



Kikongo dialect continuum: internal and external classification

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S/TAM/P morphs in Kikongo

Subject Concord 1sg: (y)i- vs. N- (TAM conditioned)

Kimbeko (Eastern Kikongo variety; KongoKing field data)

i-ta-món-a ***ngóma***

SC1sg-PRS.PROG-see-FV drum

'I am playing the drum'

N-gond-edí ***ki-mbóko***

SC1sg-kill-PFV NP7-antilope

'I have killed the antilope'

S/TAM/P morphs in Kikongo

Subject Concord 3sg: u- vs. ka- (linked with focus marking)

Kimbata (Eastern Kikongo variety; KongoKing field data)

náni ***u-n-zúb-idi ?*** ***n-loongí*** ***u-ku-zúb-idi***

who SCd3sg-Ocd1sg-hit-PFV NP1-teacher SCd3sg-Ocd1sg-hit-PFV

'Who hit me? The teacher hit you.'

n-lóongi ***náni*** ***ka-zúb-idi?*** ***mw-ána*** ***ka-zúb-idi***

NP1-teacher who SC3sg-hit-PVF NP1-child SC3sg-hit-PVF

'I have killed the antilope'

Archaic nominal class pairings

Singular: ku- (Class 15) / Plural: ma- (Class 6)

Yombe (Western Kikongo variety; De Grauwe 2009)

kúulu/máalu 'leg(s)'

kúutu/máatu 'ear(s)'

kóoko/móoko or *myóoko* 'arm(s), hand(s)'

(also class 5 singular form: *dibóoko*)

Ntandu (Eastern Kikongo variety; Daeleman 1983)

kookó/mookó 'arm(s), hand(s)'

kuulú/maalú 'leg(s)'

BUT: *kutú/makutú* 'ear(s)' → reanalysis as cl. 5-6

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Project
People
Partners
Fieldwork
Publications
Workshops
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KONGOKING : an interdisciplinary approach to the origins of the Kongo kingdom

KONGOKING is an interdisciplinary and interuniversity research group which aims at contributing to a better understanding of the origins and early history of the Kongo kingdom. Funded by a Starting Grant of the European Research Council under the Seventh Framework Programme (FP7), **KONGOKING** is coordinated by Prof. Koen Bostoen of Ghent University and unites researchers from **Ghent University** (UGent), **Brussels University** (ULB) and the **Royal Museum for Central Africa** in Tervuren (RMCA), as well as from several partner institutions in Africa, Europe and the USA.

The magnificent **Kongo kingdom**, which arose in the Atlantic Coast region of Equatorial Africa, is a famous emblem of Africa's past. It is an exceptionally important cultural landmark for Africans and the African Diaspora. Thanks

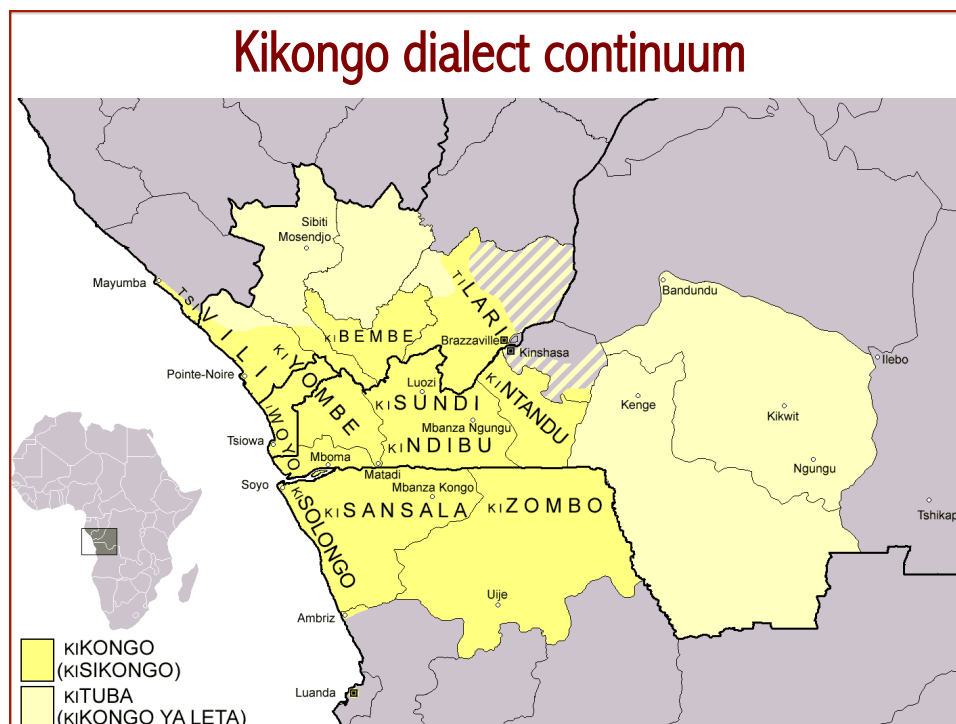



Kongo kingdom map showing its extension around 1800



‘Kongo’

- Cultural/ethnic identity which is primarily linguistically founded
- Kikongo: large dialect continuum with family resemblance structure
- Guthrie’s H10 group
- 4 countries: Angola (including Cabinda), Democratic Republic of the Congo (Kinshasa), Republic of the Congo (Brazzaville), Gabon



Kikongo dialect cluster

- Comprehensive historical-comparative study of Kikongo and surrounding language groups (Kimbundu, Teke, Punu-Shira)
- Earliest written Bantu language data (early 17th c.)
- ‘Ecology of language evolution’: historically best known region of Central-Africa from 15th c. onwards
- Impact of rise and fall of **Kongo Kingdom** and related polities on language change
- **Words-and-things**: language as historical evidence

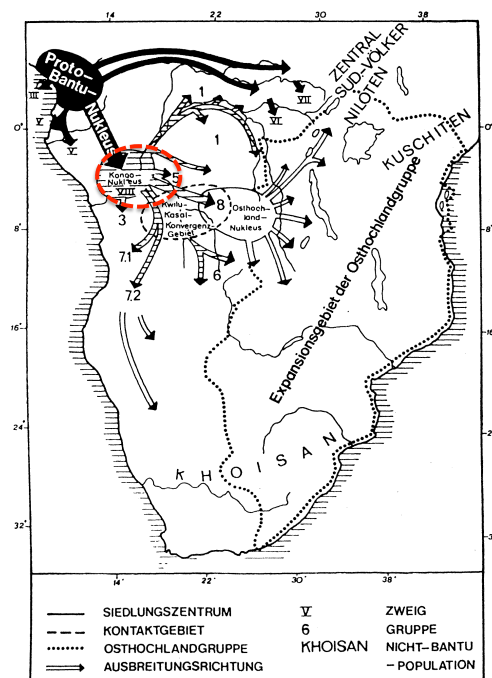
2012 fieldwork campaign

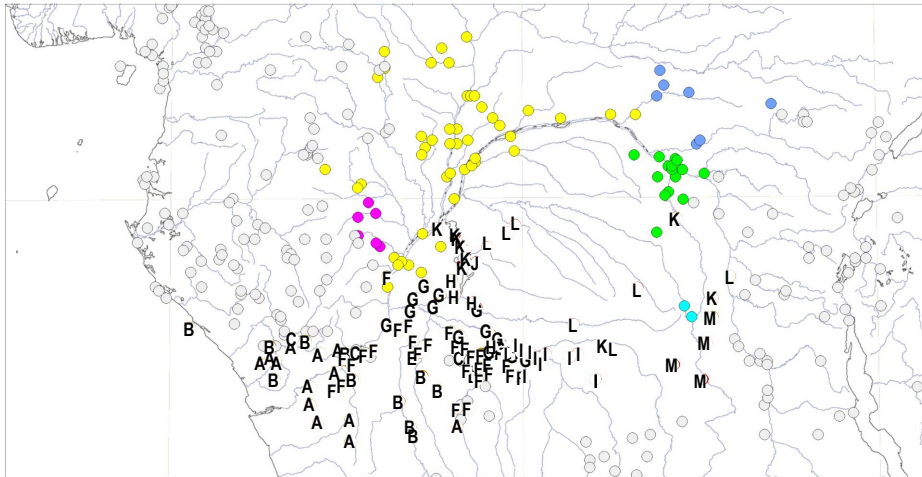
- Lower Congo Province of the DRC
- Poorly documented Eastern varieties: **Kimbata, Kimbeko, Kinkanu, Kimpangu**
- Poorly documented Western varieties: **Ciwoyo, Kisolongo, Cizali, Cimbala, Cilinji, Cizobe**



External classification

- Lower Congo region: a secondary nucleus of early Bantu expansion
- Heine *et al.* (1977): 'Kongo-nukleus'
- Wotzka & Bostoen (2009, unpublished): Lower Congo at beginning of a long-term **wave-of-advance** that resulted in Bantu settlement of the Inner Congo Basin





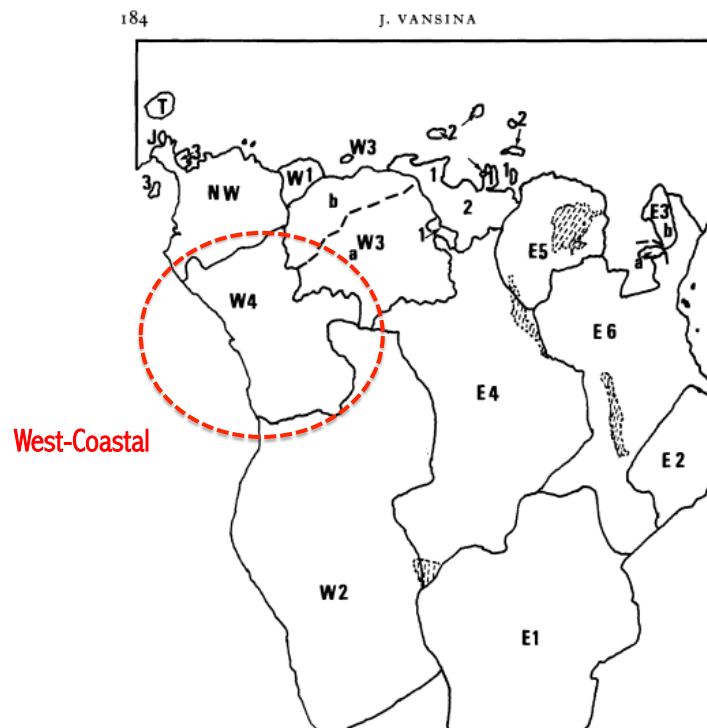
Wotzka & Bostoen (2009, unpublished)

External classification

- Vansina (1995), based on Bastin *et al.* (1999):

‘Narrow West Bantu’

- 1) Sangha (C10, C20)
- 2) South-West (K, R, L10, L22, L50, H41)
- 3) North Zaïre: (a) Inner Basin (C33-35, C50-80, B82); (b) Rivers (C31-32, C36-37, C40)
- 4) West Coastal: B40-80, H (except H41)

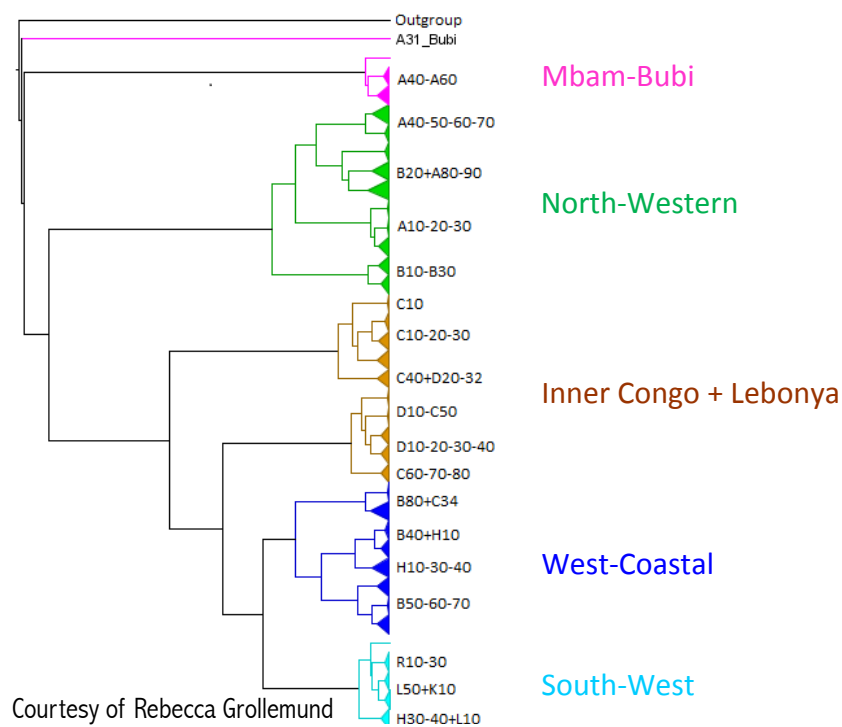


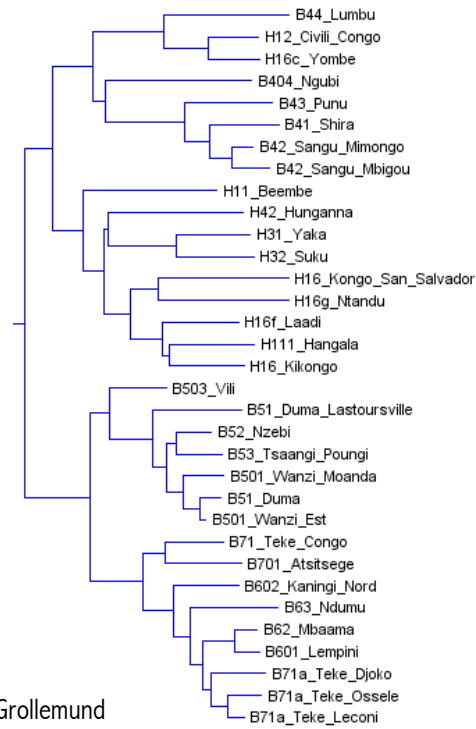
External classification

- Bastin *et al.* (1999): lexicostatistics (different calculations)
 - **Kongo** (H10, except Vili & Yombe): coordinate branch with Yaka-Suku (H30)/Hungan (H40) (60% shared vocabulary)
 - **Vili** (H12) & **Yombe** (H16c): more closely related to Gabonese B40-languages, especially Lumbu (B44) & Bwisi (B45) (65% shared vocabulary)
 - H12/H16c/B44/B45: coordinate with
 - either H10+H30/H40
 - or rest B40 (together coordinate with H10+H30/H40)

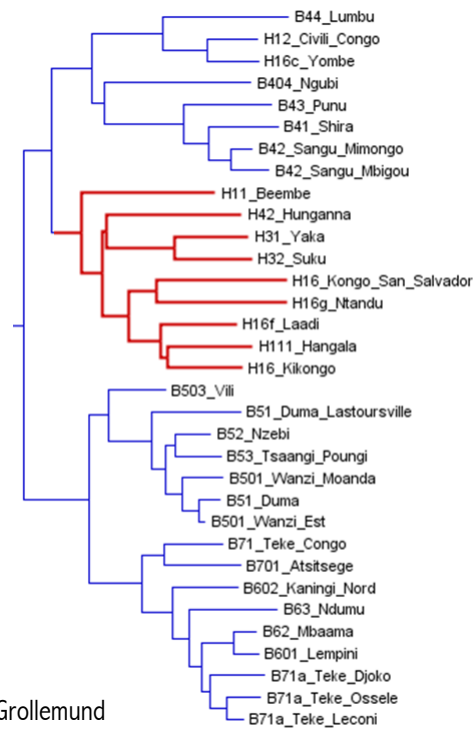
External classification

- Grollemund (2012): Neighbor-Joining
 - Confirmation of **'West-Coastal'** subgroup, forming coordinate branch with **'South-West'** (K, R, H20, L10/50) and together coordinate branch with **'Inner Congo Basin'** (C35, C60-80)
 - Within West-Coastal:
 - » B80+C34 first split-off
 - » Coordinate branches B50 and B70 next split-off
 - » Coordinate H10/30/40 and B40/H12/H16c final split-off



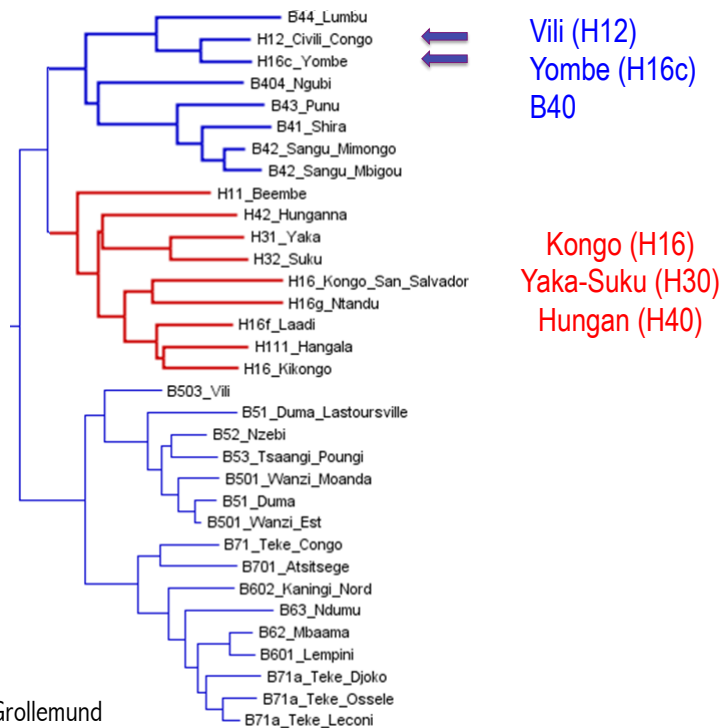


Courtesy of Rebecca Grollemund



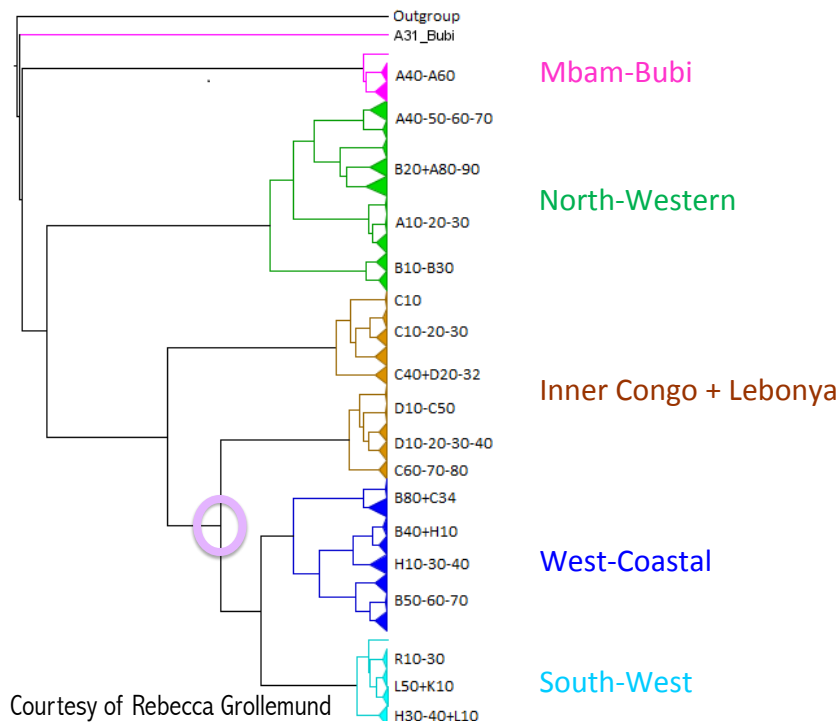
Kongo (H16)
Yaka-Suku (H30)
Hungan (H40)

Courtesy of Rebecca Grollemund



Distinctive lexical isoglosses

<i>(li)tadi</i> 'stone'				<i>(li)manya</i> 'stone'	
North	Laadi	South	Kisikongo	West	Yombe
	Bembe		Mboma		Vili
	Kunyi		Solongo		Woyo (<i>myanya</i>)
	Sundi	Central	Manyanga		
East	Ntandu		Ndibu	B40	Lumbu
	Mpangu		Hangala		Punu
	Mbata	West	Yombe		Sangu
	Mbeko				Shira
	Nkanu				
	Zombo				
BLR distribution: A B C D F H J N				BLR distribution: B C H K L R	

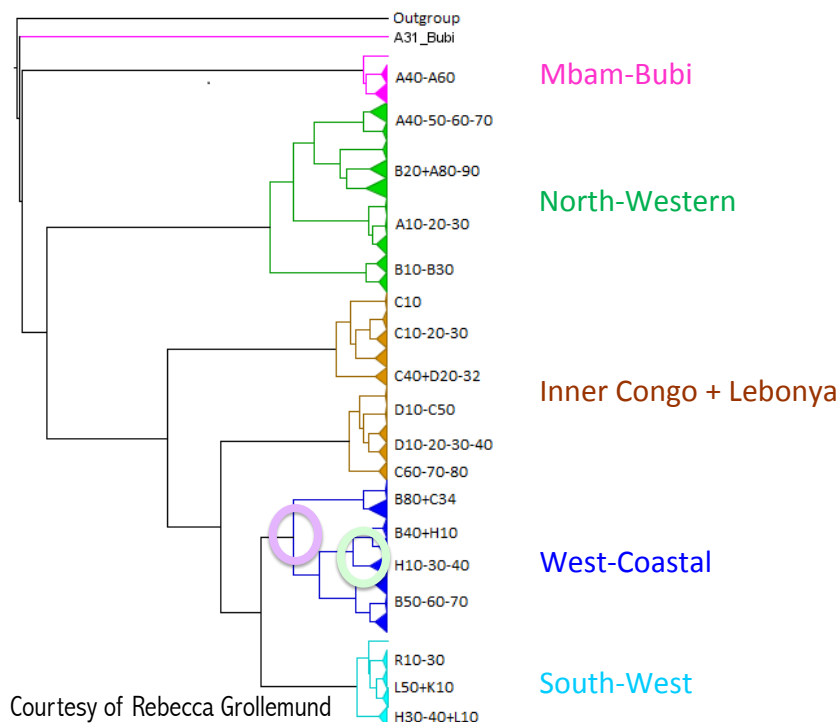


Distinctive lexical isoglosses

<i>mbombo</i> 'nose'				<i>liyilu</i> 'nose'	
North	Laadi	Central	Manyanga	West	Yombe
	Bembe		Ndibu		Vili
East	Ntandu		Hangala		Woyo
	Mpangu	<i>nzunu</i> 'nose'			Zali
	Mbata	South	Kisikongo	B40	Lumbu
	Mbeko		Kisolongo		Bwisi
	Nkanu		Mboma		Ibongo
	Zombo	Central	Ndibu		
< <i>*-bòmbo</i> (A B C D F H L M S)		East	Ntandu	< <i>*-jódu</i> (A B C D E F H J K L R)	

Distinctive lexical isoglosses

tiya 'fire'				mbasu 'fire'	
North	Laadi	Central	Manyanga	West	Yombe
East	Ntandu		Ndibu		Vili
	Mpangu		Hangala		Woyo
	Mbata				Zali
	Mbeko			North	Bembe
	Nkanu				Kunyi
	Zombo	<u>H30</u>	Yaka	<u>B40</u>	Lumbu
South	Kisikongo		Suku		Bwisi
	Mboma	<u>H40</u>	Hungan		Sangu
Kikongo innovation?		Possibly 'West-Coastal' Innovation: B40-80, H10, 30, 40 (< *-bàk- 'burn; be lit'; E F G J S)			



Distinctive lexical isoglosses

<i>-tatika</i> 'to bite'				<i>-tebila</i> 'to bite'	
North	Bembe	Central	Manyanga	West	Yombe
	Kunyi		Ndibu		Vili
	Laadi		Hangala		Woyo (<i>-tebala</i>)
	Sundi	South	Kisikongo		Zali
East	Ntandu			B40	Punu (<i>-rabila</i>)
	Mpangu				
	Mbata				
	Mbeko				
	Zombo				
Possibly Kikongo innovation: < <i>*-tāt-</i> 'tie up'					

Distinctive lexical isoglosses

<i>vata</i> 'village'				<i>bwala</i> 'village'	
North	Laadi (<i>gata</i>)	Central	Manyanga	West	Yombe
East	Ntandu (<i>yata</i>)		Ndibu		Vili
	Mpangu (<i>yata</i>)		Hangala (<i>hàtà</i>)		Woyo + Zali
	Mbata			South	Solongo
	Mbeko (<i>yata</i>)	West	Yombe	<u>B44</u>	
	Nkanu (<i>yata</i>)			Possibly shared innovation	
	Zombo			<i>bula</i> 'village'	
South	Kisikongo			North	Bembe
	Mboma		BLR: C H L	BLR: B C D H L	

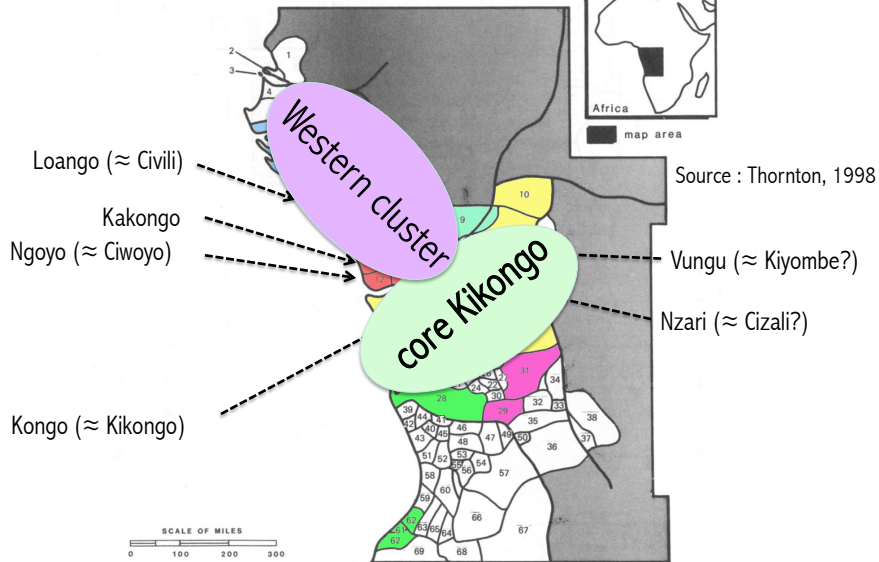
Distinctive lexical isoglosses

-vova 'to speak'				-tuba 'to speak'	
North	Kunyi	West	Yombe	West	Vili
East	Ntandu (-yoya)	Central	Manyanga		Woyo
	Mpangu (-yoya)		Ndibu		Zali
	Mbeko (-yoya)		Hangala (-poya)		Yombe
	Mbata	H30	Yaka	B40	Lumbu
	Zombo			-zonza 'to speak'	
South	Kisikongo			North	Bembe
	Kisolongo				Laadi
	Mboma	BLR: B C H J R S		East	Nkanu

Distinctive lexical cognates

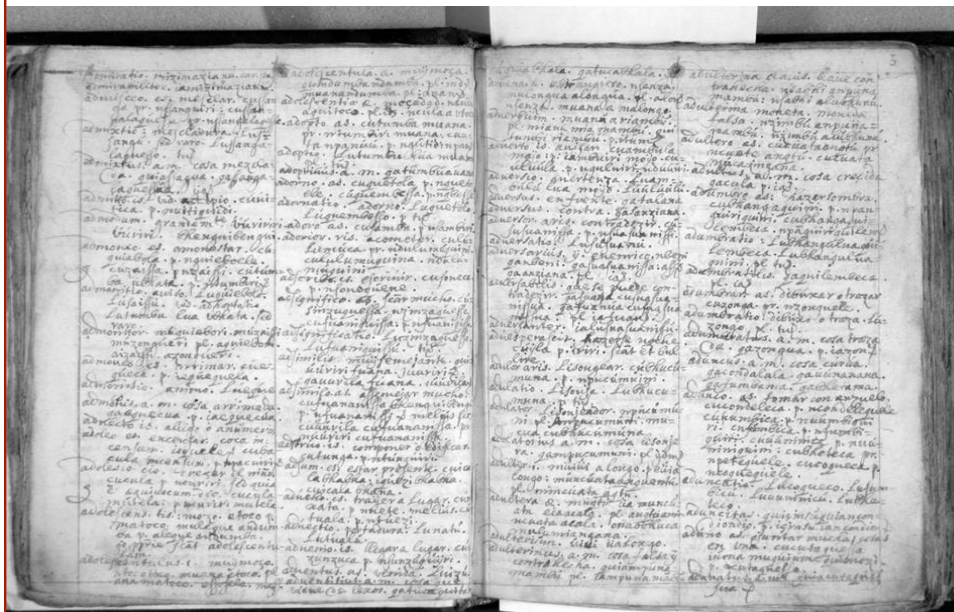
- **S** (Kisikongo, Mboma), **C** (Ndibu, Manyanga, Hangala), and **E** (Ntandu, Mpangu, Mbata, Mbeko, Nkanu) varieties seem to constitute a 'core Kikongo cluster'
- **W** varieties (Yombe, Vili, Woyo, Zali) form a distinct cluster manifesting affinities with B40; Yombe often lexical doublets (W + core Kikongo)
- **N** varieties (Kunyi, Bembe, Laadi) either go with 'core Kikongo' or with **W**

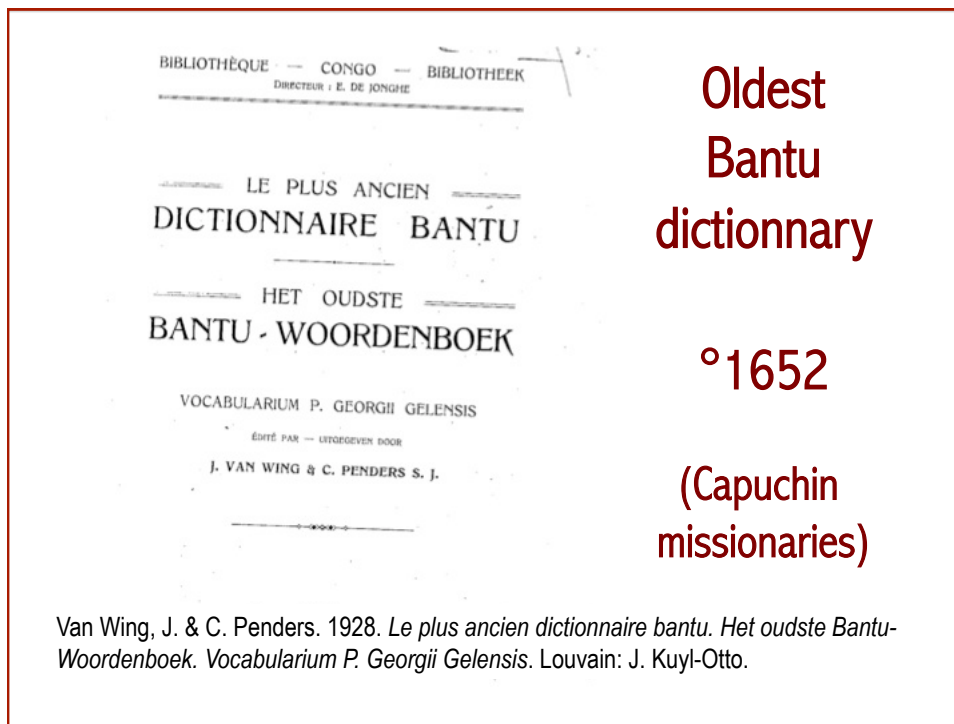
Central-African kingdoms around 1625



Light green: southern extension of Nziko kingdom; Pink: Ndongo kingdom; Green: Angola kingdom and Benguela (Portuguese).

Vocabularium latinum hispanicum e congense = Vocabularium P. Georgii Gelensis (1652; Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale di Roma)



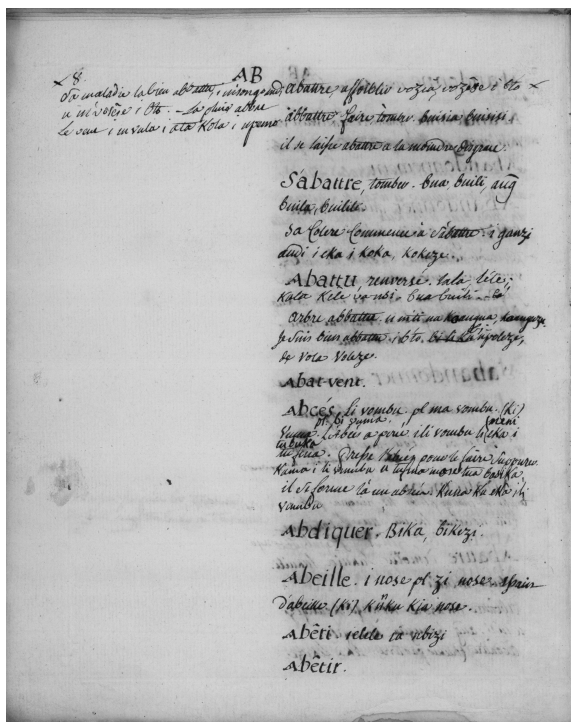


Language variety in *Vocabularium* ?

- MA-research Jasper de Kind (UGent)
- **Kisolongo** (southern coastal variety linked with Mbanza Soyo, first contact with Europeans) or **Kisikongo** (southern inland variety associated with Mbanza Kongo, the capital of the Kongo Kingdom)?
- Phonologically more like Kisolongo, but mainly shared retentions
- Shared morphological innovation with current-day Kisikongo: **e-o-o augment pattern** (Kisolongo has e-e-o)

Bantu augment or pre-prefix

- cf. Prothesis in Banda (Olson, this conference)
- Mostly vocalic morpheme in front of noun prefix; vowel quality predictable from prefix vowel, e.g. *u-mu-* (cl.1), *a-ma-* (cl. 6), *i-mi-* (cl.4) (cf. de Blois 1970)
- Often vowel lowering: *u- a- i- > o- a- e-*
- Merger places articulation: *o- a- e- > e- a- e- / o- a- o- > e- e- e- / a- a- a- / o- o- o-*
- Often augment loss

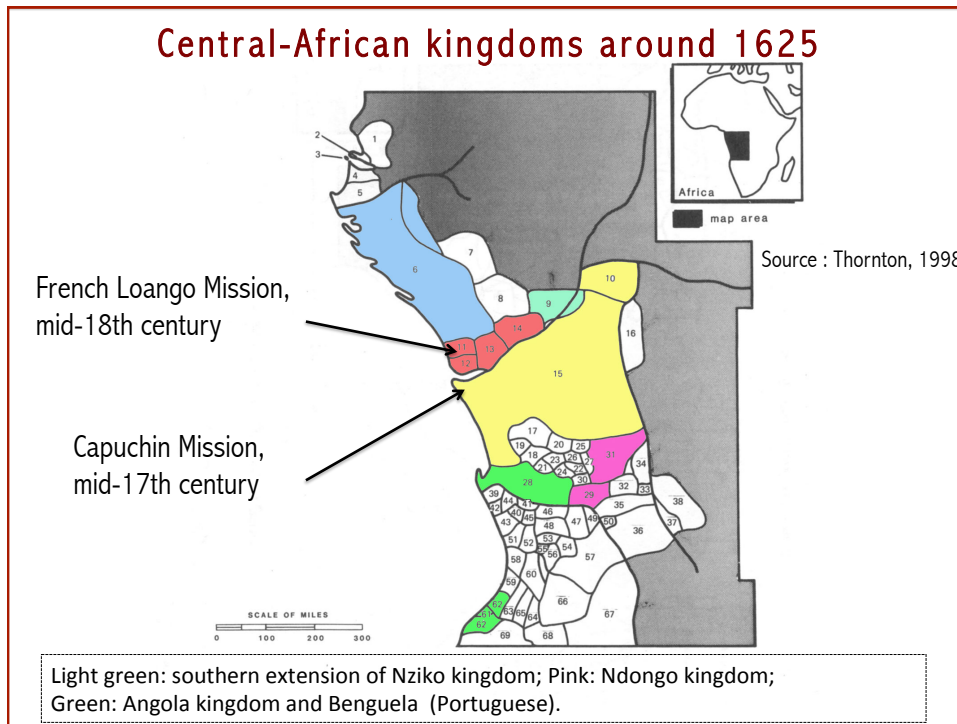


Dictionnaire français et congo

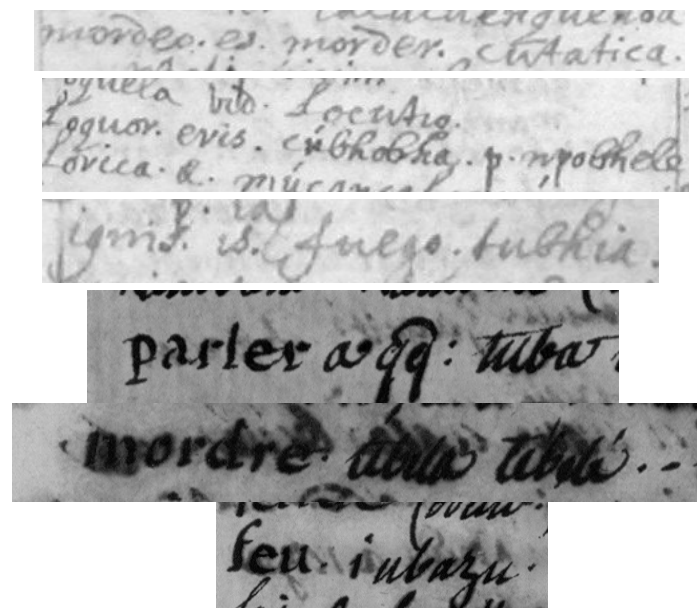
(Besançon; Bibliothèque Municipale, MS N° 525)

°1773

'Mission de Loango'
(Cabinda)



Lexical isoglosses



Lexical isoglosses

	Capuchin dictionary °1652	Loango dictionary °1773
'to bite'	<i>cutatica</i>	<i>tebila</i>
'to speak'	<i>cúbhobha</i>	<i>tuba</i>
'fire'	<i>tubhia</i>	<i>inbazu</i>
'stone'	<i>etari</i>	<i>limaniã/mamaniã</i>
'village'	<i>ebhata</i>	<i>vata/bwala</i>
'nose'	<i>luzunu</i>	<i>liilu</i>

Morphological change at work between 17th & 19th century

- Evolution of noun prefixes of cl. 1/3 (*mu-*) and cl. 4 (*mi-*) to (homorganic) syllabic nasals (*N-*) (cf. Swahili)
- 17th century Kikongo variety mostly NV structure

	Vocabularium	Van Wing & Penders
'woman'	<i>mu-quentu</i>	<i>mu-kentu</i>
's.o. stingy'	<i>mú-cobho</i>	<i>mu-kovo</i>
'person'	<i>mu-ntu</i>	<i>mu-ntu</i>
'young boy'	<i>mu-leque</i>	<i>mu-leke</i>
'year, season'	<i>mu-aca /mi-aca</i>	<i>mw-aka /my-aka</i>
'trap'	<i>mu-tambu/mi-tambu</i>	<i>mu-tambu/mi-tambu</i>
'pole'	<i>mu-culu/mi-culu</i>	<i>mu-kulu/mi-kulu</i>

Morphological change at work between 17th & 19th century

- 17th century Kikongo variety: sometimes N- structure; often doublets; internal variation
- Non-homorganic nasal

	Vocabularium	Van Wing & Penders
'warrior'	<i>m'tani / atani</i>	<i>mu-tani / a-tani</i>
'spy'	<i>nssengui / anssenqui</i>	<i>nsengi / a-nsengi</i>
'hunter'	<i>múcongo / ancongo</i> <i>ncongo / ncongo</i>	<i>mu-kongo / a-nkongo</i>
'boss'	<i>múculuntú / aculuntú</i> <i>nculuntú / aculuntú</i>	<i>mu-kuluntu / a-kuluntu</i>

Morphological change at work between 17th & 19th century

- 19th century Kikongo: always homorganic, syllabic N-

	Vocabularium	Bentley (1887)
'cook'	<i>mulambi</i>	<i>n'lambi</i>
'young boy'	<i>muleque</i>	<i>n'leke</i>
'woman'	<i>muquentu</i>	<i>n'kento</i>
'flame'	<i>múlacú</i>	<i>n'laku/n'laku</i>
'dinner'	<i>mulequelo</i>	<i>n'lekelo/n'lekelo</i>
'tissue'	<i>mulélé</i>	<i>n'lele/n'lele</i>
'cloth(s)'		<i>m'vwatu /m'vwatu</i>
'year'		<i>m'vu</i>