

# Curriculum Vitae

Family name, first name: Ricquier, Birgit

Date of birth: 30/05/1983

Nationality: Belgian

Current position: principal investigator of the ERC project BANTURIVERS - postdoctoral researcher at the Center of Cultural Anthropology, Université libre de Bruxelles

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<https://ulb.academia.edu/BirgitRicquier>

## Expertise

Linguistic palaeontology aka Words and Things

Comparative linguistics

Bantu languages

“Kongo” languages of the southern Republic of the Congo

Languages of the Tshopo and Maniema Provinces, Democratic Republic of the Congo

Precolonial history of Central Africa

Culinary history of Central Africa

## Publications

(accepted) Archaeology, Language and. In: Stanlaw, James (ed.). *The International Encyclopedia of Linguistic Anthropology*. Wiley.

(2018) Historical Linguistics: Loanwords and Borrowing. In: Spear, Thomas (ed.). *Oxford Research Encyclopedia of African History*. Oxford: Oxford University Press. <https://oxfordre.com/africanhistory/view/10.1093/acrefore/9780190277734.001.0001/acrefore-9780190277734-e-362>.

(2017) The ‘Words-and-Things’ Method. In: Cornelissen, E., O. Gosselain, A. Livingstone-Smith & S. MacEachern (eds). *Field Manual for African Archaeology*. Tervuren: Royal Museum for Central Africa.

(2016) A Foodie’s Guide to Kongo Language History: Early Events, North versus South, and the Innovative West. *Africana Linguistica* XXII.

(2014) The History of Porridge in Bantuphone Africa, With Words as Main Ingredients. Monique Chastanet, Gérard Chouin, Dora de Lima, Thomas Guindeuil (eds), *Afriques* 5, special issue : *Eating and drinking in Africa before the 20th century. Cuisines, exchanges, social constructions*.

- (2013) Central Africa. In: Bruce Kraig and Colleen Taylor Sen (eds.). *Street Food around the World. An Encyclopedia of Food and Culture*. Santa Barbara : ABC-CLIO. pp. 66-70.
- (2013) Kongo Cuisine and the Middle Passage in terms of Peanuts. In: Susan Cooksey, Robin Poynor & Hein Vanhee (eds.). *Kongo across the Waters*. Gainesville : University Press of Florida. pp. 258-263.
- (2012) On *Mfúumbu, Nkasa* and *Whisky*: A Wedding Celebration in Kimbonga-Louamba (Congo-Brazzaville). In: McWilliams, M. (ed.). 2012. *Celebration. Proceedings of the Oxford Symposium on Food and Cookery 2011*. Totnes: Prospect Books. pp. 258-266.
- (2011) (with Koen Bostoen) Stirring Up the Porridge: How Early Bantu Speakers Prepared Their Cereals. In: Fahmy, A.G., Kahlheber, S. & D'Andrea, A.C. (eds.). *Windows on the African Past. Current approaches to African archaeobotany. Proceedings of the 6th International Workshop on African Archaeobotany, Cairo*. Series 'Reports in African Archaeology 3'. Frankfurt am Main : Africa Magna Verlag. pp. 209-224.
- (2011) Central Africa. In: Albala, Ken (ed.). *Food Cultures of the World Encyclopedia. Volume 1: Africa and the Middle East*. Westport: Greenwood Press. pp. 31-41.
- (2010) (with Koen Bostoen) Retrieving Food History through Linguistics: Culinary Traditions in Early Bantuphone communities. In: Hosking, Richard (ed.). *Food and Language. Proceedings of the Oxford Symposium on Food and Cookery 2009*. Totnes: Prospect Books. pp. 258-269.
- (2008) (with Koen Bostoen) Resolving phonological variability in Bantu lexical reconstructions: the case of 'to bake in ashes'. *Africana Linguistica XIV*: 109-149.

## Dissertations

- (2013) Porridge Deconstructed: A Comparative Linguistic Approach to the History of Staple Starch Food Preparations in Bantuphone Africa. PhD dissertation: Université Libre de Bruxelles.
- (2007) Het probleem van 'osculante' reconstructies bij historisch-vergelijkend onderzoek naar culinaire woordenschat in de Bantutalen. Master dissertation: Ghent University.
- (2005) De taalsituatie in Equatoriaal-Guinea. Master dissertation: Ghent University. <http://www.scriptieprij.be/uploads/documentenbank/5a2f579230ee11ea5974f6c011e3d2ab.pdf>

## Presentations at international conferences

- (2019) At a Crossroads of Bantu Expansions: The Language and Settlement History of the Eastern Congo Basin Revisited. *International Conference on Historical Linguistics 24*, Australian National University, Canberra.
- (2018) Words as silent witnesses of Kasongo's trade history. 48<sup>th</sup> Colloquium on African Languages and Linguistics (CALL), Leiden University.
- (2016) (with Sebastian Dom) What's in a Name? A Comparative Study of Kikongo Dialects Also Known as "Sundi". *6<sup>th</sup> International Bantu Conference (Bantu 6)*. University of Helsinki.
- (2015) (with Maud Devos) Linguists to the Rescue of Endangered Culinary Knowledge. *Food in Society and Culture - Research across the Social Sciences and Humanities*. University of Helsinki.

- (2014) Proto-Bantu \*-dong-, A Web of Power and Faith. 44<sup>th</sup> Colloquium on African Languages and Linguistics (CALL), Leiden University.
- (2014) Kongo in African American cuisine, a linguist's perspective. *Gwendolen M. Carter Conference, Kongo Atlantic Dialogues: Kongo culture in Central Africa and in the Americas*, Harn Museum of Art - University of Florida, Gainesville.
- (2013) (with Gilles-Maurice de Schryver, Jasper De Kind & Koen Bostoen) A Diachronic Corpus for African Languages: The Exceptional Case of Kikongo. *International Conference on Historical Linguistics*, Oslo University.
- (2013) Kongo Cuisine and the Columbian Exchange: Lexical Evidence for Culinary Transformations at the West-Central African Coast, and Beyond. *82nd Anglo-American Conference of Historians: Food in History*, University of London.
- (2013) (with Koen Bostoen & Gilles-Maurice de Schryver) Power Talk: From Royal Kongo Words to Royal Kongo Origins. *5th International Conference on Bantu Languages (Bantu 5)*, Paris.
- (2013) (with Odette Ambouroue) Congo River Crossroads Cuisine: A Blend of Western and Eastern Words. *5th International Conference on Bantu Languages (Bantu 5)*, Paris.
- (2012) La linguistique comparative et l'histoire culinaire africaine: méthodes, résultats, limites. *Le manger et le dire, colloque international sur la gastronomie et ses discours*. Université Libre de Bruxelles.
- (2012) Cassava Wrapped Up Kongo Style: The History of Chikwangue. *Oxford Symposium on Food & Cookery 2012: Wrapped and Stuffed Foods*. St Catherine's College, Oxford.
- (2011) On *Mfuumbu*, *Nkasa* and *Whisky*. A Wedding Celebration in Kimbonga-Louamba (Congo-Brazzaville). *Oxford Symposium on Food & Cookery 2011: Celebrations*. St Catherine's College, Oxford.
- (2011) One Action, Many Words: The Lexical Field of 'Pounding' in Bantu Languages. *Berlin Bantu Conference (B4ntu)*. Humboldt Universität zu Berlin.
- (2011) (with Anneleen Van der Veken, Koen Bostoen & Joseph Koni Muluwa) Classified East, behaving West: the intricate history of the Luba languages. *Berlin Bantu Conference (B4ntu)*. Humboldt Universität zu Berlin.
- (2009) (with Koen Bostoen) A Historical-Linguistic Approach to the Introduction of Cereals in the Culinary Traditions of Early Bantu Speech Communities. *NVAS studiedag 'Afrikastudies in Nederland en België'*, The Hague, The Netherlands.
- (2009) (with Koen Bostoen) Reconstructing Food History through Linguistics: Culinary Traditions in Early Bantu Speech Communities. *Oxford Symposium on Food & Cookery 2009: Food and Language*. St Catherine's College, Oxford.
- (2009) (with Koen Bostoen) A Historical Linguistic Approach to the Processing of Food Plants in Early Bantu Speech Communities. *6<sup>th</sup> International Workshop for African Archaeobotany*. Helwan University, Cairo.
- (2009) How Cassava Became Integrated in the Culinary Traditions of the Region Loango – Benguela: The Analysis of Words for Cassava Products. *3<sup>rd</sup> International Conference on Bantu Languages*. Royal Museum for Central Africa – University of Antwerp, Belgium.

- (2008) Historical (vs.) Linguistics: A Comparison of Historical and Linguistic Research According to the Words-and-Things Method. *51<sup>st</sup> Annual Meeting of the African Studies Association*. Chicago, USA.
- (2008) A Comparative Linguistic Approach to the Integration of Cassava in the Culinary Practice of Bantu-speaking Africa. *Special 6<sup>th</sup> World Congress of African Linguistics*. University of São Paulo.
- (2008) Some Culinary Reconstructions Reconsidered: The Osculant Cluster °-tédk-/°-téek-. *39<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference on African Linguistics*. University of Georgia, Athens, USA.
- (2007) (with Koen Bostoen) Synonymy in Bantu Lexical Reconstructions: The Case of ‘To Bake in Ashes’. *International Conference: Bantu Languages: Analysis, Description and Theory*. Göteborgs Universitet.

## Education

- 2013: PhD in Linguistics, Université Libre de Bruxelles  
project in collaboration with the Royal Museum for Central Africa  
PhD supervisors: Pierre de Maret (ULB) & Koen Bostoen (RMCA)
- 2007: Master of Advanced Studies in Linguistics: Linguistics in a Comparative Perspective (ManaMa: ‘Master after Master’), Ghent University
- 2005: Master in African Languages and Cultures, Ghent University

## Positions

- 2019 – 2023: postdoctoral researcher, Université libre de Bruxelles
- 2019 – 2023: principal investigator of the ERC project BANTURIVERS
- 2014 – 2018: research assistant, Heritage Studies, Royal Museum for Central Africa
- 2012 – 2013: research assistant, Service of Linguistics, Royal Museum for Central Africa
- 2007 – 2011: graduate student (aspirante du Fonds de la Recherche Scientifique – FNRS), Université Libre de Bruxelles – Royal Museum for Central Africa
- 2006 – 2007: research assistant, Service of Linguistics, Royal Museum for Central Africa

## Fellowships

- 2019 – 2023: ERC Starting Grant
- 2008: Honorary Fellow of the Belgian American Educational Foundation (BAEF), Northwestern University, Evanston
- 2007 – 2011 aspirante du Fonds de la Recherche Scientifique – FNRS, Université Libre de Bruxelles – Royal Museum for Central Africa

## Organisation of scientific meetings

- 2011: co-organizer of the Junior Researchers Days, Belgian Association for Africanists
- 2009 – 2011: initiator and organizer of the “Séminaires des Africanistes de l’Université Libre de Bruxelles”, seminars intended for graduate students

## Institutional responsibilities

2012 – 2018: co-editor of the A1 journal *Africana Linguistica*, Royal Museum for Central Africa

2012 – 2018: collaborator of the new permanent exhibition of the Royal Museum for Central Africa, notably for the rooms *Language, Music and Performance* and *Long History*

2010 – 2011 (with Julien Volper): “Central Africa”, a contribution to the exhibit *Breakfast Time*, Brussels Museum of the Mill and Food, Evere

## Stays abroad

June – August 2010: Republic of Congo, fieldwork for PhD dissertation

May – June 2010: Bumba – Kisangani, Democratic Republic of the Congo: participation in the “Boyekoli Ebale Congo 2010 Expedition”

January – December 2008: Northwestern University, Evanston, USA: visiting scholar (B.A.E.F. Honorary Fellowship)

September 2007: Lubumbashi, Democratic Republic of the Congo: fieldwork for the Royal Museum for Central Africa

## Languages

*fluent* <—————> *notions*

Dutch, English, French, German, Spanish, Latin, Lingala, Ciluba, Kiswahili