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*Curriculum Vitae*

**ROBERT HARMS**

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**Current Position**

Henry J. Heinz Professor of History and African Studies, Yale University

**Education**

Ph.D. 1978, University of Wisconsin-Madison. Comparative World History with specialization in African History.

Certificate of African Studies, 1974, University of Wisconsin-Madison. Concentration in African history, anthropology, linguistics, and agricultural economics.

M.A. 1973, University of Wisconsin-Madison. African History.

B.A. 1968, Tabor College, Hillsboro, Kansas. Social Science.

**Languages**

French, Bobangi, Lingala, Swahili, some German

## Experience

2008-Present: Henry J. Heinz Professor of History and African Studies, Yale University

1988-2008: Professor of African History, Yale University

1995-96: Fellow, *Wissenschaftskolleg zu Berlin*, Germany.

1991-92: Fulbright Research Professor, University of Conakry, Guinea.

1985-88: Associate Professor, African History, Yale University.

1979-85: Assistant Professor, African History, Yale University.

1981-82: Mellon Fellow, Whitney Humanities Center, Yale University.

1979: Visiting Lecturer, African History, University of California, Berkeley.

1975-76: Research Associate with the *Centre d'Etudes Socio-Politiques pour l'Afrique Centrale*. Lubumbashi, Zaire.

## Single-Authored Books

*Land of Tears: The Exploration and Exploitation of Equatorial Africa* (New York: Basic Books, 2019).

- Winner of the 2020 Gustav Ranis Book Prize awarded by the MacMillan Center for International and Area Studies at Yale for the best book on an international topic by a current member of the Yale Faculty.

*Africa in Global History*, New York: W. W. Norton, 2018.

*The Diligent: A Voyage Through the Worlds of the Slave Trade*, New York: Basic Books, 2002.

- Winner of the 2003 Frederick Douglass Prize awarded by the Gilder Lehrman Center for the study of Slavery, Resistance, and Abolition.
- Winner of the 2003 J. Russell Major Prize in French History awarded by the American Historical Association.

- Winner of the 2003 Mark Lynton History Prize awarded by the Columbia University Graduate School of Journalism and the Nieman Foundation at Harvard University.
- Finalist for the 2003 Los Angeles Times Book Prize in the category of History.
- Finalist for the 2003 L.L. Winship/PEN New England Literary Prize, awarded by the Boston Globe and PEN New England.
- Finalist for the 2003 Alf Andrew Heggoy Book Prize awarded by the French Colonial Historical Society.
- Winner of the 2005 Gustav Ranis International Book Prize awarded by the MacMillan Center for International and Area Studies, Yale University.

*Das Sklavenschiff: Eine Reise in de Welt des Sklavenhandels* (Bertelsmann, 2004). This is the German translation of *The Diligent: A Voyage through the World of the Slave Trade*.

- Finalist for the German “History Book of the Year” award sponsored by *Damels* magazine, 2004.

*Games Against Nature: An Eco-Cultural History of the Nunu of Equatorial Africa*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 1987. Second edition, 1999.

- Winner of the 1991 George Perkins Marsh Prize awarded by the American Society for Environmental History.
- Selected in 2004 for publication in the History E-Book Project of the American Council of Learned Societies. This project is dedicated to selecting and creating an electronic collection of important scholarly monographs that are expected to have continuing relevance in the field of history.

*River of Wealth, River of Sorrow: The Central Zaire Basin in the Era of the Slave and Ivory Trade, 1500-1891*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1981.

## Co-Edited Books

*Indian Ocean Slavery in the Age of Abolition*. Co-editor with David Blight and Bernard Freamon. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2013.

Editorial Board for the *Atlas of the Transatlantic Slave Trade*, by David Eltis and David Richardson. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2010. For publishing this book, Yale University Press won the prestigious 2010 R. R. Hawkins PROSE award, which “recognizes the very best in professional and scholarly publishing.”

*Paths Toward the Past: African Historical Essays in Honor of Jan Vansina*.

Co-editor with Joseph C. Miller, Michelle Wagner, and David Newbury. Atlanta: African Studies Association Press, 1994.

## Articles

“An Ancient Practice Transformed by the Arrival of Europeans,” *The Wall Street Journal*, Sept. 20, 2019.

“What a New Scramble Could Mean for Africans,” *The Washington Post*, Dec. 3, 2019.

“Sklavenhandel, Abolition, und Kolonialismus als vernetzte normative Ordnungen” (Slave trading, Abolition, and Colonialism as Normative Orders), in *Die Herausbildung Normativer Ordnungen*, edited by Rainer Forst and Klaus Gunther (Frankfurt/New York: Campus Verlag, 2011).

“Slavery in Pre-Colonial Equatorial Africa,” in *African Systems of Slavery: Beyond the Indian, Mediterranean, and Atlantic Ocean Markets*, edited by Stephanie Beswick and Jay Spaulding (Trenton, New Jersey: Africa World Press, 2010).

“Heinrich Barth’s Construction of Nature,” in *Heinrich Barth in Mali: Dialogue of Civilizations*, edited by Mamadou Diawara, Gerd Spittler, and Paul Ferias (Cologne, Germany: Rudiger Koppe Press, 2006).

“The Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade in Cinema,” in *Black and White in Colour: African History on Screen*, edited by Richard Mendelsohn and Vivian Bickford-Smith, co-published by Double Storey Books (Cape Town), James Curry Publishers (Oxford), and Ohio University Press, (Athens, Ohio), 2006.

“The Voyage of the Slave Ship *Diligent*,” *Seaport: New York’s History Magazine*, vol. XXXIX, no. 1 (Winter/Spring 2004), pp. 12-17.

“King Leopold’s Bonds,” in *Origins of Value: Essays in the History of Financial Innovation*, edited by William N. Goetzmann and Geert Rouwenhorst (Oxford University Press, 2005).

“Early Globalization and the Slave Trade,” *Yale Global Online*, May 9, 2003.

“The Voyage of *The Diligent*: Model or Anti-Model?” *Dialektik*. 1997 no. 1, pp. 95-104.

"Fishing and Systems of Production: The Precolonial Nunu of the Middle Zaire," *Cahiers des Sciences Humaines*, 1991.

"The Decline of Diversity along the Middle Zaire," in *Savoirs Paysans et Développement*, edited by Georges Dupré. Paris, 1991.

"Systems, Games, and History: Models for the Study of Africa's Past," *African Studies Review*, 30 (1987): 25-33.

"The Wars of August: Diagonal Narrative in African History," *The American Historical Review*, 88 (1983):809-34. (Lead article)

"Sustaining the System: Trading Towns along the Middle Zaire," in *Women and Slavery in Africa*, edited by Martin Klein and Claire Robertson (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1983), pp. 95-110.

"The World Abir Made: The Maringa-Lopori Basin, 1885-1903," *African Economic History*, no. 12 (1983): 125-139.

"The Genesis of the Commercial Economy in the Central Zaire Basin," *Enquêtes et Documents d'Histoire Africaine*, 4 (1980): 101-113.

"Oral Traditions: Indicators of Collective Perceptions," in *The African Past Speaks: Essays on Oral Tradition and History*, Edited by Joseph C. Miller (Folkstone, England: Dawson Press, 1980), 178-200.

"Oral Tradition and Ethnicity," *Journal of Interdisciplinary History*, X, 1 (Summer, 1979): 61-85.

"Fish and Cassava: The Changing Equation," *African Economic History*, no. 7 (1979): 113-116.

"Slave Systems in Africa," *History in Africa*, 5 (1978): 327-335.

"The End of Red Rubber: A Reassessment," *Journal of African History*, 16 (1975): 73-88.

## **Keynote and Distinguished Lectures**

2007. *Keynote Address*: "Conflicting World Views: Sociality, Economy, and Politics during Colonialism", presented at the conference on "Confrontation and Conviviality: Negotiating World Views, Spiritualities, and Everyday Lives in Colonial and Post-Colonial Congo," Copenhagen, Denmark, January 12, 2007.

2006. *The Jensen Memorial Lectures*: “The Making of Colonialism in Equatorial Africa,” a series of seven weekly public lectures that I gave at the Frobenius Institute of the Johann Wolfgang Goethe University in Frankfurt, Germany, during May and June 2006.

## **Selected Yale Activities**

2013-14. Ad hoc Committee on Grading in Yale College. This committee was formed to study and recommend solutions for grade inflation and grade compression in Yale College.

2012-2014. History Department Undergraduate Curriculum Committee. This committee was formed to review and revamp the History Department’s curriculum and the requirements for graduating as a History major.

2012-13. Director of Senior Essay Program, Yale History Department (also directed the program in 1980-84).

2011. Selection committee for the Gustav Ranis Book Prize for the best book by a Yale faculty member on an international subject, and the Gaddis Smith Book Prize for the best first book on an international subject by a Yale faculty member. The prizes are sponsored by Yale’s MacMillan Center for International and Area Studies.

2006-2008, 2010-11. Director of Undergraduate Studies (DUS), Yale History Department (also served as DUS in 1985-87).

2004. Frederick Douglass Book Prize Selection Committee. This international prize is awarded annually to the “most outstanding book on the subject of slavery and/or abolition and antislavery movements.” The prize is sponsored by the Gilder Lehrman Center for the Study of Slavery, Resistance, and Abolition.

2003-2004. Chair, Yale College Writing Committee. This committee was formed to develop ways to improve the writing skills of undergraduates.

2002-2005. Chair, African Studies Program, Yale University. Also served as Chair in 1999 and 1989-91.

Fall, 2002. Acting Director, Program on Agrarian Societies, Yale University. Also served as Acting Director in 1998-99 and 1994-95.

2001-2002. Chair, Yale College Course of Study Committee. This committee evaluated and approved all new undergraduate courses taught at Yale.

1993-95. Associate Director of Graduate Studies, History Department.

1988-89. Director, Yale Southern African Research Program.

1988-89. Director of Graduate Studies, History Department.

### **Selected Professional Activities Outside of Yale**

2020. Scholarly Advisory Board of the Gilder-Lehrman Institute of American History in New York.

2006. Chair, Mark Lynton History Prize Committee. This prize is awarded to the “book-length work of history published in the United States, on any subject, that best combines intellectual or scholarly distinction with felicity of expression.” Administered by the Columbia University Graduate School of Journalism and the Nieman Foundation at Harvard, the prize is part of the Lukas Prize Project established in 1998 to honor “the best in American nonfiction writing.”

1999-present. International board of directors for the Center for the Study of Local Knowledge in Bamako, Mali. The center promotes research on the relationship between global forms of scientific knowledge and local forms of folk knowledge.

2004-2008. Editorial Board of *History Compass*, an on-line journal launched by Blackwell Publishing. It offers academic historians a convenient way to assess the state of a subfield of history or to see what major scholars consider important new directions and issues.

2000-2001. Chair of the George Perkins Marsh book prize committee for the American Society for Environmental History. This committee selected the best book in the field of environmental history published during the previous year.

1994-97. Executive Committee, U.S. African Studies Association.