: Mulino, 2010). This title has been cited 1,052 times on Google Scholar (July, 2015)

*The Kongolese Saint Anthony. Dona Beatriz Kimpa Vita and the Antonian Movement, 1684-1706* (Cambridge University Press, 1998) Honorable mention, Melville J. Herskovits Prize, (African Studies Association)

*Warfare in Atlantic Africa, 1500-1800* (University College of London Press/Routledge, 1999)

(with Linda Heywood), *Central Africans, Atlantic Creoles and the Making of the Anglo-Dutch Americas, 1580-1660* (Cambridge University Press, 2007) Winner, Melville J. Herskovits Prize (African Studies Association)

*A Cultural History of the Atlantic World, 1250-1830* (Cambridge University Press, 2012) Winner, World History Association Annual Book Prize, 2012

*A History of Pre-Colonial West Central Africa* (under contract with Cambridge University Press)

### Articles

"The State in African Historiography: A Reassessment," *Ufahamu* 4 (1973): 113-26.

"Demography and History in the Kingdom of Kongo, 1550-1750," *Journal of African History* 18 (1977): 507-30.

"An Eighteenth Century Baptismal Register and the Demographic History of Manguenzo" in C. Fyfe and D. McMaster (eds.) *African Historical Demography* (Edinburgh: Centre of African Studies, 1977): 405-16.

"A Resurrection for the Jagas," *Cahiers d'études africaines* 18 (1978): 223-38.

"New Light on Cavazzi's Seventeenth Century Description of Kongo," *History in Africa* 6 (1979): 253-64.

"A Note on the Archives of the Propaganda Fide and the Capuchin Archives for African History," *History in Africa* 6 (1979): 341-4.

"The Slave Trade in Eighteenth Century Angola: Effects on Demographic Structures" *Canadian Journal of African Studies* 14 (1980): 417-28.

"Early Kongo-Portuguese Relations, 1483-1575: A New Interpretation" *History in Africa* 8 (1981): 183-204. French translation in *Cahiers des Anneaux de la Mémoire* 3 (2001)

"The Chronology and Causes of Lunda Expansion to the West, ca. 1700-1852," *Zambia Journal of History* 1 (1981): 1-13.

"The Demographic Effect of the Slave Trade on Western Africa, 1500-1850" in C. Fyfe and D. McMaster, *African Historical Demography*, vol. 2 (Edinburgh: Centre of African Studies, 1981): 691-720.

"The Kingdom of Kongo, ca. 1390-1678: History of an African Social Formation," *Cahiers d'études africaines* 22 (1982): 325-42.

"Sexual Demography: The Impact of the Slave Trade on Family Structure," in Claire Robertson and Martin Klein (eds.) *Women and Slavery in Africa* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1983): 39-48.

"The Development of an African Catholic Church in the Kingdom of Kongo, 1483-1750," *Journal of African History* 25 (1984): 147-67. Reprinted in Black Diaspora Committee (Howard University), *The Black Diaspora: Africans and their Descendants in the Wider World* (1st and 2d edition, Lexington, Mass: Ginn Press, 1986 and 1987)

(with Linda M. Heywood), "Demography, Production and Labor: Central Angola, 1890-1950," in Joel Gregory and Dennis Cordell (eds.), *African Population and Capitalism* (Boulder and London: Westview, 1987): 241-54.

"The Correspondence of the Kongo Kings, 1614-35: Problems of Internal Written evidence on a Central African Kingdom," *Paideuma* 33 (1987): 407-21.

(with Joseph C. Miller), "The Chronicle as source, history and hagiography: The *Catálogo dos Governadores de Angola*," *Paideuma* 33 (1987): 359-89. Portuguese translation: "A crónica como fonte, história e hagiografia: O *Catálogo dos Governadores de Angola*," *Revista Internacional de Estudos Africanos* 12-13 (1990): 9-55.

- "Tradition, Documents and the Ife-Benin Relationship" *History in Africa* 15 (1988): 351-62.
- "On the Trail of Voodoo: African Christianity in Africa and the Americas," *The Americas* 44 (1988): 261-78.
- (with Linda Heywood), "African Fiscal Systems as Demographic Sources: The Case of the Central Highlands of Angola, 1770-1900" *Journal of African History* 29 (1988): 213-28.
- "The Art of War in Angola, 1575-1680," *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 30 (1988): 360-78.
- "Ideology and Political Power in Central Africa: The Case of Queen Njinga (1624-1663)," *Journal of African History* 32 (1991): 25-40.
- "African Dimensions of the Stono Rebellion," *American Historical Review* 96 (1991): 1101-13. Reprinted in: Darlene Clark Hine and Ernestine Jenkins, eds. *A Question of Manhood: A Reader in US Black Men's History and Masculinity* (Indiana University Press, 1999), pp. 115-29 and Mark M Smith, *Stono: Documenting and Interpreting a Southern Slave Revolt*, (University of South Carolina Press, 2005) pp. 73-87
- "Pre-Colonial African Industry and the Atlantic Trade, 1500-1800," and "The Historian and the Pre-Colonial African Economy: John Thornton Responds," in *African Economic History Review* 9 (1992), along with comments by four other historians.
- "The Regalia of the Kings of Kongo" in Erna Beumers and Peter Koloss (eds.) *Kings of Africa* (Maastricht: Kings of Africa Foundation, 1993), pp. 57-64.
- "I am the Subject of the King of Congo': African Ideology in the Haitian Revolution," *Journal of World History* 4 (1993): 181-214. Reprinted in Alyssa Sepinwall, ed. *Haitian History: New Perspectives* (Routledge, 2012).
- "African Soldiers in the Haitian Revolution," *Journal of Caribbean History* 25 (1993): -80. Reprinted in Laurent Dubois and Julius Scott, eds., *Origins of the Black Atlantic: Rewriting Histories* (Routledge, 2010), pp. 195-213.
- "Central African Names and African American Naming Patterns," *William and Mary Quarterly* 3rd series, 50 (1993): 727-42.
- "The Role of Africans in the Atlantic Economy: Modern Africanist Historiography and the World System Paradigm," *Colonial Latin American Historical Review* 3 (1994): 125-40.
- "Perspectives on African Christianity," in Vera Hyatt and Rex Nettleford (eds.), *Race, Discourse, and the Making of the Americas* (Washington, DC: Smithsonian Institution, 1994), pp. 169-98.

"Early Portuguese Expansion in West Africa: Its Nature and Consequences," in George Winnius (ed.) *Portugal the Pathfinder: Journeys from the Medieval to toward the Modern World* (Madison: Hispanic Seminary of Medieval Studies, 1995), pp. 121-32.

"The African Background to American Colonization" in Stanley Engerman and Robert Gallman (eds.) *Cambridge Economic History of the United States Volume 1. The Colonial Era* (New York and London: Cambridge University Press, 1996), pp. 53-94.

"As guerras civis no Congo e o tráfico de escravos: a história e a demografia de 1718 a 1844 revisitadas," *Estudos Afro-Asiaticos* (Rio de Janeiro) 32 (1997): 55-74.

"Les racines du vaudou. Religion africaine et société haïtienne dans la Saint-Domingue prérévolutionnaire," *Anthropologie et Sociétés* 22 (1998): 85-104.

"The African Experience of the '20 and Odd Negroes" Arriving in Virginia in 1619," *William and Mary Quarterly* 3d series, 55 (1998): 421-34.

"The Coromantees: An African Cultural Group in Colonial North America and the Caribbean," *Journal of Caribbean History* 32/1-2 (1998): 161-78.

"Warfare, Slave Trading, and European Influence: Atlantic Africa, 1450-1800," in Jeremy Black (ed.), *War in the Early Modern World, 1450-1815* (London: University College of London Press, 1999), pp. 129-46.

"Mbanza Kongo/São Salvador: Kongo's Holy City," in David Anderson and Richard Rathbone (eds.) *Africa's Urban Past* (London and Portsmouth, NH: James Currey and Heinemann, 2000), pp. 67-84. Portuguese translation as "São Salvador: A cidade sagrada do Kongo," in *Fontes e Estudos* (Luanda) 4 (1999).

"War, the State, and Religious Norms in Coromantee Thought," in Robert Blair St. George (ed.), *Possible Pasts: Becoming Colonial in America* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2000), pp. 181-200.

"Documentos escritos e tradição oral num reino alfabetizado: tradições orais escritas no Congo, 1580-1910," *Actas do II Reunião da História da África* (Luanda, 1997) (Lisbon: Comissão Nacional para as Comemorações dos Descobrimentos Portugueses, 2000), pp. 439-57.

"La Nation angolaise en Amérique, son identité en Afrique et en Amérique," *Cahiers des Anneaux de la Mémoire* 2 (2000): 241-56.

"Teaching Africa in an Atlantic Perspective," *Radical History Review* 77 (2000): 123-34.

"Kongo's Incorporation into Angola: A Perspective from Kongo," in *A África e a Instalação do*



*Sistema Colonial (c. 1885-c. 1930)* (Lisbon, 2000), pp. 354–57.

“The Origins and Early History of the Kingdom of Kongo, c. 1350-1550,” *International Journal of African Historical Studies* 34/1 (2001): 1-31.

(with Paula Gershick-Ben Amos) "Civil War in the Kingdom of Benin, 1689-1722: Continuity or Political Change?" *Journal of African History* 42 (2001): 353-76.

“Religion and Cultural Life in the Kongo and Mbundu Areas, 1500-1800,” in Linda Heywood (ed.), *Central Africans and Cultural Transformations in the American Diaspora* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2002), pp. 71-90.

"Cannibals, Witches and Slave Traders in the Atlantic World," *William and Mary Quarterly* 60/2 (2003): 273-94.

“Origin Traditions and History in Central Africa,” *African Arts* 37/1 (2004): 32-37.

“European Documents and African History,” in John E. Philips, ed. *Writing African History* (Rochester, NY: University of Rochester Press, 2005), pp. 254-65.

“Central Africa in the Era of the Slave Trade,” in Jane G. Landers and Barry M. Robinson, eds, *Slaves, Subjects, and Subversives: Blacks in Colonial Latin America* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2006), pp. 83-110.

“Elite Women in the Kingdom of Kongo: Historical Perspectives on Women’s Political Power,” *Journal of African History* 47 (2006): 437-60.

(with Linda Heywood), “Central African Leadership and the Appropriation of European Culture,” in Peter Mancall, ed., *The Atlantic World and Virginia, 1550-1624* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2007), pp. 194-224.

“The Portuguese in Africa,” in Francisco Bethencourt and Diogo Ramada Curto, eds. *Portuguese Oceanic Expansion, 1400-1800* (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 2007), pp. 138-160

“Les États de l’Angola et la formation de Palmares (Brésil),” *Annales: Histoire, Sciences sociales* 63/4 (2008): 769-97.

(with Linda Heywood) “Kongo and Dahomey, 1660-1815: African Political Leadership in the Era of the Slave Trade and Its Impact on the Formation of African Identity in Brazil,” in Bernard Bailyn, ed. *Soundings in Atlantic History: Latent Structures and Intellectual Currents, 1500-1825* (Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press, 2009), pp. 86-111.

“African Political Ethics and the Slave Trade,” in D. R. Peterson, ed. *Abolitionism and Imperialism in Britain, Africa and the Atlantic*. (Oxford, OH: Ohio University Press, 2009), pp. 58-93.

“Portuguese-African Relations, 1500-1750,” in Paulo Henriques, et al, *Encompassing the Globe: Portugal and the World in the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> Centuries* (Lisbon: Museu Nacional de Arte Antigua, 2009), pp. 104-114.

(with Linda Heywood) “King Diogo of Kongo’s Legal Inquest into Treason,” in Kathrine McKnight, ed. *Afro-Latino Voices: Narratives from the Early Modern Ibero-Atlantic World, 1550-1812* (Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing, 2009)

(with Linda Heywood) "Intercultural Relations between Europeans and Blacks in New Netherlands," in Hans Krabbendam, Cornelis A. van Minnen, and Giles Scott-Smith, eds, *Handbook: Four Centuries of Dutch-American Relations, 1609-2009* (Albany and Amsterdam: SUNY Press, 2009), pp. 192-203.

“Les manuscrits Araldi,” in Michel Chandeigne, ed. *La reine Njinga (Angola)* (Paris: Changdeine, 2010).

(with Andrea Mosterman) “A Reinterpretation of the Kongo-Portuguese War of 1622 According to New Documentary Evidence,” *Journal of African History* 51 (2010): 235-48.

“Angola no Palmares,” in Flavio Gomes, ed., *Palmares: Escravidão e Liberdade no Atlântico Sul* (São Paulo: Contexto, 2010).

“Firearms, Diplomacy and Conquest in Angola: Cooperation and Alliance in West Central Africa, 1491-1671,” in Wayne E. Lee, ed. *Empires and Indigenes: Intercultural Alliance, Imperial Expansion, and Warfare in the Early Modern World* (New York: New York University Press, 2011), pp. 167-192.

(with Linda Heywood), “‘Cannibal Negroes,’ Atlantic Creoles and the Identity of New England’s Charter Generation,” *African Diaspora* 4 (2011): 76-94.

"Modern Oral Tradition and the Historic Kingdom of Kongo," in Paul S. Landau, ed., *The Power of Doubt: Essays in Honor of David Henige* (Madison, Wisconsin: Parallel Press, 2011), pp. 195-208.

"Master or Dupe? The Reign of Pedro V of Kongo," *Portuguese Studies Review* 19 1-2 (2011): 115-132.

“Religiones mundiales en África y la diáspora, 1500-1800,” in Martha Luz Machado Caicedo, ed. *La diáspora Africana: Un legado de Resistencia y emancipación* (Santiago de Cali, Colombia, 2012): 185-210.

“Afro-Christian Syncretism in the Kingdom of Kongo.” *Journal of African History* 54 (2013): 53-77.

(with Linda Heywood) "The Kongo Kingdom and European Diplomacy" in *Kongo Across the Waters* (Florida University Press, 2013)

“The Kingdom of Kongo and the Counter Reformation,” *Social Sciences and Missions* 26.1 (2013): 40-58

(with Linda Heywood) "The Culture of Mbanza Kongo" in *Kongo Across the Waters* (Florida University Press, 2013)

“Conquest and Theology: The Jesuits in Angola, 1548-1650” *Journal of Jesuit Studies* 1 (2014): 245-259.

“The Kingdom of Kongo and Palo Monte: Reflections on an African American Religion,” *Slavery and Abolition* (2015): 1-22.

“The Kingdom of Kongo,” in Alisa LaGama, ed. *Kongo: Power and Majesty* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2015), pp. 87-118.

“The Kingdom of Kongo in the Thirty Years’ War,” *Journal of World History* 27 (2016): 189-213.

“Contact with Europeans and Catholicism, Fifteenth to Nineteenth Centuries,” in *Du Jourdain au Congo: Art et christianisme en Afrique Centrale* org. Christine Maine (Paris: Flammaron, 2016), pp. 10-27.

“The Igbo and the African Backgrounds of the Slave Cargo of the *Henrietta Marie*,” in Toyin Falola and Rafael Chijioke Njoku, eds. *Igbo in the Atlantic World: African Origins and Diasporic Destinations* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2016), pp. 99-111.

“The Zambos and the Transformation of the Miskitu Kingdom, 1636-1740,” *Hispanic American Historical Review* 97 (2017): 1-28.

“Placing the Military in African History,” *Journal of African Military History* 1 (2017):112-119.

“How Useful is the Concept of Slaving Zones? Some Thoughts from the Experience of Dahomey and Kongo in Fynn-Paul J, Pargas D, eds., *Slaving Zones: Cultural Identities, Ideologies, and Institutions in the Evolution of Global Slavery* (Leiden, 2018) pp.151-168.

“The Origins of Kongo: A Revised Vision” in Bostoek K, Brinkman I eds, *The Kongo Kingdom: The Origins, Dynamics and Cosmopolitan Culture of an African Polity* (Cambridge, 2018) pp

17-41.

"Soyo and Kongo: The Undoing of the Kingdom's Centralization," in Bostoen K, Brinkman I eds, *The Kongo Kingdom: The Origins, Dynamics and Cosmopolitan Culture of an African Polity* (Cambridge, 2018) pp. 103-122.

### **Internet Publications**

(ed. and trans.) *Evangelical Missions to the Kingdom of Kongo* by Giovanni Antonio Cavazzi da Montecuccolo, 1665. Annotated translation at <http://centralafricanhistory.blogspot.com/> and <http://www.bu.edu/afam/faculty/john-thornton/cavazzi-missione-evangelica-2/>

"Sin and Evil in Kongo Christianity: An Edition and Translation of a Seventeenth Century Kikongo Sermon." From Kikongo at <http://www.bu.edu/afam/faculty/john-thornton/roboredo-kikongo-sermon/>

Translation of sections bearing on the Kingdom of Kongo from Antonio Franco, *Synopsis Annalium* (Augsburg, 1727) from Latin at <http://www.bu.edu/afam/faculty/john-thornton/franco-synopsis/>

### **Forthcoming Chapters or Articles (as of 8 May 2019)**

"Forced Contacts: Africa and America," in Frank Moya Pons (ed.) *UNESCO General History of Latin America* vol. II (also to appear in French and Spanish versions)

"Política Africana e Expansão Portuguesa em Angola, 1400-1800," (provisional title) in Marília dos Santos Lopes (ed.), *História da Expansão Portuguesa no Mundo* vol. IX (Lisbon: Editora Estampa, [TS of about 150 pages])

### **Significant Unpublished Works**

(with Amara Thornton) "The Children of Kinzamba," a children's novel of approximate 150 pages.

### **Textbook Contributions**

Chapters 2 and 3 of Michael L. Coniff and Thomas J. Davis *Africans in the Americas: A History of the African Diaspora* (New York: Saint Martin's, 1994), pp. 31-64.

