

Sabbatical report

By Kathleen Keller, History Department

I am pleased to report that I had a highly successful sabbatical leave over the 2015-2016 academic year. I completed revisions on my book and succeeded in securing a book contract from the University of Nebraska Press. The main goal of my sabbatical was, after all, to revise the manuscript, but ultimately, I also accomplished several other small goals. These include the following: I presented a paper at an international conference, published a book review, submitted two research grant applications, gave an invited talk at Macalester College, and worked on course development for two new courses. I have organized the report in order of most significant accomplishments to least.

Book manuscript

In the fall of 2015 I immediately began working on revisions for publishing my book, *Colonial Suspects: Suspicion, Imperial Rule, and Colonial Society in Interwar French West Africa*, based on my dissertation. Over the course of the fall semester I revised three chapters and the introduction. Revisions required reading secondary sources, consulting primary documents in my files, and re-writing the manuscript. These revisions kept me on track with the initial plan I laid out in my sabbatical application. One element I had not considered taking a lot of time was the writing of the book proposal itself. I consulted with several colleagues at different institutions who reviewed a draft proposal and helped me to carefully craft this piece of writing. In January 2016 I submitted a cover letter, book proposal, and sample chapter to the editor-in-chief at the University of Nebraska Press. I selected Nebraska because they publish a well-respected series called "France Overseas" which includes several books I admire on French colonialism. I continued revisions while those materials were under review. In late March I received a positive response from the Press which requested my entire manuscript for review. I spent the month of April making final revisions and then sent the entire manuscript for review in early May. The review process took longer than I anticipated and I did not have readers' reports, approval from the press, and the final contract until mid-September 2016.

As a result, I still need to make final revisions based on the readers' reports and have agreed to do so by the end of February 2017. The book should appear in the summer 2018 series of Nebraska's "France Overseas" publications. I am immensely proud of this accomplishment, but also recognize that the timeline stated in the sabbatical proposal was not met. Ultimately, I had hoped to have final revisions completed before the fall semester 2016 began. The delay occurred for two reasons. First, the time spent refining the book proposal meant I did not submit my work to the press until late January when I had hoped for late November. The reader review process also was expected to take two to three months and ended up taking four. It is no surprise, of course, that the publication process may take longer than expected. I am still very pleased with the result and look forward to providing a copy of the book to the Provost's office when it is in print.

Grant applications

In anticipation of my next project, a book about a Senegalese man named Alioune Mamadou Kane who immigrated to France in the 1920s, I applied for external research funding. Kane's life tells an intriguing story. He claimed to be a prince and a wizard who performed magic at world's

fairs in Paris and New York. Later, during the Second World War, he claimed to be an important and respected Muslim religious leader. Eventually, Kane was unmasked as a fraud and convicted of treason with Germany after the war. My book project embeds this fascinating story into broad historical themes such as colonialism, migration, interwar culture, and the Second World War and its aftermath. I plan to publish this book in the Oxford University Press series “The World in A Life” and have already had preliminary discussions about this with the series editor. However, I need to complete archival research in France in order to write the book. In anticipation of spending a summer abroad, I applied in fall 2015 for the National Endowment for the Humanities Summer Stipend and the American Philosophical Society Franklin grant. Both provide \$6, 000 for research expenses. I did not win either grant last year, but as I spent considerable time developing these proposals during the sabbatical, I am well-positioned to win them this year. I am applying for both grants again this fall with the hope of spending summer 2017 in France.

Course development

After my manuscript was in the hands of the press, I immediately turned to course development projects. As I am teaching an FTS for the first time this fall I began preparing my course. I participated in a course development workshop in June 2016 under the leadership of Julie Bartley to refine my FTS syllabus. I also applied for and was granted a Kendall center mini-grant to acquire course materials for the FTS as well as my African history courses. I began preliminary preparations for a course on France under Nazi occupation including viewing films and preparing a list of readings for the course.

International Conference

In March 2016 I attended an international history conference in Marburg, Germany on the topic “Security and Empire: Mechanics of Securitization in Imperial Spaces.” I gave a paper on the topic “A Culture of Suspicion and the Surveillance of Foreigners in Interwar French West Africa.” The conference was hosted by the University of Marburg at the Herder Institute and included a select group of international scholars who study the relationship between security and empire. I was able to meet and make connections with important historians in my field, including Martin Thomas, a scholar from the U.K. who wrote an outside letter of support for my tenure file, but who I did not previously know. The conference was instrumental in shaping my final month of revisions on the book.

Book review

One of my earliest accomplishments of the sabbatical was the publication of a book review in the online publication, H-France, a digital venue that is widely subscribed to by French historians and promotes scholarship on the history of France and the Francophone world. In September 2015 I published a review here of an edited collection of essays on European colonialism in the 19th and 20th centuries. The book was in French, although the review was in English. The book under review was entitled, *Nouvelle histoire des colonisations européennes: sociétés, cultures, politiques (XIXe-XXe siècles)*, and edited by Amaury Lorin and Christelle Taraud.

Invited talk In October 2015 I gave a talk at the invitation of the Anthropology Department at Macalester College. The topic was “A Culture of Suspicion: Policing and Surveillance in

Interwar French West Africa” based on my book manuscript. I had the opportunity to engage with many faculty and students during my visit to Macalester.

In closing, I would like to thank the Provost’s office for the opportunity to spend a year focused entirely on my research. It is my expectation that the work accomplished in this year will bear fruit for years to come.