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Jesuit Institutional Shift in the 1970s, its Impact on Jesuit Sources and Historiography, and the Future of Jesuit Archives in Francophone Africa and Europe

by

This essay shows how the institutional shift within the Jesuit Order and the Africanization of the Society of Jesus during the twentieth-century impacted on the production, collection, and conservation of sources. It also explores how those shifts might affect the writing of the current period of Jesuit history in French-speaking Africa in the future. In fact, while the end of French overseas missions decreased and even stripped French Jesuit archives off one of their most important sources of information, it also changed the quality of sources, making the content of those sources poorer in culturally-related issues. While the merging of French Jesuit Provinces changed the nature of sources by making them overwhelmingly governance-and-ministries-oriented, this shift, however, had the positive effect of relocating the archives in a single place, making it easier for researchers on French Jesuit history to access the archives.

On the African side, though, the evolution from missionary to African Christianity equally reinforced a qualitative shift in the production of the archives, while the multiplication of Jesuit jurisdictions in Africa led, instead, to the scattering of the location of sources. The historian of Francophone Africa's Jesuit history is therefore confronted with a double challenge. On the one hand, how does he/she access the scattered sources of Jesuit history, especially since the delivery of the same to the central archive of Western Francophone Europe had almost ceased with the end of the missions? On the other hand, how would the quantitative and qualitative change of Jesuit sources from missionary to African Christianity affect the writing of Jesuit history in French Africa?

This essay explores new ways of reorganizing the Jesuit archives in France and Africa in a way that would enhance the production, collection, preservation of sources, and secure their efficient distribution and accessibility for researchers. The first part gives an account of traditional ways of producing, collecting, conserving, and distributing Jesuit archives in French Africa, and the nature of Jesuit historiography this old model might produce. In the second part, we analyze the changes, both quantitative and qualitative, in the production, collection, conservation, and distribution of Jesuit sources, and how we think these shifts might influence the writing of Jesuit history in French-speaking Africa and the reorganization of Francophone Jesuit archives in Europe and Africa. This essay is a first attempt by the Jesuit Archives in the province of Francophone Western Europe (EOF),¹ and the Jesuit Historical Institute in Africa (JHIA) to address those challenges collaboratively.

Archives and Historiography: The Missionary Era

In 1961, Rev. Jean-Baptist Janssens, Superior General of the Jesuits, created the Jesuit Province of Central Africa (ACE). In addition to what is today's Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), the ACE included the two other Belgian colonies in Central Africa, namely Burundi and Rwanda. The ACE became the first Jesuit Province in Africa, followed by the creation, in Francophone Africa, of Madagascar (1971), and West Africa (1973). Both the Kongo and the Malagasy Jesuit missions had existed from the early years of the Society under Portuguese control. However, after the restoration of the Society in 1814, France and Belgium respectively took over the mission of Madagascar (1845) and the Kongo (1893).

¹ EOF : Europe Occidentale Francophone

The organization of the Jesuit archives in French-speaking Africa often coincided with the beginning of the province. Jesuit Father Joseph de Cock was archivist of the ACE. His contribution to *Scriptis Tradere et Fideliter Conservare* (2003) provides the context of the creation and organization of the Central African Province's archives. According to de Cock, while the archives started like any other Jesuit archive, with "the orderly conservation of paper for each good purpose," the task to "organize" and "preserve" only started sixty years later after the beginning of the mission, that is, when the mission had become a vice-province (and then province), and "had to demonstrate the titles of its properties," and "place its papers in order."² The archives includes the pre-history of the Province as well as diaries, deeds to houses and land.³ The organization of the archives later followed the model of the mother province (in this case, the Jesuit provinces of Belgium):

The first step was to place all the documents in a certain order, joined together and placed in boxes or bundles. As the boxes increased in number the need to carry out an inventory and to improve the organizational system became evident. A general organizational scheme that would allow additional documents to be added was found in the inventory of the archives of the Belgian provinces... The organization in the computer has to be 'thought' of or 'conceived' by the archivist himself. The outcome is what counts.⁴

As to what should be retained, de Cock offers ten categories of classification, each placed in chronological order in order to make it easy to locate them. The largest part of the archives contained materials related to Jesuit biographies, Jesuit governance and apostolic works. Existing publications on the history of the Society in Central Africa has, indeed, focused on its institutional evolution, from the early days of the Kwango and the

² Joseph de Cock, "The Archives of the Society of Jesus," in *Scriptis Tradere et Fideliter Conservare*: *Archives as "Places of Memory" within the Society of Jesus*, ed. Thomas M. McCoog (Rome: Jesuit General Curia, 2003), 52–53.

³ de Cock, 53.

⁴ Ibid.

Kwilu missions at the end of the nineteenth century to developments by the end of the twentieth century.⁵ Other publications have analyzed the socio-cultural impact of the mission, from creating an indigenous liturgy, to reforming agriculture or building roads and bridges.⁶ Only a few publications have focused on ethnographic and biographic history.⁷

Joseph de Cock's classification presents few differences with the classification of the materials related to Madagascar in the archives of the former French Jesuit Province of Toulouse. Gerald M. Berg shows that in addition to *Lettres des Scolastiques*, a newsletter of the Jesuit Scholastics of the Toulouse Province, there were at least eight additional categories with different contents.⁸ Those include a pre-history of the mission from

⁵ Léon de Saint Moulin, "La mission du Kwango de 1945 à nos jours, et le lent processus d'africanisation," in *Les Jésuites au Congo-Zaïre* (Bruxelles: AESM, 1995), 166–78; I. De Pierpont, "La Mission du Kwango," *Missions Belges* (November 1912), 401–408; Léopold Denis, *Les Jésuites Belges au Kwango, 1893-1943 : Monographie sur la Mission du Kwango, devenue actuellement les Vicariats Apostoliques du Kwango et de Kisantu* (Bruxelles: L'Édition universelle, 1943); Fernand Mukoso Ng'ekieb, *Les origines de la Mission du Kwango, 1879-1914* (Kinshasa: FCK, 1993); Anicet N'Teba Mbengui, *La Mission de la Compagnie de Jésus au Kwilu. Contribution à la transformation d'une région congolaise, 1901-1954* (Rome: Pontificia Università Gregoriana, 2010).

⁶ Rev. Butaye, "Mission du Kwango: Les mœurs indigènes," *Missions Belges de la Compagnie de Jésus* 2 (1900): 193–198; 264–267; de Saint Moulin, "La Mission du Kwango de 1945 à nos jours, et le lent processus d'africanisation"; Editors, "Fondation de cinq nouveaux villages chrétiens au Kwango," *Missions Belges* (1901), 148–149; A. Renard, "Mission du Kwango: Au service des malades," in *Missions Belges de la Compagnie de Jésus: Congo, Bengale, Ceylan* (Bruxelles: Charles Bulens, 1908), 24–35; X., "L'évangélisation ses adultes dans la Mission du Kwango," *Missions Belges* (1912), 150–154; Van de Castele, "Musique indigène, musique religieuse," *Revue du Clergé Africain* 3 (September 1948): 392–396.

⁷ Eugène Laveille, *L'Évangile au centre de l'Afrique: Le P. Van Hencxthoven, S.J., fondateur de la Mission du Kwango, Congo Belge, 1852-1906* (Louvain: Museum Lessianum, 1926); Pierre Tromont, *Le Frère Frans de Sadeleer SJ: Un missionnaire des temps héroïques: Co-fondateur de la Mission du Zambèze et de la Mission du Kwango* (Louvain: L'Aucan, 1932); Editors, "Quelques notions sur les populations de notre Vicariat du Kwango," *Revue Missionnaire des Jésuites Belges* IX (Avril 1935): 180–183; Editors, "Vicariat Apostolique du Kwango: Statistiques, 1937-1938," *Revue Missionnaire des Jésuites Belges* 18 (January 1939): 26.

⁸ G. M. Berg, "The Archives of the Jesuit Province of Toulouse Relating to Madagascar," *History in Africa* 5 (1978): 357–59.

missionary reports (FMa 110) and non-missionaries (FMa 111); several diaries by missionaries (FMa 150 and 185); correspondence with Vicars Apostolic (FMa 180); as well as other classified and non-classified correspondence (FMa 190; 411; 435-440).⁹

According to Berg,

this journal [*Lettres des Scolastiques*] consisted of letters written from missionaries in the field to their Apostolic Vicars. Such letters were then excerpted and summarized and sent on to Vals, a Jesuit training seminary, for circulation among the missionaries in training there. Originally the excerpts were hand-copied and arranged by region: Madagascar, India, Oceania, etc., but later they were lithographed or printed.¹⁰

Significantly, the loss of the original letters makes the summaries of *Lettres des Scolastiques* the best material available for the pre-history of the Jesuit Province of Madagascar.¹¹ This is the case especially for the life of its earliest missionaries.¹² Unlike other early missions, little ethnographic information is given in *Lettres*. Instead, much of the contents are administrative and biographical in nature.¹³ The administrative *lettres* are marked as involving “European” and “Non-European” Jesuit superiors, hinting at the interculturality of the Malagasy Jesuit mission and its Indian (Goa) jurisdictional connection.¹⁴ Finally, the changing name of the *Lettres* was indicative of the changing history of the Society in France and Europe in the late nineteenth-century. It portrays the

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ Which has been published in a major work: Adrien Boudou, *Les Jésuites à Madagascar Au Xixe Siècle*, vol. 1, 2 vols. (Paris: Beauchesne, 1940); Boudou.

¹² The list of the first missionaries includes Mar Finaz, Augustin Delbosc, Louis Jouen, Jean-Baptiste Cazet, Jean Baptiste Labaste, Antoine Abinal, Alphone and Henri Taix, François Callet, Hippolyte, Brégère, Pierre-Justin Caussèque, and others.

¹³ One biography published was that of Jacques Berthieu, for reason of advancing his canonization process: Adrien Boudou, *Le Père Jacques Berthieu (1838-1897)* (Paris: Beauchesne, 1935); Victor Sartre, *Jacques Berthieu, S.J.: Premier Martyr de l'île Rouge* (Toulouse: Prière et vie, 1965); Vicarius Apost. Tananariven, “De aperitione processus etc. in causa Servi Dei P. Iacobi Berthieu” (ARSI, Iunii 1935).

¹⁴ Cf. Stéphane Nicaise, *Les Jésuites dans l'Océan Indien: Madagascar, la Réunion, Maurice* (Namur: Ed. Jésuites, 2015).

picture of the Society's forced exiles. Vals (*Lettres de Vals*), where the newsletter was first published in 1838 is in France; Uclés (*Lettres d'Uclés*), its title from 1882 to 1897 is in Spain; and Gemert (*Lettres de Gemert*), the name given from 1903 to 1914, is in the Netherlands.¹⁵

Lettres du Tchad was created by Victor Barjon, in 1946. In its first edition, Charles Margot, Superior of the Chad Mission, indicates that the European benefactors of the mission were the targeted audience of the newsletter: "we need prayers as does any work that is this large and difficult; we also need other things such as material goods. As we stand, we lack almost everything."¹⁶ Other news of this first edition provide information on the weather, food, vegetation and fauna, transportation means and the description of this long trip across the Sahara, but also early efforts to learn Chadian languages. One of the cities described is the large and cosmopolitan Nigerian city of Kano, its cultural and religious diversity. On September 29 1946, Barjon wrote:

Kano is a big town populated by blacks. I do not understand a word of what they say. One of them, however, mixes some Arabic words that I am able to distinguish. Thanks to an English officer, Catholic and air station attendant, he helps me not only to leave the airfield, but to drive with him to some 5kms away. I arrive at the Catholic mission. The two Irish fathers to whom I speak in Latin welcome me fraternally. I say my Mass with joy, served by a black ebony who wears a beautiful red cassock. After Thanksgiving and breakfast, the officer comes to pick me up and takes me back to the train station.¹⁷

The *Lettres* also provide information on the early jurisdictional divisions of the mission territory, anticipating, in most cases, early maps of the future dioceses of the

¹⁵ Ibid. In the index of his short article, Berg write: "For the writings of these missionaries see *Bibliotheca Missionum* (30 vols.: Freiburg/Rome, 1917-73), 17: 640-17; 17: 710-11; 17: 528-29; 18: 185-87; 18: 1018; 18: 119-21; 17: 783; 17: 817; 17: 725-27; 17: 788-89; and 18: 182-84, respectively" (359).

¹⁶ Victor Barjon, *Lettres du Tchad* 1 (1946): 1.

¹⁷ Ibid.

church of Chad and Cameroon, including, for Chad, Fort-Lamy (N'djamena) and Fort-Archambault (Sarh), and Fouban for Cameroon.

Courrier du Tchad (1947), replaced *Lettres du Tchad* and became the official newsletter of the mission. *Courrier* targeted Jesuit benefactors, family members, and friends back home in France. It provides information about the life and early works of the missionaries as they built the church from scratch.¹⁸ In its second edition, Charles Margot describes the planning and administrative organization of the mission of which he was head.¹⁹ Not surprisingly, as in Madagascar and Congo, early historical publications on the Jesuit work in Chad focused on the administration of the mission,²⁰ the foundation of the church in Chad,²¹ and the lives of individual Jesuits who were pioneers of the mission.²² Yet, because of the cultural diversity of Chad, the European missionaries, in contact with both the Northern Arab-Muslims and the Southerners, especially the Sara and the Mbay,

¹⁸ Barjon, "Première Lettre du P. Barjon," *Courrier du Tchad* 1 (1947): 1.

¹⁹ Charles Margot, "Mission du Tchad," *Courrier du Tchad* 2 (1947): 1ss.

²⁰ Joseph Fortier, *Les Débuts de l'évangélisation au Moyen Chari, Diocèse de Sarh (Les Pionniers), 1946-1966*, vol. 1, 2 vols. (Sarh: Non published, 1991); Joseph Fortier, *Les Débuts de l'évangélisation au Moyen Chari, Diocèse de Sarh (La Relève), 1966-1978*, vol. 2, 2 vols. (Sarh, 1991); J. Fortier, "Chad," in *Diccionario Histórico de la Compañía de Jesús*, vol. 1, 4 vols. (Madrid: UPComillas, 2001), 745–751; J. Fortier, *Notes chronologiques pour servir à l'histoire de la mission SJ du Tchad* (N'djamena: Imprimerie du Tchad, 1958).

²¹ A. Hallaire and J. Fedry, *Naissance d'une Église africaine: Lettres et chroniques du Pays Sarh* (Paris: Karthala, 1998); Charles Vandame, "Projet d'érection d'une circonscription ecclésiastique à Mongo par division des diocèses de N'Djamena et de Sarh (Tchad)" (Inédit, n.d.); Charles Vandame, *Cinquante ans de la vie de l'Église Catholique au Tchad* (Paris: L'Harmattan, 2012).

²² J. Fortier, *Frédéric de Bélinay. Pionnier des missions du Tchad*, vol. 1–2, 2 vols. (Fort Lamy: Imprimerie du Tchad, 1958); Charles Vandame and Benjamin Bamani, *La joie de servir* (Paris: Sarmant-jubilé, 2009).

published several grammar books, dictionaries,²³ catechisms,²⁴ and traditional Chadian rites.²⁵ With European Jesuits, publications focused on biographical and cultural history until the 1960s when the first Cameroonian Jesuits, namely Meinrad-Pierre Hebga, Fabien Eboussi Boulaga, and Engelbert Mveng developed a scholarship of their own, especially in the fields of philosophy, theology, and national history.²⁶

The Emerging Africanization in Jesuit Writings

The publications of the first Cameroonian Jesuits shifted after the creation of the Jesuit Province of West Africa in 1973. None of the publications, with one exception,²⁷ focused on the history of the Jesuits as such. Yet, the institutional evolution of the Jesuit

²³ Julien de Pommerol, *L'arabe Tchadien. Emergence d'une langue véhiculaire* (Paris: Karthala, 1997); Julien de Pommerol, *Dictionnaire Arabe Tchadien-Français* (Paris: Karthala, 1999); Julien de Pommerol, *Grammaire pratique de l'arabe Tchadien* (Paris: Karthala, 1999); Julien de Pommerol, *Contes et chants du Tchad* (Paris: Ecole Pratique des Hautes Etudes, 1978); Jacques Hallaire, *Au confluent des traditions de la savane et de la forêt. Étude thématique des contes Sar (Moyen-Chari, Tchad)* (N'djamena: CEFOD, 1987); Jacques Fedry and Pascal Djiraingue, *Prières traditionnelles du Pays Sara* (Sarh: CEL, 1977).

²⁴ The authors did not have access to any original copy of the early catechisms in Chad; but several references to them are made in different documents and letters. Paul Dalmais, "La mission du Tchad et les chrétiens de Fort-Lamy," *Mitte Me* 11 (1966): 16–27; Mgr. Dalmais, "Un monde qui naît: La Mission du Tchad," *Jésuites* 3 (1959): 31–37.

²⁵ J. Fortier, *Dragons et sorcières. Contes et moralités du Pays Mbaï* (Paris: Armand Colin, 1974); J. Fortier, *Contes Ngambaye* (Fort Lamy: Mission Catholique, 1972); J. Fortier, *Le mythe et les contes de Sou en Pays Mbaï-Moïssala* (Paris: Julliard, 1967); Jacques Fedry and P. Djiraingue, *Prières traditionnelles du Pays Sara* (Sarh: CEL, 1977).

²⁶ P. Meinrad Hebga, *Personnalité africaine et Catholicisme* (Paris: Présence Africaine, 1963); Fabien Eboussi Boulaga, *Bantou problématique* (Paris: Présence Africaine, 1968); Mveng Engelbert, "Structures fondamentales de l'art négro-africain," *Présence Africaine*, no. 1 (1964): 116; Engelbert Mveng, "L'Afrique chrétienne au Premier Festival Mondial des Arts Nègres," *Revue du Clergé Africain* 5 (September 1966): 397–399; Engelbert Mveng, *Si Quelqu'un...* (Tours: Mame, 1962); P. Engelbert Mveng, "L'art africain: II - Le rythme," *Présence Africaine*, no. 52 (1964): 104–127; Engelbert Mveng and Beling-Nkoumba, *Manuel d'histoire du Cameroun* (Yaoundé: CEPER, 1969); Engelbert Mveng, *Histoire du Cameroun*, 1st ed. (Paris: Présence Africaine, 1963).

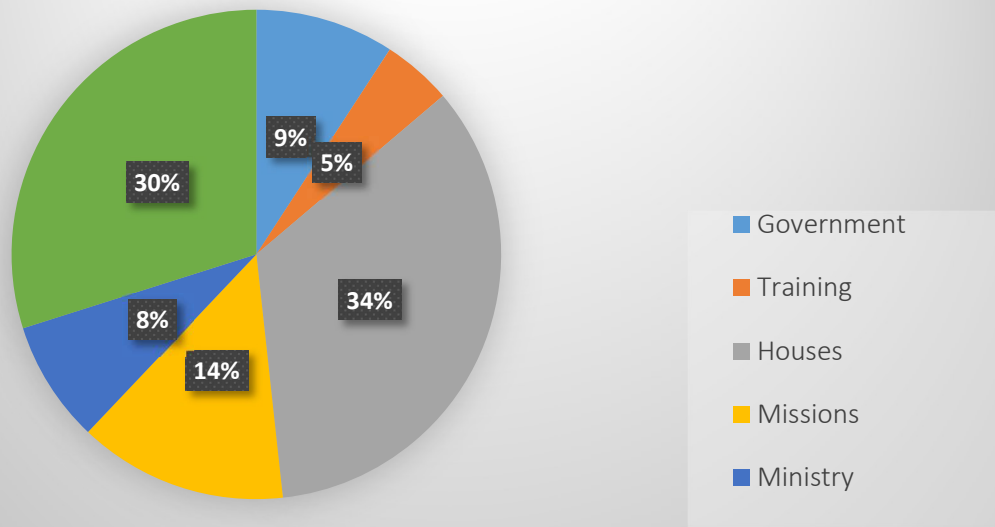
²⁷ The exception is Mveng's article in the *Diccionario Histórico de la Compañía de Jesús* [Engelbert Mveng, "Camerún," in *Diccionario Histórico de la Compañía de Jesús* (Madrid/Roma: I.H.S.I./UPComillas, 2001)]. However, in the immediate aftermath of the creation of the Jesuit Vice-Province of West Africa, the nature of the postcolonial African church and the future of "missions" became their main focus.

jurisdiction in West Africa certainly shaped the missiological shift of their publications, giving them a postcolonial and anti-missionary accent. A close analysis of this shift, in a previous work,²⁸ suggests a direct link between this intellectual shift and the institutional position of these first Cameroonian Jesuits within the Jesuit organization and the church overall. Jean Luc Enyegue's work also marks a shift in Jesuit historical research in French Africa, moving beyond the cultural and missiological paradigm to address institutional Jesuit history as governance. One reason for Enyegue's shift is also the change in the nature of the archives also related to the evolution of Jesuit jurisdictions worldwide.

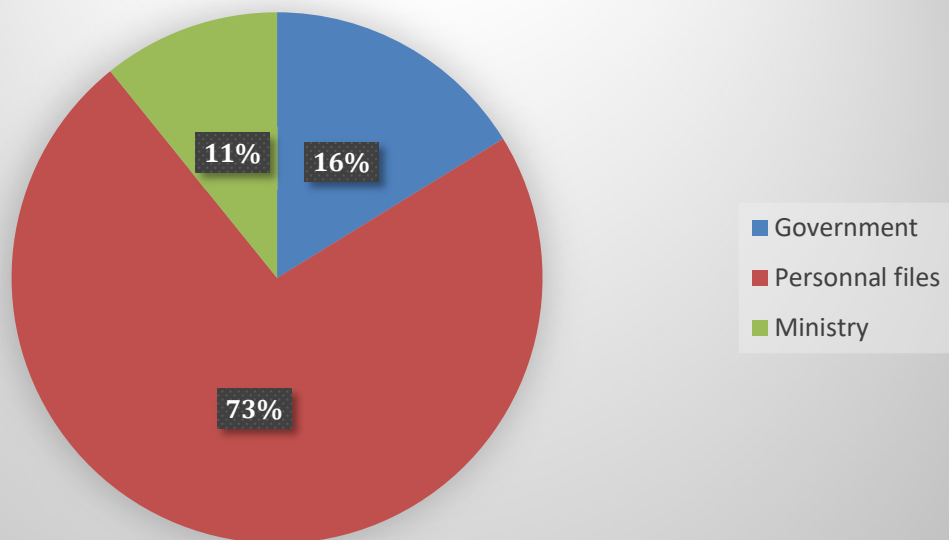
As of today [2019], after the end of European missions in Africa, the archival collections of the former French Provinces of Paris, Lyon, Champagne and Toulouse cover many areas and tend to follow the same six-fold classification: (1) governance and administration; (2) training; (3) houses; (4) missions; (5) personal files of Jesuits; and (6) activities and ministry. The following charts show the volume of documents for area of study or collection before and after the end of missions, and the material which researchers consult the most.

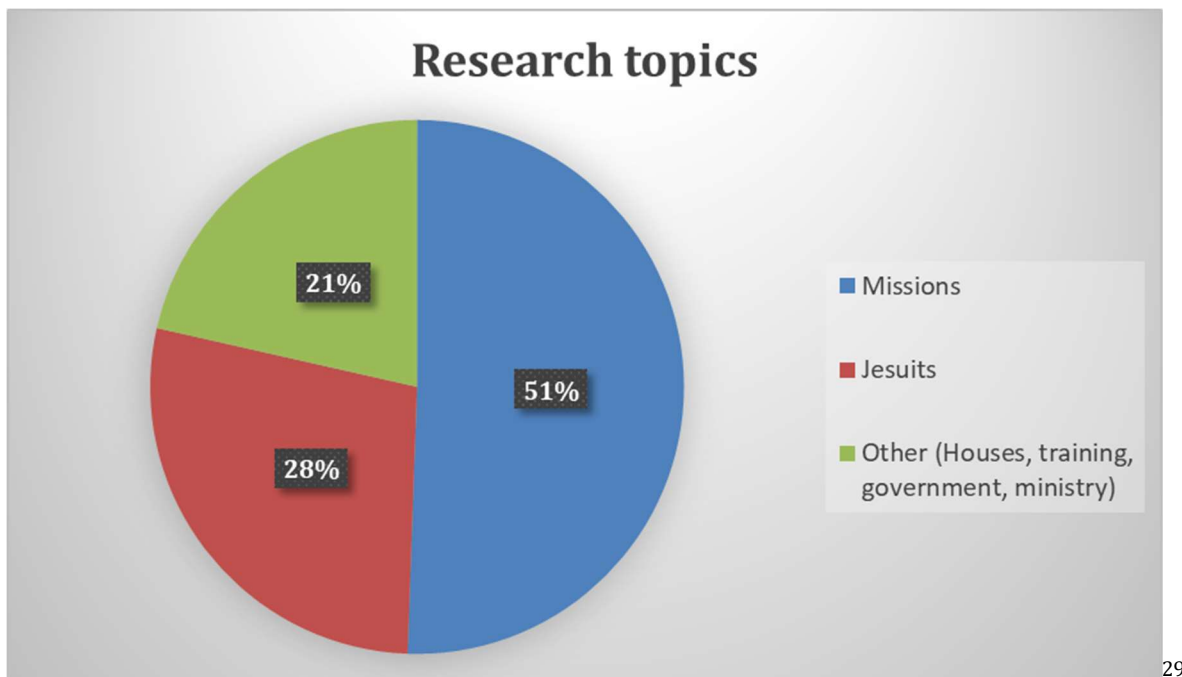
²⁸ Jean Luc Enyegue, "The Creation of the Jesuit Province of West Africa and the Challenges of Africanization, 1946-1978" (Ph.D. Church History, Boston University, 2018); Jean Luc Enyegue, "Africanize Christianity or Christianize Africanity? The Cameroonian Reaction to Global Catholicism in the 1970s," in *Global History and Roman Catholicism* (Global History and Roman Catholicism, Notre Dame, IN, 2019), 22.

Volume of Archives Holdings Before 1976



Volume of Archives Holdings After 1976





29

A thorough analysis of this data shows that, from 1976³⁰, mission files have disappeared while the personal files in the archives have more than doubled. The growth in personal files corresponds to the decreasing membership in the Society and its shifting demographics worldwide. As membership decreases, however, one also realizes that files related to governance have almost doubled, while files on ministries have remained stable with a slower decrease from 11 to 8%. Two reasons may explain the doubling of governance files. It might be related, on the one hand, to an increased bureaucratization due to the amalgamation of provinces. On the other hand, and related to the slower diminution of ministries, the governance of the Society in Francophone Europe might simply have expanded despite the decrease in membership to maintain most of the traditional ministries.

²⁹ Statistics from the archives of the EOF Province

³⁰ In 1976, the four former Provinces of France merged and became the united Province of France

As for research, mission materials, by far, remain the files most consulted by researchers. The charts also show that the content of the collections is less diverse and rich in terms of the provenance of archives. Indeed, the end of the missions and the aftermath of the decade during and after the Second Vatican Council (1962-1965) coincided with the closing of many Jesuit schools and an increase in secularization in France.³¹ Bruno Poucet has traced this secularizing trend in Jesuit schools from the Debré Law of December 31st, 1959.³² This process was confirmed and accelerated by the crisis of 1968.³³ The increasing decline of vocations from the 1970s in France also led to the decline in the direct supervision of schools by the Jesuits and other Catholic institutions,³⁴ and less productivity and diversity of Jesuit archives, since the mission field had been a primary source of Jesuit archives.

Therefore, from 1976, archives holdings are essentially composed of:

- 1) Personal files,
- 2) governance,
- 3) Ministry.

One can therefore make the hypothetical case that future historiographical research on the Society might focus mainly either on Jesuit biographies, especially, as research trends indicate, great intellectual Jesuits such as Henri de Lubac, Gaston Fessard, Pierre Teilhard de Chardin and others; or Jesuit historiography might make a shift toward

³¹ Colin Roberts, "Secularisation and the (Re)Formulation of French Catholic Identity," in *Catholicism, Politics and Society in Twentieth-Century France*, ed. Kay Chadwick (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2000), 268.

³² Bruno Poucet, "Les Collèges Jésuites et la formation des élites: L'impact de la Loi Debré," *Le Télémaque* 39 (2011): 84–85.

³³ Yves Chiron, *L'Église dans la tourmente de 1968* (Paris: Artège, 2018), 113–14; Philippe Chenaux, *Paul VI. Le souverain éclairé* (Paris: cerf, 2015), 221–53.

³⁴ Nicholas Beattie, "Yeast in the Dough? Catholic Schooling in France, 1981-95," in *Catholicism, Politics and Society in Twentieth-Century France*, ed. Kay Chadwick (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2000), 203–7.

institutional and social history, drawn from governance and ministries files. Some of the social sources are not yet sufficiently exploited including the writings related to ministry (Jesuit periodicals), social (*table de Cana, Mission Ouvrière*), pastoral (*Communauté de Vie Chrétienne, Mouvement Chrétien des Cadres, Mouvement Eucharistique des Jeunes*, etc.), spiritual centers, youth chaplaincies, hospitals, prison ministry, etc. The new frontiers of the mission such as Jesuit work among the refugees, the socially marginalized, the poor and the sick could potentially embrace the social and spiritual history of the Society as a new historiographical shift for this new millennium.

JHIA – EOF Collaboration

As technical and institutional collaboration between the JHIA and the EOF Province Archives is being considered, some actions will be taken with repercussions on archival management. First are the procedures and the communicability of the archives' holdings, including issues of church law, and restrictions on access. According to Roland M. Baumann, access is defined as “the authority/right of a researcher (outside of government creators/receivers) to obtain information from or to do research in archival materials in the custody of an archives.”³⁵ Decision on access to Jesuit archives is determined by policies put in place by the archivist, and ultimately by the Province Socius or the Provincial (at the Province level), or by the Superior General (for the ARSI).³⁶ Standardizing those policies and other adaptation to new media, therefore, becomes a necessary step for inter-Provincial collaboration. Further, according to the “Pastoral Function of the Archives” published by the Pontifical Commission of the Cultural Heritage of the Church (Feb. 2, 1997),³⁷ this networking is necessary for new evangelization and

³⁵ Roland M. Baumann, “The Administration of Access to Confidential Records in State Archives: Common Practices and the Need for a Model Law,” *The American Archivist* 49, no. 4 (Fall 1986): 351–52.

³⁶ de Cock, “The Archives of the Society of Jesus.”

³⁷ Gard Robin, “The Pastoral Function of Church Archives,” *Journal of the Society of Archivists* 19, no. 1 (April 1998): 53–62.

the preservation of the religious identity and charisma of the religious institutions involved.³⁸

Specifically, the EOF Province Archives and the JHIA will try to develop a common and proactive policy of production and collection. This endeavor has an impact on appraisal policies. Barbara Baudry, the EOF Province archivist proposes, for example, setting up a project to collect oral archives of former French and Belgian missionaries in Africa. These interviews could be posted on the respective websites of both institutions. Moreover, she argues, whether they are kept in Africa, Belgium or France, archives, for the most part, require a reclassification to established standards. Thus, the sharing of research instruments would be an opportunity to classify or reclassify these archives' holdings according to established standards.³⁹ Standardization of procedures and appraisal would be a necessary first step before digitizing any documents. In the same way, tools and storage sharing (iCloud-type), on computing platforms, can be set up: inventories, digitized documents, work tools such as management tables and lists of transferring archives. The pooling of research instruments will allow better orientation for researchers and more advanced work.

Digital mediation is, indeed, another big issue. In fact, one of the first steps that could be taken is the collection, classification and digitization of the photographic

³⁸ Francesco Marchisano, "The Archival Patrimony of Religious Families as a Key to the Church's Pastoral Mission of Inculturation into the New Millenium," in *"Criptis Tradere et Fideliter Conservare": Archives as "Places of Memory" within the Society of Jesus*, ed. Thomas M. McCoog (Roma: Jesuit General Curia, 2003), 1–8; David Bracken, "The Pastoral Function of Church Archives: A Reflection on the Theological, Juridical and Pastoral Context of Roman Catholic Diocesan Archives," *Irish Theological Quarterly* 82, no. 1 (February 2017): 60–71.

³⁹ In particular, she refers to International archival standards ISAD-G, ISAAR, EAD etc . Sarah Higgins and Gavin Inglis, "Implementing EAD: The Experience of the NAHSTE Project," *Journal of the Society of Archivists* 24, no. 2 (October 2003): 199–214; Jennifer Bunn, "Developing Descriptive Standards: A Renewed Call to Action," *Archives and Records* 1 (September 2013): 1–13; Elizabeth Shepherd and Rachel Pringle, "Mapping Descriptive Standards Accross Domains: A Comparison of ISAD (G) and SPECTRUM," *Journal of the Society of Archivists* 23, no. 1 (April 2002): 17–34.

collection.⁴⁰ It would be done both by the EOF Archives center and the JHIA. In the same way, all of the periodicals concerning Jesuits in Africa could be digitized and made accessible on the web. Virtual exhibitions could also be possible on both websites. Those exhibitions would help promote the archives' holdings. Despite the ongoing dispersion of the archives following the creation of new Jesuit jurisdictions in Africa, the information would remain centralized and easily accessible. The archives' holdings would be highlighted at best while preserving them. This would allow each archive to remain the owner of its heritage while facilitating communication and sharing with others.⁴¹

To make all of these projects possible, we'll have to build, supply, maintain the network, and make it grow. We have already started to plan a training program on archiving that is specific to the Society of Jesus and adapted to the specific archives' holdings of French-speaking Africa. Other more historic trainings may also be offered, internships of French staff in Africa and *vice versa*. Everyone must have a minimum of knowledge about the holdings and the operation of the other institution to be able to work at best, in the same spirit, in a collaborative exchange.

A work of development and awareness could also be done at the level of the Society. The implementation of educational actions, especially in Africa, would be an excellent tool for raising young people's awareness of their history and the history of the Society in their country and region, as well as the unique source which the archives are.

⁴⁰ Photos taken by the French missionaries

⁴¹ A serious challenge to the digitization is its cultural mediation. While Baudry insists on the integral heritage of each archive, the issue of heritage goes beyond the context of a particular archive to include the cultural heritage of past memories, sometimes conflictual especially when they are memories of cultural encounters, and to prepare for what Michel Foucault calls "future memories." See: Erik Granly Jensen, "Access and History: The Digitisation of the Danish Broadcasting Archives and Its Cultural Heritage," *International Journal of Media and Cultural Politics* 8, nos. 2–3 (2012): 306; Michel Foucault, *The Archaeology of Knowledge; and, The Discourse on Language* (New York: Vintage Books, 2010), 191.

Jesuit high schools are a place where such a project could start. Moreover, all this work is aimed at reaching the broader public through the organization of seminars, workshops and publications. The ultimate goal is to advance research and to identify contributors to help us in mission.⁴²

The review and analysis of past and present practices in collecting, preserving, and using Jesuit archives for Francophone Africa is a first step towards new collaboration. This analysis is already an important work that could help researchers. We should, however, be constantly vigilant about the context that surrounds us, its shifts and evolution. According to Terry Cook, a major shift that has occurred in recent decades is the task of the archivist him/herself,⁴³ and how his/her own cultural biases affect the building of an archive.⁴⁴ Therefore, the long-term thinking between the EOF Province archives and JHIA requires constant adaptation, continuous and thorough.

This project is an initial step toward a global approach of managing the archives in the Society of Jesus. Given the particular situation of Africa, its history and the history of its sources, practical tools are needed to adapt to the situation, including digital, collaboration, networks, and other means. The creation of the JHIA (in 2011) is already a first step, a first impetus towards this mutation and adaptation. Moreover, this project fits

⁴² Baudry is raising an important point that connect her thought with the pioneering work of T.R. Schellenberg (1903-1970) who first understood the importance of school libraries for the professionalization of archives work. William W. Hardesty, "'A Proper Function of Library Schools': T.R. Schellenberg's Archives Institute at the University of Texas, 1960," *Libraries & Cultural Record* 42, no. 2 (2007): 129 and 142.

⁴³ Terry Cook, "Archival Science and Postmodernism: New Formulations for Old Concepts," *Archival Science* 1 (2001): 3–24; Terry Cook, "Evidence, Memory, Identity, and Community: Four Shifting Archival Paradigms," *Arch Sci* 13 (2013): 95–120.

⁴⁴ Terry Cook, "Building an Archives: Appraisal Theory for Architectural Records," *American Archivist* 59 (Spring 1996): 136–43; Terry Cook, "Macroappraisal in Theory and Practice: Origins, Characteristics, and Implementation in Canada, 1950-2000," *Archival Science* 5 (2005): 101–61.

more broadly into the desire of the Society of Jesus to manage its archival heritage, to promote it and make it more accessible for researchers.

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