

HA.01.0331

Inventaire des archives de
Jan Vansina
1929 - 2017



Koninklijk Museum voor Midden-Afrika
Tervuren, 2018

Description des archives

Nom :

Archives Jan Vansina

Référence :

HA.01.0331

Dates extrêmes :

1953-2009

Importance matérielle :

4 m.l.

Langues des pièces :

Les documents sont rédigés en Français pour la majeure partie.

Lieu de conservation :

Musée royal de l'Afrique Centrale

Historique de la conservation :

Don au MRAC effectué par Jan Vansina en 2010 (2010.21).

Context

Le Producteur d'archives :

Jan Vansina est né à Anvers en 1929. Il obtient son licence d'histoire à l'Université Catholique de Louvain en 1951. Ensuite, il est engagé comme anthropologue par l'Institut pour la Recherche Scientifique en Afrique Centrale (IRSAC). Après une année de formation en anthropologie à la School of Oriental and African Studies à Londres (1952), Vansina arrive à la station de l'IRSAC à Lwiro (territoire de Mweka, Kivu) en janvier 1953. Installé à Tung aKosh lez Nsheng, Il s'immerge chez les Bushóong et pays kuba. En envoyant ses assistants aux villages, il y récolte des données historiques, linguistiques et sociales pour obtenir un aperçu général de la société et de la culture kuba. De Nsheng, Il voyage plusieurs fois vers le centre d'IRSAC à Astrida (Butare, Ruanda) où il rencontre sa future femme, Claudine Herman (marié sept. 1954). Ses recherches sont interrompus par son service militaire à Kamina (oct. 1954-mars 1956). En avril 1956, il reprend son travail chez les Kuba jusqu'à juillet 1956. En 1957, il obtient un doctorat en histoire à l'Université de Louvain et il est aussi nommé directeur de l'IRSAC. Dans cette fonction, il dirige à Butare une équipe rwandaise pour la récolte et l'étude des récits historiques ruandaises appelés ibitéekerezo (nov. 1957- fin 1961). En outre, Vansina lui-même, assisté de plusieurs commis, mène la recherche au Burundi sur la récolte des récits historiques (déc. 1957- ca. juin 1960). Sauf directeur, Vansina enseigne à l'université de Lovanium comme professeur en visite depuis 1958. En 1960, Vansina aborde à la demande de devenir profeseur à l'Université de Winsconsin à Madison et quite alors le Ruanda. Il reste presque toute sa carrière académique à Madison (1960-1994), sauf une période où il était professeur à l'Université de Louvain (1973-1975). Il est aussi invité par plusieurs universités renommées comme professeur en visite (Sorbonne, Leiden, Pennsylvania, Northwestern University). Il part encore une fois au Congo-Brazzaville pour un projet sur le Tio (oct. 1963 – avr. 1964). Vansina est mondialement reconnu comme grand spécialiste de l'histoire ancienne de l'Afrique et de la méthodologie des traditions orales. Il est l'auteur de vingt ouvrages et de plus de deux cents articles. Depuis 1994, Il est professeur émérite de l'université du Wisconsin-Madison. Il meurt à cause d'une maladie en 2017.

Sources :

COQUERY-VIDROVITCH C., « Le témoin et l'acteur », in : *Cahiers d'Études africaines*, 143, XXXVI- 3, 1996, p. 477-488 ; ARNAUT K. et VANHEE H., « History Facing the Present: An Interview with Jan Vansina », in : *Bulletin des Africanistes*, 2001. ; VANSINA J, *Vansina, Jan*. In : Northwestern University Archival and Manuscript Collections. Record Last modified date : 11 avril 2018. Available from World Wide Web : <https://findingaids.library.northwestern.edu/agents/people/1713> ; SCHOENBRUN D, « Jan Vansina (1929–2017) : a founder figure in the study of Africa's past, early and recent

», In : *Azania : Archaeological Research in Africa*, 52 (2017), p. 267-270. ; VANSINA J, *Living with Africa*, Madison, 1994.

Sources complémentaires

Archives :

Au MRAC :

* MRAC, Archives départementales, Section d'Ethnographie, DA.3.131 et DA.3.859.

* MRAC, Archives Départementales, Section d'Histoire coloniale, Dossier 2010.21

Aux autres institutions :

* Melville J. Herskovits Library of African Studies (Northwestern University), Evanston (Illinois), Jan Vansina Papers, Identifieur 030. Available from World Wide Web : https://findingaids.library.northwestern.edu/repositories/4/archival_objects/39520

* University of Wisconsin, Madison, African Focus Digital Collection. Available from World Wide Web : <http://digicoll.library.wisc.edu/WebZ/SearchOrBrowse?sessionid=01-33957-843762537>

* University of Wisconsin, Madison, Memorial library, Room 443, Microfilm 5506 et 11770. Available from World Wide Web : <https://search.library.wisc.edu/catalog/999731634802121> and <https://search.library.wisc.edu/catalog/9910031384002121>

Photos :

Au MRAC :

* Collection Jan Vansina (sans code référence)

Objets :

Au MRAC :

* EO.1954.40 : 78 objets enregistrées

* Collection Archéologie : 81 objets (nrs. 82391 – 82424, 82436 – 82437, 82439 – 82448, 82459 – 82487, 82494 – 82500)

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Référence complète :

Musée royal de l'Afrique centrale, Tervuren, Archives Jan Vansina, HA.01.0331, **numéro dans l'inventaire**.

Référence abrégée :

MRAC, Jan Vansina, HA.01.0331, **numéro dans l'inventaire**.

Inventaire :

Cette liste est basé sur le travail préparatif de Hein Vanhee, Stéphanie Hocq, Nancy Vanderlinden et Eline Van Heymbeeck. La rédaction finale est réalisée par Tom Morren, assistant scientifique au MRAC, sous la supervision de Dieter Van Hassel, archiviste au MRAC. La version actuelle date d'août 2018.

Annexe 1 : Interview avec Jan Vansina, par Karel Arnaut et Hein Vanhee en 2001.

'History Facing the Present: An Interview with Jan Vansina'

Karel ARNAUT and Hein VANHEE
Ghent University

INTRODUCTION

On the occasion of the publication of *Le Rwanda ancien: le royaume nyiginya*,^[1] Professor Emeritus Jan Vansina paid a visit to his native country of Belgium in April 2001. After a lengthy absence he was warmly welcomed by the Belgian Africanists at the Royal Academy of Overseas Sciences in Brussels and at the Universities of Ghent, of Antwerp and of Louvain-la-Neuve, at each of which he gave a lecture.^[2]

A few days after his lecture for the Interdisciplinary Research Group Africa (IDOGA) in Ghent, we met with Jan Vansina in Antwerp for an interview that was to last more than two hours.^[3] In order to arrange the replies to our numerous and often open questions into an orderly and readable text, we have somewhat restructured the original interview. In the first part, we deal with the subject that Jan Vansina discussed in his lectures at the Universities of Ghent and Louvain-la-Neuve: the precolonial history of the Nyiginya Kingdom. In the second part we focus on the early career of Vansina. A significant portion thereof is discussed in his *Living with Africa* (1994), but we try to find out why this so remarkably took place without Belgium. In the third part we review the development of African Studies in Belgium, with generalizations for Europe, and the significant differences with the United States. In the fourth and final part, we discuss the themes that interconnect the four Belgian lectures, namely the ideological/political use of history and of 'historiography' in Rwanda (lectures in Ghent and in Louvain-la-Neuve) and of linguistics in Congo (Antwerp) and in Angola (Brussels).

That Vansina is asking for the special attention of his Belgian audience to the relationship between knowledge and power is remarkable insofar as this problem has marked the development of (post)colonial African Studies in Belgium - possibly more so than in any other European country. In this respect, Vansina narrates the great confusion among Belgian scholars after 1960, and the clumsiness with which the institutes where they worked were decolonised. In the four Belgian lectures and in this interview, Vansina ultimately points to a series of flaws, which are in part institutional and otherwise concern research agendas, and together continue to encumber African Studies in Belgium. The ongoing controversies about the functioning of the Africa Institute and of the Royal Museum for Central Africa (RMCA) in Tervuren, and also the marginal status and insecure position of African Studies in Belgian universities illustrate the institutional aspects of the Africanist crisis. With respect to research content, Vansina draws attention to the continuities and discontinuities that interconnect the precolonial, colonial and postcolonial periods. His book and lectures point to a lack of critical studies concerning the processes of ethnogenesis in precolonial Africa, the scholarly and political appropriations of these processes in colonial times, and the re-appropriations by scientists, politicians and wider strata of the population in the postcolonial context. 'History facing the present' is not only the title of the last chapter of *Le Rwanda ancien* but also stands for the confrontation between postcolonial Belgium and the *longue durée* of Jan Vansina.

HIDDEN TRANSCRIPTS OF EMERGING IDENTITIES

KA&HV: Conventional views on precolonial Rwanda are frequently based on a 'coming together' where the three groups, Twa, Hutu and Tutsi, have populated ancient Rwanda in that order. Your book is apparently defending an alternative stand.

JV: Indeed, in my opinion, the Twa, Hutu and Tutsi did not arrive in different waves to populate Rwanda and the differences between them developed essentially on site. In addition, until some time after 1900, there was no general concept of 'Rwanda'. Rwanda as a word refers to 'a central place with a surrounding area'. Thus, we may refer to the rwanza of Nyiginya, to the rwanza of Burundi, to the rwanza of other places. Rwanda is therefore not an ethnonym; you have to add another word in order to transform it into an ethnonym. The self-awareness of all the inhabitants that they were Rwandan came only with the colonial period and was related to their shared experiences during that time. That is something that is never discussed in the light of the current problems of Rwanda: since when do all these people believe that they are Rwandans? Formerly, such group awareness was connected with the various kingdoms or, in some cases, with the family communities to which they belonged.

KA&HV: So it is in this context of state formation that you situate the origin of the concepts of Hutu and Tutsi?

JV: That is partly a separate process. The terms 'Hutu' and 'Tutsi' date back much earlier than Rwanda. In fact, Burundi, Buha and other small areas in Northern Congo also have Hutu and Tutsi, but the origin of the concept of 'Hutu' there differs from that in Rwanda. Hutu and Tutsi are ancient words with changing meanings. First in Rwanda and subsequently in Burundi, 'Hutu' was opposed to 'Tutsi'; both terms began to exclude each other: if you were a Hutu you could not possibly be a Tutsi. But be careful: these developments occurred only after 1800. We have found traces of that. We know about people who did not refer to themselves as Hutu and who used a place name to indicate their ethnic identity. Then gradually the term 'Hutu' developed among the large peasant population to denote their common social position.

KA&HV: That is historiographic dynamite ! In historical literature about Rwanda the suspicion is still smouldering that indeed some ethnic 'essence' is being hidden behind the concepts of Hutu and Tutsi.

JV: Well, if we look back far enough we find that the word 'hutu' originally meant 'servant'. Actually, this word is still used with that meaning in Rwanda. For instance, the person carrying the suitcase of a minister is called a 'hutu'. He may actually be a high-ranking Tutsi but in this situation he is a hutu, namely the case-carrier of a dignitary. In the course of the 19th century, the meaning of this word has changed, which is shown, for instance, in a story of around 1850 about a certain Mrs. Shongoka [cf. *Le Rwanda ancien*, p. 174-5], mother of a Tutsi (i.e. noble) cattle-breeding family. The household, however, went all astray because Shongoka did not have a servant and she refused to use her Tutsi relatives as servants (i.e. as 'Hutu'). And that is the difference: half a century earlier, this gap was by far not as deep.

KA&HV: Hence, in your account, there is no reference to any primordial (ethnic) content of the Hutu concept, but you are less radical where the ethnic term Tutsi is concerned.

JV: The content of the Tutsi concept has also changed thoroughly in this process. At the beginning of the kingdom, most of the cattle-breeders considered themselves to be Hima. Furthermore, there was a small group of people who called themselves Tutsi, and that was a genuine ethnic term. The first king, Ndori, originated from the North and was a Hima, not a Tutsi. But one generation or more later, the members of the royal lineages also referred to themselves as Tutsi. This proves that at that time, the term Tutsi had more prestige than Hima. Besides, the etymology of the word Tutsi cannot be traced either in Kinyarwanda or in Kirundi or Kiga. This is entirely different where Hutu is concerned; the term can be found in Angola and in Lower Congo for someone who is either poor or a servant.

KA&HV: This series of alternative views regarding the precolonial history of Rwanda is being formulated by you on the basis of new or rather previously unused source material.

JV: Yes, I draw on two sources that have remained mostly unused until now. First there are the records of Father Schumacher who worked as a full-time researcher during the period from 1928 to 1936. Schumacher cooperated with 4 major informants who were all attached to the royal court and he always accurately noted who had given him what piece of information. This early research was done just prior to the beginning of Abbé

Kagame's investigations. There is, in fact, a perfect continuity: when Schumacher left, his most important informant (Sekarama) began to co-operate with Kagame and became Kagame's tutor.

KA&HV: Where are the records of Schumacher now?

JV: Schumacher assembled the material from his sources in a manuscript that was, in fact, meant to be published. This would certainly have been quite a chaotic book, basically a collection of countless notes. Schumacher worked with a small group of people whom he referred to not as 'informants' but as 'co-workers' and he called his group 'the cenacle'. He spoke Kinyarwanda perfectly and he organized sessions in which specific subjects were being discussed. You can find reports on these successive sessions – everything in shorthand - in his manuscript of about 1400 pages, including repetitions on the same subjects, etc. The publisher Anthropos who had first been offered the manuscript, eventually opted in favour of publishing it not in the form of a book but in microfilm. The reason why this source has mostly remained unused is that few Rwanda researchers knew enough German – and even fewer were prepared to read the endless microfilms.

The second group of sources is the product of a research project of the former IRSAC (Institut de Recherche Scientifique en Afrique Centrale) in Astrida, now Butare (Rwanda). Over a period of 4 years (1958-1962) the Rwanda Department of the IRSAC collected historical narratives and testimonies about precolonial Rwanda. Altogether, more than 1,000 people were interviewed and with some of them up to 80 hours of conversation have been recorded (for most of them we have 2 to 3 hours). These 1,000 people were not simply chosen at random but following a very complicated sampling method.

All of these records were subsequently transcribed and translated from Kinyarwanda into French. This resulted in approximately 7,000 pages of text, of which three full (hand-written) copies were made: one copy remained at the IRSAC, a second copy and the original tapes went to the Royal Museum for Central Africa (RMCA) in Tervuren, where it still is today, and a third copy was forwarded to me in Madison. Of this last copy, microfilms have been made for The Center for Research Libraries [<http://www.crl.uchicago.edu>], making them accessible for everybody. At the time I thought: Rwandan historians will soon engage in this matter and make use of these sources. At the beginning of the 60s - the early days of Rwanda's independence - it was no priority for me to work with this material. I certainly did not want to write a book that would fix the thoughts and views of the Rwandans. That has been a mistake made by many foreign historians: they tried to forestall the African historians and impose on them the agenda of research into their past.

However, more than 20 years later almost no one had looked at these sources. And after the 1994 genocide, when I heard all that was said about the causes of the genocide and the little historical depth of most of the analyses... It is as if you would now write about the Holocaust and say that the cause is to be found in 1934, without looking a few centuries back... -- this simply cannot be done. Since nobody had undertaken anything in this respect, I considered that I should do it. One final aspect of these sources is that everyone in Rwanda was using the two works of Kagame (either in Kinyarwanda or in French). Now then, Kagame used his sources quite carelessly. Most often, he arranged them according to his liking and nowhere he really indicated who said what. It is very difficult, therefore, to determine on the basis of his text alone the sources he is relying on. Therefore, comparing Kagame with the two 'new' sources is very instructive. On the one hand, one can weigh Kagame's texts against those of Schumacher: both are using closely related sources from the Rwandan court. On the other hand, we are able to confront Kagame's texts with the source material collected in 1958-1962. The significant and interesting difference is that this latter information originated from popular environments. Of course, ordinary people knew about court traditions but, importantly, in the way that they themselves understood them. This dual confrontation enabled me to deconstruct the entire work of Kagame: to examine where he had found what, and how he had interpreted it. I have elaborated this deconstruction exercise for the greater part in the footnotes so as not to bother the reader with too many historiographic subtleties, but it is all in there!

*KA&HV: In this sense, your book *L'évolution du royaume rwanda des origines à 1900* of 1962 is actually a precursor of this new book. There, too, you presented a critical reading of the work of Kagame by confronting it with another contradictory source, namely *Historique et chronologie du Ruanda* of 1956. This book also included the voice of the periphery, which was ignored in the 'official' historiography.*

JV: Yes, this booklet [of 1956] was in itself quite complicated. It was a collection of documents from the various regional administrations in Rwanda. And they had all summarized what was told in their region about the history of Rwanda. This information, off course, cannot simply be taken for granted, since local political interests often were involved. Nevertheless, the small book existed and provided a historical picture that differed so significantly from what Kagame was saying, that questions simply had to be asked.

When I wrote "L'evolution" of 1962 I already had access to the material provided by the vast IRSAC survey, but at that time I focused essentially on a critical review of the sources. It was essential, indeed, to free the people from certain stereotypes regarding the history of Rwanda. This was certainly not the history of a smart ruling elite who held the natural right to control everything and who had built a country that was ready and fully completed by the time the first colonials entered the scene. The 1962 book was indeed meant to be a first step, a sort of prolegomenon of the later and more serious work ... that finally, now 40 years later, has been accomplished.

LIVING WITHOUT BELGIUM

KA&HV: Still before the independence of Congo, you played a significant role in the scientific research and teaching about Africa. After 1960 then, you went to the United States. Was there no place for you in Belgium?

JV: After 1960, people in Belgium didn't want to hear anymore about the colony and the colonials. Those who worked at the Royal Academy for Colonial Sciences or other institutes, had no idea as to what was going to happen to them. Up to then, their activities had been financed by the colonial Congolese treasury and they were wondering who was going to finance their activities now and if at all there was still going to be money available. Personally, I wanted to continue my research in Rwanda but that appeared to be far from simple at the time. Then I received this telephone call from Philip Curtin from Madison and my wife and I thought that it would perhaps be nice to work for a year or so in the United States. In the meantime we would see how the situation developed in Congo and Rwanda. This one year soon became three.

KA&HV: But it was your intention to come back to Belgium thereafter?

JV: Absolutely, but above all I wanted to pursue my research. When I returned to Belgium in 1963, I hoped to find a job at the RMCA in Tervuren and to move on from there. This interested me more than an appointment at any university. You must realize that at that time, I was quite disgusted with university professors in Belgium. At that time they were 'instructors', they were magister, they taught their courses which the students then had to memorize and later replicate during examinations, and that was it! I found, at that time, that very little innovative research originated from our university circles, not much serious attention was given to the students and there was no enthusiasm for the progress of research. By that time, I had also received two other offers. The first consisted of a sum of money from the American Social Science Research Council. That was something quite incredible: they simply had too much money! They were still left with some research money, and asked me whether I could use some of that for fieldwork. Of course, I immediately accepted. In addition, I received an offer from Roland Oliver of the School of Oriental and African Studies in London to go and work with him. I declined this offer, however, because the Director of the RMCA of Tervuren had told me that I would get a job there. So, we came back to live in Belgium and I went to Tervuren to see what they had to offer me. The director started by explaining how the appointments worked: not only a balance had to be observed between Flemish, Walloon and people from Brussels, but also the various political parties and districts all held certain rights! Nevertheless he had found something for me: I could do bibliographic work, assist in keeping the library updated, albeit on a temporary appointment to start, "but that would turn out all right". The salary for this job was by one third lower than that for a regular secondary school teacher and finally I learned that I would have to surrender the American research money to the Museum! You can imagine that this did not come off ... So I moved to Congo-Brazzaville for the fieldwork among the Tio and after that I returned to Madison.

KA&HV: Still with the idea of coming back?

JV: Yes, I still wanted to come back. Around 1968, there were rumours from Leuven that I could perhaps be appointed there, but it was unclear at which department. During this period, there was the idea of starting a Department of Ethnology at the Faculty of Arts and Philosophy, together with Daniel Biebuyck. As a result of

the chaos after the split-up of the University [into a Flemish-speaking and a French-speaking University, in 1968], it took a very long time before things moved on in this matter. Finally, the Faculty of Psychology, together with the Faculty of Medicine, recruited Eugeen Roosens. He could teach something like 'comparative psychology and pathology'. Biebuyck and I were asked to co-operate in this project.

It was 1973, and I was back in Leuven with an assignment to work on the history of Africa. However, I was not allowed into the Department of History because numerous disputes were raging between the contemporary historians and the medieval historians. At that time, a former class-mate of mine was a high-ranking professor of history, but nothing could be done: I was only entitled to teach history within the framework of anthropology. I never discovered how this was justified, but it appeared that history - even in 1973 - was a discipline that ought to deal with Western Europe and the recent history of the United States. Possibly also 20th century China and Japan fell within its scope, but not the 19th century, that was assigned to the Department of Oriental Studies! So, Roosens and I found ourselves involved in creating a Department of Anthropology, but we had entirely different perspectives on the matter, as was soon to become clear. Roosens wanted a sort of rural sociology, an applied anthropology, with a focus on migrants and such. My idea was to combine social anthropology as it was taught in the UK with some structuralism and also with a good deal of American cultural anthropology that was actually non-existent here. For the first year we agreed on the programme but for our second year students, Roosens subsequently wanted to repeat the courses given during the first year. I did not agree at all with this plan. I was convinced that the university had a number of obligations towards its students and their parents. If they were to follow a programme of three years, you could not possibly teach the same subjects three times! We disagreed entirely; Roosens obtained the support of the other professors and in 1975 I returned to Madison.

KA&HV: This third time, you appear to have taken a final decision. Since then you have been a visiting professor in Frankfurt, in Paris and in Leiden, but Belgium was no longer included.

JV: Returning to Belgium was out of the question because my departure in 1975 had shocked quite a number of people. Those of the Academy, for instance, did not know which way to turn. They even suggested to me that I take early retirement but I was only 46 years of age! After I left, I was even told that my departure was considered as a betrayal of my country; and such comments came both from French-speaking people of Brussels and from people with Flemish nationalist sympathies from Leuven. I could hardly believe my ears. All this ensured that in subsequent years I did not travel frequently to Belgium. It took about ten years before things got more or less back to normal.

POSTCOLONIAL AFRICAN STUDIES

KA&HV: Looking back to the years immediately after independence, one observes not only insecurity in Congo and bureaucracy in Tervuren, but also a general feeling of confusion and perplexity among the people involved in ethnology and other 'colonial sciences'. How do you look back on this period?

JV: In Belgium particularly but also elsewhere in Europe, defeatism was rampant. Consider, for instance, the Colonial School ["Koloniale Hogeschool"] in Antwerp; there they were in such a panic that they simply sold off their entire library. A handful of second-hand book traders bought all of their collections. In 1963, I purchased about 200 books in Antwerp, at a price of 10 Belgian francs each. Feelings of panic ran high. The Africanist Institute in Leuven, which had been founded just four years earlier - and which until then had been bilingual, of course, - all of a sudden thought that Latin America could provide a solution. So in one of their rooms you could now look at one of those large maps of South America! Africanist sciences in Belgium mainly consisted of administrative sciences. 'Africanists' were totally unprepared for decolonisation. Imagine that even in 1961, more than one year after independence, the Academy published a book on the question of whether the Congolese could obtain a specific nationality or whether they were just subjects and not citizens. The anthropologists and historians among the Africanists were at that time all trained by the IRSAC. They were Luc De Heusch, Jean-Jacques Maquet, Daniel Biebuyck and myself. Luc De Heusch had been in Paris where he picked up structuralism or proto-structuralism. The other three had studied in London and had returned with some training in British social anthropology.

KA&HV: What did these people think at that time of the sudden independence of Congo, Rwanda and Burundi?

JV: In his younger years, De Heusch had been an anarchist, so to him it was only reasonable that independence came, that the entire colonial business just collapsed. Biebuyck was somewhat disheartened and did not know what to think of it. He was interested in African art and also in social anthropology, but his approach was then still that of 'one tribe, one art, one society'. In that sort of anthropology, however, you cannot explain from where the independence movement originated. For Biebuyck as well as for the colonial administration, the uprisings and the independence were a problem of the derailment of the 'évolué' problem. As far as I know, Biebuyck never wrote anything on this subject, but it is my impression that he tried to understand what happened in terms referring to this 'traditional society'. To me, this was only half the truth, possibly because Rwanda and Burundi were very different. Also when you worked in the Kuba area, you saw a lot of Baluba walking about and you could not ignore this. As a historian I struggled with the problem of how to provide, for instance, a valid description of the Kuba kingdom - in a structural/functionalist framework - without mentioning the Europeans. The kingdom existed in 1959, so I was wondering what this king was doing and what kind of decisions he made. On the one hand, I was busy with questions of this kind but on the other, I also began to recognize that it was impossible just to ignore colonial policies and the position of the king within the colonial administration. As a consequence, I was also lost to some extent. From a practical point of view, we had to consider, of course, which way to go with our careers. Three years earlier, De Heusch had already left the IRSAC and he was later given a position at the ULB [Université Libre de Bruxelles]. Maquet went to France and for Biebuyck and myself, the destination was the United States.

KA&HV: The postcolonial hangover also discouraged those historians who focused on the development of the colonial state, as described later by Jean Stengers.

JV: Indeed, but you should consider that Stengers is not just a historian of Central Africa but also and above all of the 19th century Belgian Chamber and Senate. Prior to independence, he studied the colony mainly from this angle. After 1960 he wanted to investigate how Congo had become independent, again from the perspective of Belgian politics and by considering the role played by the Chamber, by the Senate, etc. In Belgium it was only Benoit Verhaegen who dealt with Congolese history, mainly with the immediate history ("l'histoire immédiate"), an approach that he was the first to use.

While it was difficult to find jobs for these people in Belgium, the situation was totally different in Lovanium where people were needed. However, one had to promise these lecturers that at the end of their career in Congo they would get a position in Belgium. In this way, African studies started up again at the Catholic University of Louvain-la-Neuve as well as at the Africa Institute in Leuven. As already stated, the latter had become an Institute for Latin America for a period of time, but a bit later it started to attract Africanists again. At the Free University of Brussels, Stengers succeeded in obtaining a position for Pierre Salmon, who had been involved in research into the social conditions in Uele during the 1957-58 period. Independence did not cause much of a stir at Ghent University. There were some problems with the number of students that had to be enrolled because otherwise, some lecturer positions would have had to be scrapped, but Amaat Burssens succeeded, nevertheless, in keeping everything going.

KA&HV: In Belgium, it took until the 80s before a new generation of anthropologists and historians were able to focus on Africa. What happened meanwhile in the US?

JV: The difference with the US was enormous. Towards the end of the 50s, the United States had adopted a very anticolonialist attitude and public opinion was glad about this independence. African states would be able to manage on their own from now on. At the same time, some political circles at the State Department in Washington became convinced that once the colonial powers had left Africa, a vacuum would develop that could be filled easily by the US. American politicians expected the US to play a leading role in various African countries. As from 1957, with the independence of Ghana, one could notice how various universities were beginning to become interested in Africa. This interest was displayed essentially by political scientists and economists who thought in terms of tabula rasa, as for them everything commenced with the struggle for independence. Some people such as Jim Coleman in California succeeded in convincing their universities, even prior to 1960, of the idea that specialists in Africanist sciences had to be recruited, since Africa would become a very important factor in the future. At the University of Wisconsin, the President was a historian, specialised in American history of diplomacy. In 1961 he already declared that the coming century would be characterized by "multilateralism". On the basis of this conviction he considered that the history, the economy, and the political

culture of all major regions of the world needed to be studied. The universities that would set up regional programmes would undoubtedly grow and become among the most important. As it happened, we at Wisconsin received major impulses and considerable financial resources from the university and were able to bring together a considerable number of people, in the years to come. In 1960 I was there alone with my colleague Philip Curtin, but in 1965, we were twelve already! Appointments were no problem at all and finding the money was not difficult; the only problem was to find qualified people. While Europe was in a despondent state of mind, Africanist sciences experienced a sort of triumph in the US.

KA&HV: This did not bring about an immediate reaction in Europe?

JV: That reaction came only later. Around 1970, more than half of all those holding a doctoral degree in African studies came from the United States. This was an enormous reversal that was being felt above all in the United Kingdom. The idea in Great Britain, France, Belgium, and even in The Netherlands was that Africa was the backyard of Europe and not that of the United States. During the 1970s, people in Europe began to complain about the brain-drain towards the United States. When African studies were gradually being re-established during the 70s in Europe, this was one of the reasons presented to the decision-makers, namely that we had to defend ourselves against the US that had extended their influence all over the world.

KA&HV: How long did this enthusiasm in the United States last?

JV: Partly for economic reasons, we experienced a certain slowdown in the US after 1973. The enthusiasm had died down to some extent. By that time, however, African studies were already strongly established at various US universities. There were actually two options in the United States. You could either try and set up an African Studies department or try and include as many Africanists as possible in various existing departments such as anthropology, history, literature, geography, etc. The risk inherent to the first option was that a sort of academic ghetto could be created. A major argument in favour of the second option was that in a decentralised structure, Africanists would better learn the critique and the spirit of each separate discipline. We were able to apply this second model in Wisconsin and elsewhere, too. When business slowed down in the 70s, all of these people were able to stay in their departments and they could defend themselves better. They could ensure that no positions were cancelled and that they got as many doctoral students as the other professors. Just as in France, also the influx of African students guaranteed a certain continuity of the various Africa-related programmes.

KA&HV: If we look back at the historiography of Congo in Belgium during the 70s and 80s, we see three well-marked currents. On the one hand, there is the 'positivist academism' of people such as Jean Stengers, who argue that historians should not become involved with the moral problems of colonial history. A second trend displays a certain continuity with the 'imperial historiography' of the colonial period and produces mainly works in the biographical genre without showing much interest in the emerging academic discussions about methodology and theory. This last characteristic also applies to a third group that writes from a deep-felt sense of indignation mainly about the abuses during the early colonial period. Would you agree with this analysis and is this situation somehow proper to postcolonial Belgium?

JV: I would like to start with this last group. I became acquainted with Daniel Vangroenweghe [author of *Du sang sur les lianes*, 1985] even before he began to write about the Congo Free State. Vangroenweghe first wanted to join the 'Scheutist' missionary order but he soon resigned. He gathered his first Congo experience in the Ekonda area. There, in the work of Edmond Boelaert and Gustaaf Hulstaert, existed already a certain tradition of denouncing the colonial abuses. This tradition was so important that from 1945 onwards, the school books in Mongo contained accusations against the colonials. One could read, for instance, that the Belgians had no legitimate claims on Congo, that the Mongo people had their own civilisation and that they should not allow themselves be led astray, etc. When Vangroenweghe began to write, he must have been influenced by this. Also, he was not a historian, and that is significant. He considered everything he found on paper as narrating the truth. He did not critically review all his source material. He did not ask questions such as why, for instance, a particular missionary was writing something at a particular moment, and not the year before. One does not find answers to these questions in his work. His main purpose lay in denouncing abuses. But he did that with such great success that at some stage some right-wingers among the former colonials became so furious that questions were asked even at ministerial level and in Parliament. There was also Jules

Marchal who was a historian and had obtained his doctoral degree with a thesis on the reactions of the newspapers to the colonial adventure of Leopold II. Marchal had been a District Commissioner in Congo and after independence he was given a job at the Belgian diplomatic service. When he continued his historic research, he had the advantage that at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs he was able to use record material that was not yet accessible to others. That is how he came across Leopold II as the person responsible for all abuses. The problem is, however, that when you have completed a research project such as this and the crusade is over, what happens then? You may wonder why Vangroenweghe and Marchal were so outraged. Was it because of the Congolese people or were there other motivations? I suspect that together with Leopold II also the French-speaking upper-middle classes of Brussels were being targeted. I think that the anti-nationalist inquisition of both authors was primarily aimed at these people. This could be compared to similar movements in other countries, but under different circumstances. In this respect, just consider the anti-colonial studies appearing in France as a reaction to the Algerian situation in 1968-69. In Great Britain, these conflicts were less notable. Oliver was rather conservative, and Fage, although he was not a Tory himself, had trained numerous public servants for colonial service. The young social scientists and above all the social anthropologists were almost all on the Labour side, but few were radical left-wingers and they had expressed their critical comments about the colonial conditions long before decolonisation.

KA&HV: In response to the 'moral crusaders' and the 'late colonial biographers' certain academics have indulged in a sort of sublime detachment of scientific research.

JV: You have to consider, above all, the reactions of Stengers. All the history departments at the Belgian universities had adopted an extremely positivist stand on methodology. Stengers shared these views and that explains his conviction that historians must not become involved with moral assessments. Historians cannot be judges. The reaction of Stengers with regard to Vangroenweghe was that it was of no use to judge something that occurred 70 years earlier, because one is not familiar with the moral standards of that period. Marchal, however, had an answer to this; the main difference with Vangroenweghe is that Marchal shows that the abuses in the Congo Free State could be said to be immoral according to the standards at that time. Furthermore, Leopold II was well aware of the abuses and of the moral outrage. Stengers continued to cling to the conviction that matters of this nature could no longer be established.

KA&HV: Part of the indignation of the postcolonial historians was directed also against the representations of Congolese history at the Africa Museum (RMCA) in Tervuren.

JV: Tervuren had Marcel Luwel as a historian and during his entire career, he wanted to obtain above all two things: the archives of Stanley and those of Wissmann. The problem is that his ideas did not reach much further than that; he thought as an archivist, in terms of keeping public records. His photograph department was very rich but he never saw that as a collection of important sources. He published some photographs as postcards but that was all. His successor, Philippe Marechal, may also have been recruited in part because he was interested in keeping archives. So, there is a history department at Tervuren, but the people who work there act as if they are archivists in one or another major archive. That is the misfortune of Tervuren, namely that they do not have a genuine historian who wants to interpret the material and elaborate a distinct point of view.

KA&HV: What may be needed in Tervuren is perhaps someone with a sort of meta-historical vision. Someone who is prepared to consider the various ways in which the Belgians deal with colonial historiography. Up to now, historians both of the 'iconoclast' and of the 'nostalgic' types continue to use Tervuren as a reference point: the former to show how Belgium covers up the abuses of its colonial history, the latter to prove that our colonial history is in safe, scientific hands. As an institution you may need to do something with that predicament.

JV: You need to adopt indeed a certain attitude. It can be defended, of course, from the point of view of an archivist, that you write a specialized monograph for 20 readers of this generation and for another 20 of the next, but that is hardly helpful for an institution such as Tervuren. If you are an employee in Tervuren, in whatever department, then you have, in my opinion, certain responsibilities towards the general public. Firstly, you must be able to live with a whole range of opinions and, secondly, you must be able to teach the public that the museum is not the truth, not the final word. In exhibitions, you must try to bring together various points of view, although this is not easy, of course. You may organize an exhibition that shocks part of the

public, but you cannot shock all the people, because then they will simply turn away. Museum visitors must retain and use their critical mind at all times and the museum must lead visitors to think.

HISTORICAL RESEARCH AND AFRICAN POLITICS

KA&HV: Now that we are on the subject of communication with the public, can you specify which of your books or articles have had, as far as you know, a significant impact on a wider range of readers.

JV: The most influential has been, undoubtedly, *Les anciens royaumes de la savane* [Kingdoms of the savanna] [4]. Almost immediately, a sort of illicit traffic developed, above all in the direction of Angola where you were looked upon as a freedom fighter when you were in possession of that book! Some time later, a new church was founded in Limete (Kinshasa), called 'L'église des royaumes de la savane' (Church of the kingdoms of the savannah) and about 20 years after that, a local initiative by one of the Protestant churches resulted in this book being translated into Kikongo, and later into Lingala, on the initiative of another church. The other book is *Introduction à l'ethnographie du Congo* [1965] which brought about effects with which I am not so happy. It was used, for example, by Mobutu in order to check the ethnic balances when he put together a new government, so that none of the ethnic groups would be over-represented. I would have preferred, of course, for this book not to be used as a basis for ethnicism, but once a book has been published, it begins to lead a life of its own.

KA&HV: Your lecture in Antwerp dealt with Bantu nationalism. Is there a similar link between Bantu research and recent political events?

JV: I started the study of Bantu in Tervuren, with Emiel Meeussen. If you are not a specialist in linguistics you may not be aware of the fact that Meeussen was a true genius, really someone like Chomsky, of the same kind, quite incredible. Meeussen had developed a method for syntactic structure recognition: first one transcribed a bit of recording of a totally unknown language after which one was asked to deduct the grammar from it. During the 80s I wrote a series of articles about the historical background of Bantu research and the lecture in Antwerp pursues this subject. I start from the fact that over a period of time speaking Bantu has been developed into a modern ideology that is racist. That was already so in 1980. When you hear Omar Bongo of Gabon say: 'We speak one language, namely Bantu, and we are of one race, we have one culture and we are one nation all over Central and Southern Africa', actually, that takes us back to 1933! It will be important in Antwerp to explain exactly what the term Bantu refers to, why language and culture are not the same and that neither of them have anything to do with race. This is all quite obvious but it needs to be said, since many people are being misled. We also get too close to the extremes of our own [Flemish] nationalism where language is still being considered not only as the soul of the child but as something that outweighs everything else. This is claimed while you can see for yourself that all nationalisms are not primordial but instrumental. That is just as true here as it was/is in Congo.

KA&HV: Do you find traces of this Bantu-ideology also in scientific circles?

JV: Yes, one does find them, but not as radical. For instance the Congolese scholar Isidore Ndaywel è Nziem [author of *Histoire générale du Congo*, 1998] writes as a nationalist historian and searches for that which underlies the unity of Congo. Is it a creation of Leopold II? Or was there something earlier that linked the people together so that one can speak of a natural unity? For him Bantu languages establish the unity of Congo - forgetting that in Northern Congo no Bantu languages are spoken. Fortunately, in his work there is no reference to the Bantu peoples as a race - but in the work of his followers, there is. They essentially refer to a psychological race: our forefathers were clever, they were well educated and the others are just savages.

KA&HV: Such a typology has a distinct colonial flavour to it.

JV: Well, there are two sides to this phenomenon. Firstly, the entire colonial division into Bantu and non-Bantu dates back to the first ethnography of Congo written by H. Johnston in 1908, after which it was being perpetuated in the publications of Laude and Van der Kerken etc. Later, Rwanda and Burundi were added and then came a small chapter about 'Caucasian cattle-breeders', etc. Thus, the Congolese learned this distinction between Bantu and non-Bantu also at school. Secondly, tribal politics and ethnic politics came into being at about 1960; politicians needed to find voters and so aimed at certain 'tribes'. Towards the end of the 20th

century a combination of these two elements results in the Bantu becoming a sort of super-tribe. That is 'tribe politics' but on a major scale. It reaches from Kenya to Cameroon and from there almost to South Africa - excluding South Africa itself, because the word Bantu has an entirely different meaning there.

KA&HV: Is a historian able to point out the mistakes made in the past?

JV: In my latest book about the Nyiginya kingdom I briefly discuss the question whether a historian can refer to the 'lessons' from history. I come to the conclusion that historians have no lessons to draw from history, considering that these lead only to instrumentalizing historical narratives. Historians can only incite their readers to think for themselves while explaining how certain problems have been solved in the past, thus asking indirect questions about how this could be done in the future.

KA&HV: Thank you very much for this conversation.

Notes

1. Jan Vansina, *Le Rwanda ancien. Le royaume nyiginya* (Paris: Karthala, May 2001).

2. The following are what is being referred to as the 'Belgian lectures':

"The Nyiginya Kingdom in Ancient Rwanda", April 20, 2001, Annual Distinguished Lecture on Africa 2001, Interdisciplinary Research Group on Africa, Ghent University.

"The Bantu myth and nationalism in contemporary Congo", April 24, 2001, Centre for the Study of the Great Lakes Region of Africa, University of Antwerp.

"Kimbundu en Portugees: 3 eeuwen taalgebruik in Angola, 1575-1880" [Kimbundu and Portuguese: three centuries of language in Angola, 1575-1880], April 17, 2001, The Royal Academy of Overseas Sciences, Brussels.

"Qui se cache derrière les historiens du Rwanda?" [Who is hiding behind the historians of Rwanda?], April 27, 2001, Department of History, UCL, Louvain-la-Neuve.

3. The interview took place on April 23, 2001 in Antwerp and was done in Dutch.

4. Jan Vansina, *Les anciens royaumes de la savane: les états des savanes méridionales de l'Afrique centrale des origines à l'occupation coloniale / traduit de l'anglais par J. Taminiaux*. Léopoldville: Institut de recherches économiques et sociales, 1965; 2ième éd. Kinshasa: Presses universitaires du Zaire, 1976 ; *Kingdoms of the savanna*. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1966.

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Fonds Jan Vansina

A. Recherche sur le terrain

I. Territoire de Mweka: Recherche sur le Kuba (1952-1956)

1. Carnets de recherche

1. « Villages du centre-est », Carnets de Sylvain Shamba, assistant de Jan Vansina.
1953 sept. 5 volumes
2. « Villages Kete sud », Carnet de Valentin Shaam aKwet, assistant de Jan Vansina.
1954 mai. 1 volume
3. « Villages Pyaang », Carnet de Valentin Shaam aKwet , assistant de Jan Vansina.
1954 mars - 1954 avr. 1 volume
4. « Villages Shobwa », Carnet de Paul Mikobi.
1955 mars. 1 volume
5. « Environs de Nsheng », Carnet de Mikwepy Anaclet, assistant de Jan Vansina.
1953 1 volume
6. « Villages Mweka-Bakwa Kenge » , Carnet de Jean Mingashaang, assistant de Jan Vansina.
1953 sept. - 1953 oct. 1 volume
7. « Villages bushóng sud-ouest », Carnet de Shyaam aNce Evariste, assistant de Jan Vansina.
1953 sept. 1 volume
8. « Villages Nsheng-Baancep », Carnet de Gaston Kwete, assistant de Jan Vansina.
1953 sept.- 1953 oct. 1 volume
9. « Villages Ngende et environs Mapey », Carnet de Gaston Kwete, assistant de Jan Vansina.
1953 sept. - 1953 oct. 1 volume
10. « Villages région Nshol, Cwa, Shobwa », Carnet d'un assistant anonyme et Jan Vansina.
1953 nov. 1 volume
11. « Villages kel », Carnet de Gaston Kwete, assistant de Jan Vansina.
[1953 déc.]. 1 volume
12. « Baancep et nouvelles en Kete », Carnet de Shamba Géorge, assistant de Jan

- Vansina.
1953 août – 1953 oct. 1 volume
13. « Ethnographie élémentaire, Bushóóng élémentaire », Carnet de Jan Vansina.
1953 avr. 1 volume
14. Continuation d'« Ethnographie élémentaire, Bushóóng élémentaire », Carnet de Jan Vansina.
1953 avr. - 1953 mai. 1 volume
15. Carnet de Jean Vansina contenant la deuxième continuation d' « Ethnographie élémentaire, Bushóóng élémentaire », une copie de Verleysen « Ethno Ngende » , feuilles détachés avec un plan du village, une généalogie, des devises et une histoire d' occupati.
1953 mai - 1953 juin. 1 volume
16. « Ethnographie », Carnet de Jan Vansina.
1954 juin - 1954 août. 1 volume
17. « Ethnographie », Carnet de Jan Vansina.
1953 sept. 1 volume
18. « Initiation », Carnet de Jan Vansina.
1953 nov. - 1954 mars. 1 volume
19. « 1953/4 initiation II, séjour Village Mboon aByeesh », Carnet de Jan Vansina.
1953 oct. - 1954 janv. 1 volume
20. « Généalogies des gens de Nsheng », Carnet de Mikwepy Anaclet, assistant de Jan Vansina.
1953 juin. 1 volume
21. « Initiation », Carnet de Gaston Kwete, assistant de Jan Vansina.
1953 oct. - 1953 nov. 1 volume
22. « Village Mapey et nouvelles locales », Carnet de Gaston Kwete, assistant de Jan Vansina.
1953 oct. 1 volume
23. « Villages Kel », Carnet de Gaston Kwete et Florentin Kwete, assistants de Jan Vansina.
1953 nov. - 1953 déc. 1 volume
24. « Tribunal Nsheng : résumés de procès et en général », Carnet de Gaston Kwete, assistant de Jan Vansina.
1954 févr. - 1954 avr. 1 volume
25. « Ethnographie, culture matérielle », Carnet de Jan Vansina.
1956 avr. - 1956 mai. 1 volume
26. Continuation d'« Ethnographie, culture matérielle », Carnet de Jan Vansina.
1956 mai - 1956 juill. 1 volume

27. Carnet de Jan Vansina concernant les collections faites pour l' IRSAC à Lwiro.
1956 avr. – 1956 juill. 1 volume
28. « Villages bushoo'ng nord », Carnet de Gaston Kwete, assistant de Jan Vansina.
1956 mai. 1 volume
29. Continuation de « Villages bushoo'ng nord », Carnet de Gaston Kwete, assistant de Jan Vansina.
1956 mai. 1 volume
30. Deuxième continuation de « Villages bushoo'ng nord », Carnet de Gaston Kwete, assistant de Jan Vansina.
1956 mai. 1 volume
31. Troisième continuation de « Villages bushoo'ng nord », Carnet de Gaston Kwete, assistant de Jan Vansina.
1956 mai. 1 volume
32. Quatrième continuation de « Villages bushoo'ng nord », Carnet de Gaston Kwete, assistant de Jan Vansina.
1956 mai. 1 volume
33. Cinquième continuation de « Villages bushoo'ng nord », Carnet de Gaston Kwete, assistant de Jan Vansina.
1956 mai. 1 volume
34. Feuilletés détachés provenant de Gaston Kwete, assistant de Jan Vansina, contenant des plans et dessins de villages.
1956 mai – 1956 juin. 1 enveloppe
35. « Villages sud-ouest bushoo'ng et Kel », Carnet de Florentin Kwete, assistant de Jan Vansina. Avec une feuille détachée « village Shokombengi », une lettre et une liste de Shyaam aNce Evariste sur les « hommes sages à Nsheng », par quartier et une liste.
1953 nov. – 1954 janv. 1 enveloppe
36. « Villages sur la route de Baancep », Carnet de Gaston Kwete, assistant de Jan Vansina.
1956 juin. 1 volume
37. Continuation de « villages sur la route de Baancep », Carnet de Gaston Kwete, assistant de Jan Vansina. Avec une note en tshiluba.
1956 juin. 1 volume
38. « Divers Nsheng: titres, politiques, récits etc. », Carnet de Shaam aKwet Valentin, assistant de Shaam aKwet Valentin.
1956 avr. - 1956 mai. 1 volume
39. Continuation de « Divers Nsheng: titres, politiques, récits etc. », Carnet de Shaam aKwet Valentin, assistant de Shaam aKwet Valentin.
1956 juin. 1 volume
40. « Richesses: dots, marchés, inventaires, labaam », Carnet de Jérôme Mingashaang,

- assistant de Jan Vansina.
1956 avr. - 1956 mai. 1 volume
41. « Ngady akan: 3 cas », Carnet de Jérôme Mingashaang, assistant de Jan Vansina.
1956 juin. 1 volume
42. « Ngady akan: 2 cas » , Carnet de Jérôme Mingashaang, assistant de Jan Vansina.
1956 juin. 1 volume
43. « Enterrement et labaaam », Carnet de Jérôme Mingashaang, assistant de Jan Vansina.
1956 juin. 1 volume
44. « Marchés », Carnet de Benoît Mikobi, assistant de Jan Vansina.
1956 mai - 1956 juin. 1 volume
45. « Religion », Carnet de Constantin Kwet, assistant de Jan Vansina.
1956 avr. - 1956 mai. 1 volume
46. « Héritage », Carnet de Constantin Kwet, assistant de Jan Vansina.
1956 juin. 1 volume
47. Continuation de « Héritage », Carnet de Constantin Kwet, assistant de Jan Vansina.
1956 juin. 1 volume
48. « Miko miYool et nouvelles », Carnet de Constantin Kwet, assistant de Jan Vansina.
1956 juin. 1 volume
49. « Divers », Carnet de Constantin Kwet , assistant de Jan Vansina.
1956 juin. 1 volume
50. « Villages, récits, titres », Carnet d'Augustin Mbaanc, assistant de Jan Vansina.
1956 mai – 1956 juin. 1 volume
51. « villages région bushoo'ng nord, récits historiques », Carnet d'Augustin Mbaanc ,
assistant de Jan Vansina.
1956 avr. – 1956 juin. 1 volume
52. « Nouvelles », Carnet de Stéphane Kwete, assistant de Jan Vansina.
1956 avr. – 1956 juin. 1 volume
53. « Récits historiques et autres », Carnet de Stéphane Kwete, assistant de Jan Vansina.
1956 avr. -1956 mai. 1 volume
54. « Toomlakwey et Kotambo (exploits de): remarque en néerlandais, quelques info sur
routes et villages », Carnet d'Evariste Shaam aNce, assistant de Jan Vansina.
1960 janv. 1 volume
55. « Village 1954: Mboon aByeesh », Carnet d'Evariste Shaam aNce, assistant de Jan
Vansina.
1954 juin. 1 volume

2. Dossiers

56-64. Dossiers composés dans le cadre de la recherche sur les Kuba, concernant la situation socio-politique, la législation, le village, la diversité régionale, l'esclavage, l'organisation politique et la chefferie.

- 56. « Structure sociale bushóóng (famille, section clan, clan) », 1954. 1 enveloppe
- 57. « Mariage », 1953. 1 enveloppe
- 58. « Classes d'âge, voisinages », s.d. 1 enveloppe
- 59. « Naissance et petite enfance », 1953. 1 enveloppe
- 60. « Initiation », 1954. 1 enveloppe
- 61. « Mort, obsèques, héritage », 1953. 1 enveloppe
- 62. « Statuts sociaux diminués: pauvres, Ngady akan, esclaves », 1956. 1 enveloppe
- 63. « Droit », 1953-1970. 1 enveloppe
- 64. « Villages en général », [1956]. 1 enveloppe

65-73. Dossiers concernant la Nyim (Kingship - Royauté).

- 65. « Religion en général », s.d. 1 enveloppe
- 66. « Sorcellerie », 1954-1956. 1 enveloppe
- 67. « Mouvements populaires pour restaurer l'harmonie », 1953-1956. 1 enveloppe
- 68. « Ipweeney: oracle du poison », 1954-1966. 1 enveloppe
- 69. « Administration et dignitaires », 1953. 1 enveloppe
- 70. « Diversité régionale », s.d. 1 enveloppe
- 71. « Royauté : rois , princes, épouses royales », 1953. 1 enveloppe
- 72. « Rois, poésies pour les , s.d. » 1 enveloppe
- 73. « Ballets itul », 1953-1954. 1 enveloppe

74-85. Dossiers rassemblant des notes de recherches sur sujets divers.

- 74. « Ndop », 1970-1997. 1 enveloppe
- 75. « Économie, prix, culture matérielle », 1956-2007. 1 enveloppe
- 76. « Heures de travail dans un quartier de Nsheng », 1954-1958. 2 enveloppes
- 77. « Nsheng : ville: plans et devises des places et rues », 1952-1968. 1 enveloppe
- 78. « Nsheng : recensement, généalogies, diagrammes parenté et quartiers », 1953. 1 enveloppe
- 79. « Villages : recensement des clans et sections », 1956. 2 enveloppes
- 80. « Villages Mboon a Byeesh, Mboong Bushephy, Bushobbe : recensements des clans et sections, plans », [1954-1959]. 1 enveloppe
- 81. « Bushóóng linguistique grammaire », [1953] 1 enveloppe
- 82. « Bushóóng lexiques par domaines », 1953-2009. 2 enveloppes
- 83. « Bushóóng lexique par domaine, Children of Woot et détails », s.d. 1 enveloppe
- 84. « Bushóóng et "Urbantu" », s.d. 1 enveloppe
- 85. « Bushóóng littérature . Farde 1 : devices, chansons, proverbes, récits, tiré à part Laam, farde 2: Ncyéém ingésh, enregistrements et littérature », 1954-1972. 2 enveloppes

86-91. Dossiers rassemblant des notes de recherches sur l'art kuba.

- 86. « Art Kuba: notes », [1953-1973] 1 enveloppe
- 87. « Art Kuba: dessins de candidats commis », [1953-1956]. 1 enveloppe
- 88. « Art Kuba: différents musées + Tervuren », 1976-2006 1 enveloppe

89. « Art Kuba: Hambourg et fiches Frobenius », 1984. 1 enveloppe
90. « Art Kuba: marchands d'art », 1976-2004. 1 enveloppe
91. « Art Kuba: école d'art à Nsheng », 1989. 1 enveloppe
- 92-94. Dossiers rassemblant des notes sur l'histoire des rois.
92. « Histoire des rois avant 1880 », s.d. 1 enveloppe
93. « Rois 1880 - avant 1920 », 2009. 1 enveloppe
94. « Rois 1920 - 1970 »; s.d. 1 enveloppe
95. Dossier rassemblant des nouvelles et rêves (fardes nouvelles, restes des anciens carnets 25-26, rêv es x 2). 1953-1954. 2 enveloppes

Dossiers rassemblant des notes et copies d'originaux provenant de la recherche des archives.

96. « Compagnie de Kasai (surtout Dima) », s.d. 1 enveloppe
97. « Archives gvt Mweka/ Luebo », s.d. 1 enveloppe
98. « Archives Tervuren », 1969. 1 enveloppe
99. « Archives gouv. 1906-1916 », s.d. 1 enveloppe
100. « Rapports Chambres (19616-1952) et conseil provincial du Kasai (1950-1959) », s.d. 1 enveloppe
101. « Publications officielles rares + annuaires », s.d. 1 enveloppe
153. copies de certains documents, des papiers Mbop Mabiinc maKyéen (originaux Mem. Library Madison, WI). 1 enveloppe

154-159. Dossiers rassemblant des manuscrits

154. Ms tapé à la machine Maroni "Souvenirs du Congo 1905-1906" 2ex. Non id. (publié par F. harroy (1906) sous son nom), 1905-1906. 1 enveloppe
155. Ms. Malu aBankambu suivant le chef Dombi Biééng (publié Kongo Overzee? 1956), 1956. 1 enveloppe
156. Ms Kwete Mwana autobiographie (publié Paris 2009), 2009. 1 enveloppe
157. interviews Vansina: radio (1954), TV 2 - 1957 (TV I 1957 perdu), 1954, 1957 1 enveloppe
158. Miko miLyeen yeMaam: ms. Iniation à la vie des Bakuba, ca 1992?. Deux ex. Non identiques, [1992] 2 enveloppes
159. Différents essais académiques non publiés (Jsefsson + lettres Brown, Cameron), s.d. 1 enveloppe

160-163. Dossiers rassemblant la correspondance avec son personnel.

160. Shaam aNce, 1954-1971. 1 enveloppe
161. Mbop Albert de Jean, 1954-1971. 1 enveloppe
162. Mikwepy Anaclet, 1956-1968. 1 enveloppe
163. MongaMbengi, jonde aNgele, Busha buPyeeng, 1971-1981. 1 enveloppe

164. Documents Kuba post 1960 + une lettre 1969 Charles Ross. post 1960

1 enveloppe

165. Ms de deux auteurs bushoong post 1960 (Bope Nyim-aNkwem, Belepe Bope Mabintch).
post 1960 1 enveloppe
166. Kuba: cartes, copies de cartes de 1886 à ca 1952 inclus carte du territoire de Mweka (en morceaux) avec annotations.
1886 ca 1952 1 enveloppe
167. Vansina: symboles et Kuba: pour séminaire IRSAC 1954.
1954. 1 enveloppe
168. Vansina: Chefferie Kuba et fait colonial 1919-1956 (brouillon d'article 1971).
1919-1956. 1 enveloppe
169. copie xerox de Eliot Elisofon Reports 1947 au MusNat Af ART Washington.
1947. 1 enveloppe

3. Fiches

170. taille demie page: Evariste Shaam aNce: shoo sh.
s.d. 1 enveloppe
171. taille intermédiaire: shoo sh slogans des (a) kings.
s.d. 1 enveloppe
172. (b) capitale suivant données Jacobs + Vansina - Kongo-Overzee.
2
enveloppes
173. petite taille: 2 séries données lexicales.
1 enveloppe
174. (a) vocabulaire Français, Idzing, Bushoo ng par Evariste Shaam aNce.
1 enveloppe
175. (b) noms personnels.
14 enveloppes
176. Mikom miLyeen yeMaam: musique traditionnelle Kuba, I cassette ca 1985.
ca 1985 1 enveloppe.

II. Ruanda: Recherche sur des écrits historiques *ibitéekerezo* (1957-1961).

1. Dossiers enregistrés

177. Origines et Gihanga.
s.d. 1 enveloppe
178. Ruganzu Bwimba.

s.d.	1 enveloppe
179. Cyrima Rugwe. s.d.	1 pièce
180. Kigeri Mukobanya. s.d.	1 enveloppe
181. Mibambwe Mutabazi. s.d.	1 enveloppe
182. Yuhi Gahima. s.d.	1 enveloppe
183. Ndahiro Cyamatara. s.d.	1 enveloppe
184. Ruganzu Ndori. s.d.	1 enveloppe
185. MutaraSemugeshi. s.d.	1 enveloppe
186. Mibambwer Gisananura. s.d.	1 enveloppe
187. Yuhi Mazimpaka. s.d.	1 enveloppe
188. Cyrima Rujugira. s.d.	1 enveloppe
189. Kigeri Ndabarasa. s.d.	1 enveloppe
190. Mibambwe Sentabyo. s.d.	1 enveloppe
191. Yuhi Gahindiro. s.d.	1 enveloppe
192. Mutara Rwogera. s.d.	1 enveloppe
193. Kigeri Rwabigiri. s.d.	1 enveloppe
194. Rutarindwa/Musinga. s.d.	1 enveloppe
195. Ryangombe. s.d.	1 enveloppe

196. Mashira. s.d.	1 enveloppe
197. Imanzi, Beene Rwagishhenga. s.d.	1 enveloppe
198. divers. s.d.	2 enveloppes

2. Dossiers non enregistrés

Dossiers contenant des récits historiques recoltés sur place non enregistrés.

199. origines Gihanga. s.d.	1 enveloppe
200. RuganzuBwinba + Nsoro Samukondo. s.d.	1 enveloppe
201. Cyrima Rugwe. s.d.	1 enveloppe
202. Mibambwe Mutabazu Sekaron goro. s.d.	1 enveloppe
203. Yuhi Gahima. s.d.	1 enveloppe
204. Ndahiro Cyamatatare. s.d.	1 enveloppe
205. Ruganzu Ndori. s.d.	2 enveloppes
206. Mutara Semugeshi/Kigeri Nyamuheshere + Mibambwe Gisanura. s.d.	1 enveloppe
207. Yuhi Mazimpaka + Rwaka. s.d.	1 enveloppe
208. Cyilima Rujugira. s.d.	1 enveloppe
209. Kigeri Ndabarasa. s.d.	1 enveloppe
210. Mibambwe Sentabyo. s.d.	1 enveloppe
211. Yuhi Gahindiro. s.d.	1 enveloppe

212. Mutara Rwoogera. s.d.	1 enveloppe
213. Kgeri Rwaburgiri. s.d.	1 enveloppe
214. Mibambwe Rutarindwa + Yuhi Musinga + Mutara Rudahigwa. s.d.	1 enveloppe
215. Ryangombe. s.d.	1 enveloppe
216. Mashira. s.d.	1 enveloppe
217. Imaanzi + Beene Rwaagishenga. s.d.	1 enveloppe
218. divers. s.d.	1 enveloppe
219. index textes enregistrés et dactylographiés. s.d.	1 enveloppe
220. index textes non enregistrés et dactylographiés. s.d.	1 enveloppe
221. Rwanda: cartes. s.d.	1 enveloppe
222. Pièces d'archives 1924-1930. 1924-1930.	1 enveloppe
223. Lestrade: notes d'ethnographie 1956. 1921-1955.	1 enveloppe
224. copies d'articles anciens divers. s.d.	1 enveloppe
225. Ibisigo, 1958 déc.-1960 mars.	2 enveloppes
226. Ibyivugo, 1958 janv.	1 enveloppe.

3. Histoires locales.

Dossiers contenant des récits historiques recoltés sur place.

227. Chefferie Busanza sud, 1958 févr.-1958 mars.	1 enveloppe
228. Chefferie Buhanga Ndara, 1958.	1 enveloppe
229. Chefferie Buhanga Ndara II, 1958 févr. - 1959 déc.	2 enveloppes
230. Chefferie Mvejuru. s.d.	1 enveloppe

231. Chefferie Bukonya + ss/cheff Mataaba (Gisaka).
s.d. 1 enveloppe
232. Documents divers.
s.d. 1 enveloppe
233. Traduction de A.Kagame Inganji Karinga.
s.d. 3
enveloppes
234. Van Hove: essai droit Rwanda (ms).
s.d. 1 enveloppe
235. Copies articles Pauwels et Loupias.
s.d. 1 enveloppe
236. Cinq tirés à part: 1955-1985.
1955-1985.
1 enveloppe
237. Double d'un ancien inventaire non daté.
s.d. 1 enveloppe
238. État de documentation 1960.
1960. 1 enveloppe.

4. Ibitékerezo manuscrits: originaux et traductions.

239. Grosse masse de papiers non inventoriée contient les originaux et les traductions écrits à la main des dossiers 177-218.
1958-1960. 38 enveloppes

III. Burundi: Recherche sur des récits historiques (1957-1960)

1. Carnets.

144. Carnet.
[1958 janv. – 1958 juill.] 1 volume
- 145-146. Carnets de route (I).
145. 1958 févr. – 1959 sept. 1 volume
146. 1959 sept. 1 volume

2. Fiches

147. Fiches de grande taille: index conteurs et poètes.

- s.d. 3 enveloppes
148. Fiches de petite taille: série orange: index lieux.
s.d. 1 enveloppe
149. Fiches de petite taille: série blanche: index personnages historiques.
2 enveloppes

3. Dossiers

150. Cartes (d'avant 1960).
s.d. 1 enveloppe
151. Série par auteur non publié + 2 Twagira + un divers?.
s.d. 1 enveloppe
152. Tirés à part pas inclus dans ces papiers.
s.d. 15 enveloppes

IV. Congo-Brazzaville : Recherche sur le Tio (1963-1964)

1. Carnets de route

- « Cahiers Teke», Carnets de route.
102. 15 octobre 1963 - 12 novembre 1963. 1 volume
103. 11 novembre 1963 - 12 décembre 1963. 1 volume
104. 13 décembre 1963 - 23 janvier 1964. 1 volume
105. 23 janvier 1964 - 27 février 1964. 1 volume
106. 28 février 1964 - 1 avril 1964. Avec 2 annexes. 1 volume
107. Carnet concernant l'ethnographie des Lutèce.
1964. 1 volume
108. Carnet contenant un vocabulaire tyo -Français.
1963 oct. - 1964 avr.. 1 volume
109. Carnet contenant des feuilles volantss sur des généalogies, des plans et des cartes.
s.d. 1 volume.

2. Dossiers

110. Tirés à part et notes sur la littérature.
s.d. 2 enveloppes
111. Doubles et données non utilisées dans le livre The Tio Kingdom.
[1964]. 1 enveloppe

3. Divers.

112. Albums d'objets tio, provenant de Claudine Herman, épouse de Jan Vansina.
1963-1964. 2 volumes

B. Travaux

I. Documents concernant la linguistique

113-129. Dossiers contenant diverses publications et notes sur divers thèmes linguistiques.

113. Linguistique historique générale, 1949-1956.	2 enveloppes
114. Linguistique historique Afrique, 1960-1995.	1 enveloppe
115. Mots d'emprunt et Afrique, 1975.	1 enveloppe
116. Adamawa-Eastern, 1983.	1 enveloppe
117. Historiographie Bantu, 1979-1980.	1 enveloppe
118. Expansion Bantu, 1977-1985.	1 enveloppe
119. Christopher Ehret , 1967-1999.	1 enveloppe
120. Christopher Ehret: tirès à part, 1973-1974.	1 enveloppe
121. Roland Oliver, 1966-1979.	1 enveloppe
122. Bantu:expansion, 1976-1977.	1 enveloppe
123. Bantu: '94 (notes pour JAH), 1994.	1 enveloppe
124. Bantu '94: sous-groupes + cartes (pour JAH), 1994.	1 enveloppe
125. Bantu: '94/95 (brouillons pour JAH), 1994-1995.	1 enveloppe
126. Fractal History: Mambila, s.d.	1 enveloppe
127. Schoenbrun et les grands lacs. , s.d.	1 enveloppe
128. Bantu et historiens culturels, s.d.	1 enveloppe
129. Ciciba: littérature écrite "bantu", s.d.	1 enveloppe

II. Vocabulaires Bantu.

Vocabulaires Bantu Forêt (VBF).

131. VBF: A-A60 inclus, s.d.	1 enveloppe
132. VBF: A70-A90, s.d.	1 enveloppe
133. VBF: B20-B30 (Jacquot) , s.d.	1 enveloppe
134. VBF: B10-B30, s.d.	1 enveloppe
135. VBF: B40-B50, s.d.	1 enveloppe
136. VBF: B60-B80 inclus, s.d.	1 enveloppe
137. VBF: C00-C20, s.d.	1 enveloppe
138. VBF: C30-C40, s.d.	1 enveloppe
139. VBF: C50 "Buan", s.d.	1 enveloppe
140. VBF: C60 "Mongo Cuvette", s.d.	1 enveloppe
141. VBF: C70-C80 + Mbole, Ngwii, Saa, s.d.	1 enveloppe
142. VBF: Maniema et Nord-est, s.d.	1 enveloppe
143. VBF: Lengola, Bodo, s.d.	1 enveloppe
245. VBF: sources, plans 10, s.d.	1 enveloppe
246. VBF: non Bantu, s.d.	1 enveloppe

247. VBF: Ouest, diverses langues: 0 enrichir", s.d.	1 enveloppe
248-254. Vocabulaires Bantu Savanne (17-24): par sens.	
248. VBS: Kongo Yombe Vili, s.d.	1 enveloppe
249. VBS: parenté, s.d.	2 enveloppes
250. VBS: Minéraux (fer, cuivre, sel), s.d.	2 enveloppes
251. VBS: agriculture, élevage, s.d.	3 enveloppes
252. VBS: religion, s.d.	1 enveloppe
253. VBS: cultures américaines, s.d.	1 enveloppe
254. VBS: agriculture: Kongo-Ambundu, s.d.	1 enveloppe
255-259. Vocabulaires bantu divers (25-29).	
255. VBF: hydronymes, s.d.	1 enveloppe
256. VB: général, divers, s.d.	1 enveloppe
257. VB: raffia, s.d.	1 enveloppe
258. VB: tabac (demi pages), s.d.	2 enveloppes
259. VB: doubles cloches, s.d.	1 enveloppe
260-261. Vocabulaires bantu sur fiches.	
260. Série: vocabulaires bantu par forme (VBS), s.d.	1 enveloppe
261. Vocabulaire bantu par forme VBS lanques R20 (demipages) , s.d.	1 enveloppe
V. Vocabulaires Bantu sur fiches: par sens.	
262. 10 petits fichiers tirés d' ouvrages divers, s.d.	12 pièces.
4 grands fichiers tirés surtout de Johnston 1922.	
240. Économie, s.d.	12 pièces
241. Terminologie de parenté, s.d.	9 pièces
242. Social, politique, s.d.	9 pièces
243. Religion, s.d.	11 pièces
244. Word and things, s.d.	4 pièces.

III. Objets: notes ethnographiques

263. Notes concernant cloches, doubles cloches (demipages). s.d.	1 enveloppe.
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C. Données biographiques

264. Curriculum Vitae et tirés à part des articles et contributions de Jan Vansina. 1974-1999.	3 boîtes
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