

# **Rethinking the Katangese Secession**

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## **Abstract**

This article, in analysing the Katangese secession of 1960-63, argues that it should be primarily understood not simply as the result of external machinations but, at least as importantly, as the initiative of indigenous Katangese political leaders. It charts the development of the Katangese national project amongst self-consciously 'indigenous' Katangese leaders, who responded to what they saw as an imposed and illegitimate Congolese nation-state by constructing a national imagery rooted in a mythico-historical reconstruction of a usable Katangese past. The article explains how this was utilised by the Katangese state during the secession to perform an 'authentic' Katangese national identity. In so doing, the article situates the Katangese draws attention to the parallels between the Katangese nation-state project and attempts by post-colonial states to perform nationhood elsewhere in Africa.

## **Introduction**

Congo declared independence from Belgium on 30 June 1960. Eleven days later, the southern province of Katanga declared itself independent from Congo. The Katangese secession is commonly understood, primarily or exclusively, as the result of external machinations by forces hostile to the meaningful independence of the Congolese nation-state. Belgian colonial and military officials, and multinational mining capital, are portrayed as the main protagonists, seeking to maintain their economic and political interests against the potentially radical nationalism of the Congolese central government of Prime Minister Patrice Lumumba. The indigenous leaders of the Katangese state, to the extent they are analysed at all, are viewed as the puppets of these forces, denied political agency or legitimacy. Lumumba himself, meeting US Secretary of State Christian Herter weeks after the secession, stated: 'There is no problem in Katanga. There could be a referendum, and you would see that the people did not want secession. [Katangese leader Moïse] Tshombe is simply an instrument of the Belgians.'<sup>2</sup> The apparent role of the Katangese political leadership in the

murder of Lumumba certainly confirmed the illegitimacy of their state amongst contemporary observers and the leaders of newly independent African states.<sup>3</sup>

However, this stance has been maintained in most subsequent analysis of the Congolese crisis of the early 1960s, the UN intervention and the coming to power of Mobutu Sese Seko as Congolese leader. In particular, Ludo de Witte's generally exemplary analysis of the assassination of Lumumba consistently (if indirectly) dismisses any indigenous basis for the secession: 'Officially, power was held by Africans in secessionist Katanga. In fact, Belgians were pulling all the strings.'<sup>4</sup> Even the most sophisticated recent analyses of the crisis fail to explore the motivations of secessionist leaders or characterise them simply in terms such as 'pro-Western'.<sup>5</sup> Considerable evidence in fact exists of the agency of the Katangese authorities, their sometimes difficult relations with their various Belgian counterparts and, for most of the period of the secession following Lumumba's death, significant antagonism and distrust between Katanga and most Belgian actors.<sup>6</sup> Whilst the secession was undeniably shaped by external interests and actors, the unwillingness to recognise an alternative basis to political authority than the Congolese central state means there is no attempt to explore the motivations of the mostly southern Katangese political elites who initiated the secession and continued to maintain the Katangese state long after foreign support had largely been withdrawn. Even today, the idea of secession fires the political imagination in Katanga: when, in March 2013, the Mai-Mai guerillas known as Bakata Katanga briefly occupied the centre of the Katangese capital Lubumbashi, they flew the flag of the Katangese state of the early 1960s to consciously express a link to their predecessors.<sup>7</sup>

It is perhaps necessary to state that there is no intention here to revive the contemporaneous demonisation of Lumumba.<sup>8</sup> However, the tendency of his sympathisers to assume (rather

than demonstrate) the existence of popular support for the Congolese central state and its government, with no recognition or analysis of the uneven nature of Congolese history, human and social geography and the consequently diverse relationships between the state, government and the people of this vast territory at the moment of independence is ultimately ahistorical, denying agency to those Africans who adopted a sincerely held opposition to that state. This article does not seek to justify nor to offer retrospective legitimacy to the Katangese secession; merely to suggest that it rested in significant part on local factors, particularly the assertion by Katangese political leaders of an autochthonous identity as the basis of their claim to statehood. These leaders asserted that linked processes of demographic, economic and political change wrought by Belgian colonialism had undermined their legitimate claim to power, bringing ‘foreigners’ into their midst and (in the late colonial period) handing nascent state power to them. Their claim to Katangese statehood rested in significant part on a constructed memory of pre-colonial greatness that owed little or nothing to Belgian or other international interests.

This article therefore argues that a full understanding of the secession necessitates an investigation of its self-declared ‘indigenous’ leadership and their political dynamics, in the run-up to and during the secession itself. Their alternative conceptualisation of post-colonial statehood was, it should be recognised, only one of a number of such alternative imaginings of post-colonial administrative boundaries and ‘national’ identities. It was for example not self-evident whether France’s African territories would achieve independence as large west and central African federations or as a larger number of small independent states (as ultimately occurred). Notwithstanding the subsequent (1963) decision by the Organisation of African Unity to recognise colonial borders as the basis of independent state borders, it was by no means clear at the time of the secession that existing colonial borders would

necessarily be replicated in the post-colonial period – the subsequent sense of inevitability is a primary example of reading backwards from historically contingent outcome to evident causation.<sup>9</sup>

In making the secession a reality, however, Katangese leaders appreciated Weberian notions of modern statehood: Katanga sought to monopolise taxation revenue, primarily generated by the province's vast and globally significant mining industry; and the expression of armed force, expressed by the Katangese gendarmerie, led by Belgian and later mercenary commanders but composed primarily of troops recruited from 'indigenous' Katangese societies. Whilst not offering a detailed history of the international politics of the secession, the article briefly explores both the physical deployment of Katangese military forces against both United Nations and Congolese state forces, and the deployment of these forces for propaganda purposes on the Katangese home front, via sympathetic media. As well as Belgian and US archival sources, the article uses Katangese state documents, its communications with other actors and with mining companies.

Despite its lack of international recognition, the Katangese political project closely resembled the assertion of national independence in the rest of Africa (including the Congo itself). In seeking to turn an imagined community into a functioning state, Katangese political leaders constructed a 'usable past', emphasising aspects of the territory's history and silencing others.<sup>10</sup> This article explores the ways in which Katangese leaders and officials (along with their foreign sympathisers) sought to project and perform an authentic nation-state, rooted (like its western models) in a mythico-historical sense of ancient belonging, and the use made by Katangese leaders of both public and media space to perform and assert the nation-state in which it sincerely believed. This involved the deployment of an autochthonous claim to a

particular form of citizenship, which, as Geschiere and his fellow authors have ably demonstrated, has become central to African political expression since the continent's democratic turn in the 1990s.<sup>11</sup> Such initiatives were common in the decolonisation period, as political elites frequently made claims based on autochthony as a way to claim (in a few cases) outright independence from or significant autonomy within new independent states. An instructive comparison may be drawn with the political assertion of Bugandan royal authority vis-a-vis the Ugandan state in the run-up to independence in 1962.<sup>12</sup> This is not however to claim that autochtonist claims made by some nationalist politicians were a more 'authentic' reflection of indigenous culture than their more cosmopolitan counterparts: whilst Katangese politicians sought, as will be shown, to associate themselves with the authority of indigenous chiefs, they were no more willing than their political opponents to concede meaningful power to them.<sup>13</sup>

### **Imagining Katanga in colonial Congo**

Observers of the Congo crisis tend to neglect Katanga's largely autonomous existence in the period of Belgian colonial rule. Geographically the Congo was defined by the basin of the river which gave the country its name. However, as royal possession and then as colonial state, Congo, like many other colonies, brought together a disparate group of kingdoms and polities which had no well-established prior relations. This disparity was then reinforced by the decidedly limited development of Congo by Belgium, and the sheer scale of the land it had conquered but only partly controlled. Although significant investment in primary education and infrastructure did occur in the late colonial period, the particularly abject neglect of *internal* economic and social development by the Belgian authorities (as opposed to export-oriented economic activity), and the lack of meaningful political reform of the sort carried out by French and British late colonial authorities, reinforced the lack of a proto-national identity

amongst many of its peoples. Severe restrictions were placed on the internal movement of colonial subjects. Most importantly, the outright ban on territory-wide political parties maintained until the elections of December 1957 meant that ethno-regional cultural associations provided the basis for anti-colonial political expression and became in turn the basis for the majority of Congo's political parties in the rapid process of decolonisation.<sup>14</sup>

From the outset, Katanga had been governed distinctly from the rest of Congo, reflecting its mineral wealth, the commercial interests that sought to exploit them and the outsourcing to these companies of the territory's administration.<sup>15</sup> Whilst the rest of Congo was overseen from 1908 by the Belgian state under the *Charte coloniale*, Article 22 of that charter placed Katangese administration in the hands of the *Comité Spécial du Katanga* (CSK), dominated by mining interests.<sup>16</sup> Indeed, many supporters of the secession sincerely believed that Katanga was politically independent from Congo until 1933, when it was partly integrated into Congolese administration, whilst retaining substantial practical autonomy.<sup>17</sup> Katanga's mineral economy meant it was integrated more into southern Africa than the rest of Congo: its railroads and supply routes ran southwards (and east and west) to Durban, Lobito and Lourenço Marques. There was no tarred road connecting Katanga to the capital in Leopoldville, which could for decades be reached more quickly by rail and ferry via Cape Town than overland. Social and economic relations in Katanga were shaped both by the mining industry (and the infrastructure built to support it) and by African reactions to the possibilities it created. Instructive in this respect is the extension of the northern railway to Kasai Baluba territory in 1928. Kasai supplied food to Katanga's mines, but the railway also brought increasing numbers of Kasaian migrant workers to Katanga, and with them came profound political consequences (see below).

The political and economic impact of colonialism reconstructed Katanga's indigenous societies in important ways that can only be touched upon here.<sup>18</sup> For example, the Lunda kingdom, integrated into the colonial state, was neutered by its separation, both from the dynamic mining region in south-eastern Katanga and (by the drawing of colonial borders) from those parts of its territory now in Angola and Northern Rhodesia.<sup>19</sup> The Kasai Luba, who had historically lived within smaller chieftaincies, were (partly as a result) increasingly perceived - via Belgian ethnic stereotyping, but also self-identification - as positively attuned to individual advancement via education and migrant labour, and were accordingly recruited and promoted to increasingly senior positions in the mines and other workplaces.<sup>20</sup> The political consequences of the stabilisation of migrant labour in southern Katanga's mining towns from the late 1920s were not seriously considered by the Belgian authorities.

Whilst the global value of Katanga's mineral resources subsequently underwrote the secession, this wealth should not be understood simply as an external factor. Katanga's mineral wealth, producing 75% of Congolese mineral output and earning 50% of the colony's total income, was well understood by local African elites, some of whom came from societies whose pre-colonial prosperity rested in part on copper mining and trade.<sup>21</sup> The minerals boom of the post-war period drew large numbers of Kasaian migrants to work and settle in Katanga: by 1957, they made up 22% of the population of the Katangese capital Elisabethville, compared to 6.3% of the Katangese Lunda.<sup>22</sup> In the late 1950s, the belated conversion of urban residence into political identity, via the 1957 elections (in which the four 'burgomasters' elected in Elisabethville were all from non-indigenous ethnicities) prompted the foundation of new 'autochthon' cultural and political organisations. The following year, the *Groupement des associations de l'empire lunda* (Gassomel) was established by Lunda elites. Gassomel, as its name suggests, linked contemporary political expression to powerful

pre-colonial identities.<sup>23</sup> Its most prominent leader, Moïse Tshombe, embodied the tacit alliance between educated elites and chiefly authorities, symbolised in his marriage to the daughter of the Lunda king, the Mwaant Yav. This linkage between consciously indigenous political culture and proto-nationalist politics would be central to the subsequent claim to Katangese statehood, arguably providing more robust material for the discursive aspects of nation-building than the comparatively thin cultural claims that could be mustered by its Congolese counterpart. The centrality of such autochthonous claims should not however be taken to mean that Katangese nationalist politics was wholly supported by southern Katangese residents, on behalf of which they claimed to speak – nor even that they unproblematically represented the aspirations of the chiefly authorities with which they cooperated.

In the late 1950s, as the Belgian authorities belatedly raised the prospect of self-rule, worried indigenous chiefs asserted their authority through recourse to historical rights, as did many peripheral kingdoms in late-colonial Africa at this time.<sup>24</sup> In January 1959, the Lunda king the Mwaant Yav wrote to the Belgian authorities, attacking the ‘... unforgivable aberration’ ... of ...“considering the opinions which emanate from the urban centers as representing the general feeling of this province’.<sup>25</sup> By 1959, the term ‘Lunda empire’ had become politically ubiquitous in Lunda aristocratic and political discourse. As Bustin identifies, anthropological studies, such as those of Crine, ‘...supplied the Mwaant Yaav and his entourage with a good deal of the theoretical and scientific ammunition they needed to enhance the credibility of the imperial concept.’<sup>26</sup> The Mwaant Yav’s articulation of a political dispensation based on the pre-colonial Lunda kingdom was, notwithstanding its apparent impracticality, an important element of the secessionist imagination.

What distinguished Katanga from the many places where similar claims failed to translate into overt secessionism was of course its extraordinary mineral wealth; in this sense, political economy played a vital role in defining what cultural ideas could be converted into a credible political project. Mineral wealth was however not simply an external factor; local elites believed this indigenous wealth was in danger of being exploited by another group of outsiders, namely the poorer peoples and provinces of Congo, and via their political representation, a centralised, distant and largely unaccountable state controlled from Leopoldville.<sup>27</sup> The physical manifestation of this danger was Kasai migration to urban Katanga and the growing political mobilisation of this ‘foreign’ population.

Gassomel’s Lunda ethnic base was, however, numerically insufficient to secure political success in the new electoral environment. Alliances were formed with other indigenous elites to form the *Confédération des Associations Tribales du Katanga* (Conakat) in October 1958. Godefroid Munongo, Conakat leader and brother of the BaYeke chief the Mwami, wrote to Governor André Schoeller in February 1959 to express the party’s concerns: ‘The native Katangans have good reason to wonder if the authorities did not accord permanent residence permits to the people from Kasai in our towns so that the natives [of Kasai] can, because of their ever-increasing numbers, crush those from Katanga.’<sup>28</sup> In May 1959, Conakat declared itself in favour of a federal system ‘...in which the reins of command will have to be in the hands of authentic Katangese...’<sup>29</sup> Two months later Conakat formally became a political party, at which point Tshombe took over as its leader.<sup>30</sup> Given Conakat’s supposed pro-European position during the secession, it is important to recall its bitter criticism of the perceived bias of colonial officials in favour of the stereotypically enterprising Baluba Kasai, whom Conakat viewed as being un-African and ‘close to the whites’.<sup>31</sup> Alexis Kishiba, in his seminal article, ‘*Katangais, ou es tu?*’, expressed the danger of a direct transfer of power

from Belgium to the Kasaians: ‘Katangan ...If you don’t say anything, a language will be imposed on you and it will not necessarily be a language from the Katanga Province.’<sup>32</sup>

In this atmosphere, Conakat’s leaders - Moïse Tshombe, Godefroid Munongo and Evariste Kimba - constructed an image of Katanga ostensibly uniting the province’s indigenous ethnicities in a political project designed to maintain its relative prosperity in alliance with settler interests and mining capital, whilst simultaneously resisting the impact of ‘outsider’ migrant labour hitherto encouraged by the mining industry. Conakat sought to incorporate within this not only the main southern Katangese ethnicities (Lunda, Bayeke, Batabwa, etc) but also the northern Katangese Baluba, first via an abortive alliance with Jason Sendwe’s Balubakat party (see below), and then with the support of the Luba king Kasongo Nyembo, a relative of Evariste Kimba. Kimba himself sought ‘...to demonstrate to the settlers that Katanga was not a desert before the arrival of the Europeans and that this province could not be made to serve...as a region for massive European settlement.’<sup>33</sup> Munongo offered a similar analysis:

To serve certain political designs, people have pretended that the Katanga did not exist, that it was a construction of the colonizers. This is to deny that when the first white explorers discovered the part of Africa called Katanga they found three monarchies which were not only bound by family, economic and social links but – and this is by far the most important – their historic destiny had been linked for centuries.<sup>34</sup>

The monarchies, with their history as powerful trading and raiding empires, provided the mythico-historical basis for a Katangese nation-state which could establish post-colonial trading relationships with corporations such as the mining company *Union Minière du Haut-Katanga* (UMHK) without losing their sovereignty.

René Lemarchand concluded in 1962 that one of the three important factors explaining the claim to self-determination, alongside settler and Belgian metropolitan interests, was

...the sense of economic grievance which permeates the attitude of the so-called “genuine” Katangese towards the inhabitants of the other provinces. ... regional differences in the distribution of economic resources operated to aggravate latent tensions among ethnic groups, so that economic stratification tended to coincide with tribal divisions. In a sense, therefore, tribal antagonisms must be viewed as symptoms of economic grievances. The fact that the Conakat succeeded in rallying the support of otherwise unrelated tribal entities (Bayeke, Lunda, Batabwa, etc.) suggests indeed that these grievances were an important source of solidarity among its members.<sup>35</sup>

Conakat however failed to secure the effective inclusion of Balubakat into the secessionist project. Lumumba’s *Mouvement National Congolais* (MNC-L) sought to establish itself as a ‘national’ Congolese party, but in Katanga its alliance between the more radical wing of Balubakat gave it a distinct ethnic partiality, confirming the danger of Katangese subordination by a MNC-led Leopoldville government. This contributed, Lemarchand suggests, to the alliance with the settler organisation, the *Union Katangaise*, into which Conakat entered in May 1959.<sup>36</sup> This association with an organisation, some of whose leaders were undoubtedly white supremacists, poisoned Conakat’s relations with the many parties throughout Congo which otherwise shared its federalist leanings, such as the *Alliance des Bakongo* (ABAKO), the militant party led by Congo’s first president Joseph Kasavubu, whose demand for immediate self-government did not prevent it articulating specifically Bakongo interests.

The subsequent sub-secession of northern Katanga and the formation of the northern Lualaba province in October 1960, led by Balubakat, showed the failure to integrate this area into the secessionist state. This certainly demonstrates the contradictions inherent in the Katangese state project, but these were not qualitatively different from similar contradictions and tensions inherent in many nationalist projects in Africa, most obviously that of the Congo

itself. Conakat is therefore best understood as a ‘nationalist’ movement – across the continent at the same time, such movements sought to disguise their often parochial origins, reflecting in turn the profoundly uneven socio-economic and cultural impact of colonialism on already heterogeneous African societies, in their attempts to carve nation-states out of ambiguous and competing historical claims and territories that had experienced what Crawford Young termed ‘differential modernisation’.<sup>37</sup> Like most other nationalist movements, Conakat relied in significant part for the legitimation of its claims to authenticity and representativeness on propagandists, financiers and other external backers, particularly from the former colonial state. Like other mineral-rich colonies seeking independence in Africa at this time, it sought to ensure that a greater proportion of the revenues resulting from local mineral wealth stayed within the territory producing them, and it tried to ensure that jobs created within that industry went to the ‘locals’ they claimed as their people.<sup>38</sup>

### **Congolese independence and Katangese secession, 1960**

As Congolese independence approached, political competition took the form of ethnic clashes between indigenous groups and Kasai-Baluba in Katanga’s towns. Conakat, like nationalist parties elsewhere in Africa, asserted control over public space by insisting on the carrying of its membership card by those engaged in economic activity – in Katanga however, such demands took on a distinctly ethnic autochthon-outsider form. Rioting occurred in January and March 1960, in the run-up to the May 1960 elections that paved the way for independence. In those elections, which Young characterises as amounting to an ethnic census, Conakat won eight of the 16 national assembly seats in Katanga, and 25 of 60 provincial seats, securing 32% of the vote, a lower percentage than the Balubakat Cartel.<sup>39</sup> Conakat however skilfully constructed a broader coalition, establishing a bloc of 38 of the 60

provincial seats.<sup>40</sup> Although efforts were made to establish a broad-based government, Balubakat claimed electoral fraud and refused to take its seats, leaving its northern Katangese supporters unrepresented. Although some Luba in the Kamina area were supportive of Conakat, the ethnic and economic divide between southern and northern Katanga had more generally taken on political form, and would soon become the basis of a military conflict.

It was in practice the mutiny of the Congolese *Force Publique* in the days following Congolese independence, which provided the excuse for the declaration of an independent Katanga. The mutiny led thousands of European residents to flee abroad: Belgium, settler representatives and Conakat leaders warned of economic and societal collapse, supposedly resulting from Lumumba's malign leadership and radical agitation. Following Lumumba's refusal to accept Belgium's 'offer' of military intervention to bring about order, elements of the divided Belgian government, seeking to establish a counterweight to Lumumba's government, threw their weight behind an effort to secure mineral and strategic interests via secession. Accordingly, on 11 July, the Conakat-dominated Katangese assembly declared independence in the following terms:

The independence of the Congo is an established fact since June 30, 1960. ... Throughout the Congo and particularly in Katanga and in Leopoldville province, we see a tactic of disorganization and terror at work, a tactic which we have seen in... many countries now under Communist dictatorship... The Katangan government was elected by a provincial assembly, itself elected on the basis of a program for order and peace. Under these circumstances, and before the dangers we would bring down upon us by prolonging our submission to the arbitrary will and Communistic intentions of the central government, the Katangan government has decided to proclaim the independence of Katanga.

**THIS INDEPENDENCE IS TOTAL.** However, aware of the imperative necessity for economic cooperation with Belgium, the Katangan government, to which Belgium has just granted the assistance of its own troops to protect human life, calls upon Belgium to join with Katanga in close economic community. Katanga calls upon Belgium to continue its

technical, financial, and military support. It calls upon her to assist in re-establishing order and public safety.<sup>41</sup>

Conakat leaders' attempt to capture the authority of indigenous royal leaders was formalised in the new Katangese constitution with the establishment of a Grand Council of 20 chiefs; ten chiefs including the Mwaant Yav were appointed as Ministers of State. Yet none of this translated into practical political authority; whilst the chiefs were granted substantial autonomy in their own areas, central state administration and relations with the mining industry remained with Conakat's leaders. In this sense, the Katangese secession was in no sense a direct articulation of chiefly power, but instead drew on neo-traditional forms of legitimisation of a decidedly modern form of nationalist organisation.<sup>42</sup>

Katangese secession was followed on 9 August by a declaration of independence by political leaders in diamond-rich South Kasai. Breaking diplomatic relations with Belgium, Congolese Prime Minister Lumumba called upon the United Nations to bring a rapid and forcible end to the secession.<sup>43</sup> The UN accordingly recognised the unity of the Congo and called for the withdrawal of Belgian forces. It dispatched its second ever 'blue helmets' peacekeeping force; by the end of July, 8,400 UN troops (many from recently independent Asian and African nations) were in Congo.<sup>44</sup> However, the UN Security Council, whilst resolving that '...the entry of the United Nations Force into the province of Katanga is necessary for the full implementation of this resolution...', simultaneously affirmed that '...the United Nations Force in the Congo will not be a party to or in any way intervene in or be used to influence the outcome of any internal conflict...'.<sup>45</sup> Much then depended on whether the secession could be ended by negotiations, or would require the use of force. When UN Secretary General Dag Hammarskjöld's Special Representative Ralph Bunche visited Elisabethville, he was convinced that UN entry would require confrontation with the armed forces of Katanga

(see below), and would therefore breach this resolution.<sup>46</sup> The UN's failure to forcibly end the secession prompted a frustrated Lumumba to seek logistical and military support from the Eastern Bloc. This would lead to Lumumba's conflict with President Kasavubu, his removal from office in September 1960 and ultimately to his murder in January 1961 at the hands of Belgian soldiers and Katangese leaders. Lumumba's supporters, led by Antoine Gizenga, would go on to establish an alternative Congolese government based in the eastern city of Stanleyville.

### **Katanga's 'national' army**

The UN's fateful decision involved a successful bluff on the part of the Katangese authorities, given the barely trained army that it was still bringing into existence.<sup>47</sup> Although dozens of Belgian officers rallied to support the state, bringing some materiel with them, Katanga urgently needed an indigenous armed force, both to mobilise against its many enemies and to demonstrate its national character.<sup>48</sup> The former *Force Publique* troops based at Camp Massart were disarmed and only those of Katangese origin and residency (350 in total) were retained for the new force.<sup>49</sup> A first contingent of 1,500 men was planned, composed of men born in Katanga or who had resided in Katanga for more than ten years.<sup>50</sup> They were joined by troops from (mostly) southern Katangese societies, including many young Lunda men mobilised by the Mwaant Yav and the Tshombe family. These were supplemented with Baluba recruited by the Kasongo Nyembo; two thousand Bazela in Pweto; and Bayeke recruited around Bunkeya.<sup>51</sup> By late November, when the gendarmerie's manpower had reached around 7,000, it was, despite still being trained, already in action. The establishment of the northern Lualaba province in October 1960, supported by the Gizengaled Lumumbist government in Stanleyville, threatened to cut the Katangese state's lines of communication. Katanga's urgent need to suppress the Balubakat rebellion meant that

soldiers organised in mobile groups who were only partly trained, together with some policemen, were dispatched to the front line.<sup>52</sup>

In the wake of Lumumba's death, a stronger UNSC resolution 161 was passed in February 1961, authorising '...all appropriate measures...' to "...prevent the occurrence of civil war in the Congo, including ... the use of force, if necessary...'.<sup>53</sup> The resolution, endorsed by the Congolese government in April, allowed the forced removal and repatriation of Belgian officials, believed to be central to the functioning of the Katangese state in general and its army in particular. UN forces advanced to take key positions in northern Katanga, and in the August 1961 'Operation Rumpunch', 338 'mercenaries' and 443 Belgian 'political advisors' were detained and expelled.<sup>54</sup> Whilst it is clear that the UN was unprepared for the level of resistance it experienced from the Katangese gendarmerie, it is also true that the Katangese operations in August-September 1961 was in significant part a successful bluff, convincing UN commanders that they faced a much larger Katangese force than was in fact the case.<sup>55</sup>

De Witte argues that the gendarmerie remained essentially under the control of Belgian forces: 'A Katangan, Joseph Yav, was appointed defence minister, but this did not fundamentally change the Gendarmerie's command, which remained entirely in Belgian hands.' He reports that 'At the end of September, the Belgian diplomat Rothschild pointed out in a telegram to Brussels that removing the Belgian cadre from the Gendarmerie could bring about the "collapse" of the Katangan forces.'<sup>56</sup> But the *Forces Armees Katangaise* did not in fact collapse as most observers forecast. The Katangese officers now fell under the command of Lt-General Norbert Muké Masaku, formerly of the military police of Elisabethville.<sup>57</sup> A discipline was maintained as well as a military efficacy in the operations countering the UN attacks.

The withdrawal of Belgian military advisors coincided with a substantial increase in the recruitment of foreign mercenaries: some were themselves former Belgian soldiers, whilst others came from France, Rhodesia and South Africa – amongst their number were Roger Faulques, Bob Denard and Jean Schramme. However, it is important not to overestimate their authority during the secession itself: the mythology that has developed around these mercenaries, perpetuated through their sensational publications, tends to attribute to them qualities of military leadership and organisation out of all proportion to their actual role.<sup>58</sup> In practice, the command of the gendarmerie was largely in the hands of Katangese, whilst mercenary groups often operated separately to them.<sup>59</sup> As importantly, in a conflict which was at least as much political as it was military, the propaganda efforts of the Katangese government emphasised the indigeneity and unity of the gendarmerie, whilst certainly overstating the indigenous nature of its armed forces (see below).<sup>60</sup>

### **Katanga's friends and neighbours**

The international fallout following Lumumba's murder occasioned a significant reorientation in Belgian policy, hastened by a change in government in Brussels in April 1961. The Belgian state's support for the secession was always limited, did not involve official recognition, and was motivated primarily by concern that a radical Congolese government would take over the mining industry and the Catholic school network. Once this threat was removed, Belgium sought to reconcile the Katangese leadership with moderate leaders in Leopoldville against the Stanleyville radicals. The official Belgian position should not of course be conflated with the powerful pro-Katanga lobby in Brussels, nor with the enduring sympathies of many senior political and military figures, some of whom continued to provide considerable backing to the secession. Tshombe remained dependent on Belgian advisers

such as George Thyssens (who drafted the declaration of Katangese independence) and Prof René Clemens (who wrote the Katangese constitution).<sup>61</sup> Clemens was subsequently an important part of MISTEBEL, the Belgian Technical Mission established by Harold d'Aspremont Lynden to channel Belgian support to the secessionist state. In addition, the local directors of the UMHK, fearing likely political interference in its operations from a post-independence Leopoldville government, assiduously developed relationships with Katangese political leaders and crucially directed their royalty payments to the Katangese exchequer.<sup>62</sup>

Whilst on the international stage Belgium resisted efforts to forcibly reincorporate Katanga, the Brussels authorities equally sought to pressure the Tshombe government to accept reintegration. Belgium also channelled financial support to the Leopoldville government and provided military support and advisors to the Congolese national army. Indeed, Katangese political leaders believed the Belgian government had betrayed their cause and regarded its diplomatic efforts with suspicion. In February 1961 for example, Belgian efforts to encourage talks with the Leopoldville authorities were angrily rejected by Tshombe, who declared that

Belgium was responsible for the negative evolution of the situation by refusing... to recognise the state of Katanga. The menace of the ONU (UN), in which Belgium has assisted the triumph of unitarist views, doesn't impress Katanga which will never renounce its independence... whilst Katanga has tried to cooperate with the weak regime of Kasavubu in Leopoldville, the bad advice given to Leopoldville by the Belgian government has prevented any agreement.<sup>63</sup>

Conakat also received support from the British-ruled Central African Federation; this reflected links between white settlers on both sides of the Rhodesian-Katangan border, but also the linkages of mining economy and infrastructure that had existed since the late nineteenth century and which found expression in Tanganyika Concessions' (TANKS) share

in UMHK.<sup>64</sup> Speculation that Katanga might join the Federation was rife in March 1960.<sup>65</sup> During the secession, federal leader Roy Welensky, having failed to persuade Britain to allow Federal troops to be deployed in support of Tshombe, allowed the Federation to become a recruiting ground for mercenary forces.<sup>66</sup> Portuguese-controlled Angola was an equally important ally, providing an important conduit for arms supplies and an outlet for its mineral exports. Katanga's relations with allies across Congo's borders were thus important in enabling the secession.<sup>67</sup>

### **Katanga: acting like a nation-state**

Nevertheless, had Katanga had been solely or overwhelmingly an externally imagined project, the state and its manifestations would surely have collapsed in early 1961. In fact, the secession was maintained for a further two years. During this period, Katanga's leaders projected the secession through a visible performance of a state, directed at both the international community and to its subjects: the issuing of national stamps and banknotes, the flying of the national flag (which incorporated pre-colonial copper ingots or 'croisettes' in its imagery) and the singing of the national anthem (which refers in its lyrics to the same symbolism).<sup>68</sup> If Katanga's performative claims to statehood only partially masked its material and structural weaknesses, then this was equally true of many new African states engaged in the process of making nations from above. Alongside the imagery, Finance Minister Jean-Baptiste Kibwe sought to ensure that UMHK paid its taxes and indeed implemented additional ones, incurring displeasure and occasional resistance by the company's directors, in ways closely resembling relationships between post-colonial states and multi-national mining corporations elsewhere in Africa.<sup>69</sup> The economic policies of Katanga, including the commitment to support agricultural development via state intervention and support, strongly resembled those in newly independent Africa as a whole.<sup>70</sup> International

propaganda was issued against UN military actions, for example during Operation Rumpunch, which was followed with the publication of *46 Angry Men*, which documented the atrocities allegedly carried out by UN forces.<sup>71</sup>

Elisabethville was host to celebratory and commemorative events, including the arrival of foreign visitors; negotiations with Congolese state officials were presented as diplomatic meetings of equals.<sup>72</sup> Katangese leaders themselves went abroad on fact-finding missions. Important events took place at the ‘University of Katanga’, ‘...a high-level institution of world renown.’<sup>73</sup> Local newspapers provided a powerful outlet for state propaganda; published by self-appointed spokespersons for European interests in Katanga, they portrayed the heroic actions of Katangese gendarmes against their foreign enemies, often through iconographic photographs.<sup>74</sup> Commemorations of the glorious fallen dead were commemorated at the Cathedral of St. Peter and St. Paul.<sup>75</sup> In August 1961 honours were granted to Katangese war veterans at a reunion organised by *l’Association des Anciens Combattants du Katanga*.<sup>76</sup> Senior chiefs such as the Mwaant Yav and the Kasongo Nyembo were likewise pictured in earnest discussion with military and political leaders. Government proclamations were solemnly issued and reproduced in full in the newspapers, which denounced ‘invasions’ of Katangese territory by Lumumbist and UN forces and the threat of international communism. In July 1961, Katanga’s apotheosis as a state of supposedly international significance was demonstrated at the international fair (here, as elsewhere in Africa, the replication of a colonial-era event), where Tshombe’s position as Katangese president was acted out on a ‘national’ stage.

As in the late colonial period, claims to a legitimacy rooted in the pre-colonial authority of its composite societies were central to Katanga’s identity and representation. Newspapers

stressed the special status of Katanga within the Belgian Congo, giving it its ‘independent character’.<sup>77</sup> Such historically rooted ideas were equally promulgated in its international propaganda. Alongside the trumpeting of Katanga’s anti-communist stance was a powerful autochthonous rhetoric that, although appealing to (and often advanced by) western sympathisers, was rooted in the notion of a pre-colonial supremacy disconnected from later developments. In a section entitled ‘*Proto-histoire*’, the 1961 publication *4000 Ans d’Histoire* placed Katanga alongside other great pre-colonial African kingdoms such as Great Zimbabwe. Its wealth, generated by copper mining, enabled the development of a sophisticated hierarchical society: in the sixteenth century central Africa had witnessed ‘...the formation of great empires, which were long preserved in Katanga, making this country a true nation whose history, without its continuity being dissolved, continues up to the 20<sup>th</sup> century.’<sup>78</sup>

The state also sought to claim the allegiance of all the province’s peoples. Katangese leaders, particularly Evariste Kimba, continued to lay claim (via the allegiance of the Kasongo Nyembo) to the Baluba as an essential component of the Katangese nation - mirroring in so doing the insistence of Congolese national politicians that Katanga was integral to its territory.<sup>79</sup> Radio Katanga, which (like its colonial predecessor) broadcast daily in Lunda, Kihemba, Kiyeke, Kisanga and Tshokwe, also broadcast programmes targeted at Katangese women in Kiluba and about the folklore of the Baluba in Manono, one of the areas of northern Katanga occupied by the gendarmerie.<sup>80</sup> Tshombe himself addressed a group of Balubakat women on 5 January 1961 in autochthonous terms: ‘...*we are all part of the same family: I am the President of all and all, you are in Katanga, because you are born, because you live there. Our food comes from the same soil, fertilizes our work the same fields ... in Katanga, we are all in the same family...*’.<sup>81</sup> Whilst Tshombe’s attempts to incorporate

Katangese Baluba within Conakat's 'national' project were certainly tendentious, the strenuous and continual efforts of his party and administration in this regard are not what would be expected of a 'puppet' administration which only existed to meet the needs of its foreign masters.

### **Negotiating an end to the secession, 1961-63**

It is impossible to do justice here to the drawn-out labyrinthine process that eventually brought the secession to an end.<sup>82</sup> An outline of this process is provided here, so as to explain the Katangese leadership's perception of, participation in and reaction to these initiatives.

In late 1960 and early 1961, western powers that viewed the Gizenga-led Lumumbist state in eastern Congo as the major threat, sought to reconcile the Leopoldville and Elisabethville governments. The US was persuaded by Belgium and Britain that peaceful reintegration would better protect western control of Katanga's strategic mineral assets in a western-oriented Congo, a policy which however prevented the forcible ending of the secession.<sup>83</sup> As a result, Tshombe was able to engage in drawn-out negotiations to resolve the conflict, without the immediate threat of military action. Numerous roundtable summits and interim agreements foundered on two issues central to the secession: the flow and distribution of UMHK-derived taxation revenue; and control over Katangese military forces. Tshombe refused to surrender Katangese independence unless a federal Congolese constitution was put in place. Following Tshombe and Kimba's detention in Coquilhatville in April 1961, these leaders signed an eleven-point agreement apparently resolving the conflict.<sup>84</sup> However on his return to Elisabethville, Tshombe insisted the accord was merely a starting point for further negotiations.

The US-backed Congolese government of Cyrille Adoula, which took office in August 1961, was however more determined to end the Katangese secession, and its recognition by Gizenga created a united anti-Katangese front in the rest of Congo. The US now took an increasingly firm lead in backing its efforts to bring Katanga forcibly under control, in alliance with UN forces. Tshombe opportunistically attacked US efforts in this regard as a way for American financiers and capitalists to gain control of Katangese copper.<sup>85</sup> From the Katangese perspective, the UN was simply the agent of liberal western interests, behind which lay the threat of international communism. At the same time, negotiations with UN leaders provided Katanga with a legitimisation of its asserted identity as a legitimate state. This helps explain why Katangese leaders continually sought out and engaged in meetings with UN and Congolese state officials in diplomatic settings, whilst refusing to make substantive concessions – negotiations were, from their perspective, more about performance than outcome.

Military operations in December 1961 gave the UN control of strategic positions in Elisabethville and neutralised the capacity of Katanga's air force. Adoula and Tshombe signed the Kitona agreement, accepting in principle the unity of Congo and the need to place Katangese forces under central control. Tshombe nevertheless succeeded in delaying the termination of the secession for another year. By mid-1962, as central Congolese armed forces steadily advanced (with the support of the UN) into northern Katanga, Belgium and the US now agreed that regional stability depended on a rapid resolution of the crisis were working in close concert to end the secession.<sup>86</sup> Negotiations now revolved around the peace plan proposed by the new UN Secretary General, U Thant. The Thant Plan aimed to secure Katangese reintegration, in exchange for an agreed division of powers between central and provincial administrations on distinctly federal lines.<sup>87</sup> Mineral revenue would be divided 50-

50 between the central government and the province that produced it. A key unresolved issue was the incorporation of the gendarmerie into the ANC; seeking to defend Katangese autonomy in the envisaged federal Congo, Tshombe resisted the full transfer of the gendarmes into the Congolese armed forces until a new federal constitution was in place.

On 27 November, the US and Belgium jointly declared the failure of the Thant plan and publicly agreed to increased economic pressure. The United States increased military support for UN operations; in Katanga, anti-US demonstrations were organised in Elisabethville and a UN helicopter was shot down on 24 December. Five days later, Tshombe's refusal to withdraw roadblocks in Elisabethville led to decisive UN action. The end to the secession was surprisingly swift; Katangese gendarmes and mercenaries dispersed into the bush when faced by direct UN military action, sometimes taking the local population along with them.<sup>88</sup> UN forces entered Jadotville on 3 January. Before Kolwezi could be taken by force, the Katangese government declared a formal end to the secession on 14 January 1963.<sup>89</sup>

### **Katanga in exile: the gendarmerie after the secession**

The successful termination of the secession did not bring about Congolese unity, nor did it end the assertion of Katangese identity. Thousands of former Katangese gendarmes were moved across the border into Portuguese-ruled Angola. Following the appointment of former Katangese leader Moïse Tshombe as Congolese Prime Minister in mid-1964, ex-gendarmes were recalled, problematically integrated into the Congolese national army and mobilised against the Mulelist eastern rebellion, which culminated in the fall of Stanleyville in November. They however never saw themselves as part of the Congolese nation-state and, after President Mobutu centralised all political power in 1967, a mutiny by ex-gendarmes and their mercenary commanders led to a second and more enduring exile in Angola.<sup>90</sup>

There, the ex-gendarmes were mobilised by Portugal against the nationalist forces seeking to achieve Angolan independence, operating mainly from exile in Zambia and Congo/Zaire. Although in many respects reduced to the level of mercenaries and christened by the Portuguese the '*fieis*', or faithful ones, by the late 1960s the ex-gendarmes were asserting a new identity as an exiled political force seeking self-determination for their homeland: this was symbolised by their adoption of a new organisational identity, the National Front for the Liberation of Congo (FLNC). The situation of the ex-gendarmes was once again transformed by the Portuguese revolution of 1974, which was followed by the rapid decolonisation of Angola and civil war, ostensibly between the three Angolan national liberation movements. As the latter movements competed, politically and militarily, to take power, the ex-gendarmes and their FLNC political leadership agreed with the Marxist-oriented MPLA to mobilise their experienced and well-trained troops to aid its cause. FLNC forces saw action in some of the key battles of the civil war, in which the MPLA came to power. The quid pro quo for this agreement was that the FLNC would use its base on Angolan soil to launch attacks on Mobutu's Zaire. This it did in 1977 and 1978, with the second of these 'Shaba wars' dramatically destabilising Zaire's strategic mining industry and leading to western military intervention in a conflict misleadingly framed in exclusively Cold War terms.<sup>91</sup> Angola subsequently brought independent action by the FLNC to an end, expelling its leaders and semi-integrating its troops into its own 'national' army. Two decades later however, some thousands of their number were mobilised in the successful overthrow of Mobutu in 1997 by the AFDL, nominally led by Laurent Kabila. By this route, most ex-gendarmes finally returned to the country that what was once again known as Congo and to a very different, but still politically important, 'Katanga'.<sup>92</sup> However, as the events of March 2013 illustrate, this

return did not end internal demands for autonomy or secession within Congo, which are very much alive today.

## **Conclusion**

Although these decades-long efforts to assert the imaginary of the Katangese nation-state were ultimately unsuccessful, their existence demonstrates the enduring power to mobilise some Katangese people. This article, in exploring the internal ideational and material basis of the Katangese national project, seeks in so doing to identify the striking similarities between this internationally illegitimate state project and parallel nation-state building projects that received international recognition in the context of the rapid decolonisation of sub-Saharan Africa. It does not seek to demonstrate the ‘authenticity’ of the Katangese national project, but precisely to demonstrate that its problematic nature closely resembled the self-conscious artificial process of nation-building elsewhere on the continent. Indeed, the fact that the Katangese national project was primarily imagined and pursued by only one a section of the province’s political leadership, which represented only one element of its population’s social and cultural perspectives and which sought to map these onto the new nation-state, arguably makes it more, not less, similar to these processes. By studying the ways in which Katangese leaders thought and acted, drawing on a mythologised pre-colonial past, seeking to construct a trans-ethnic alliance, emphasising autochthony as the basis of national identity and performing the nation in the ways outlined above, it can indeed be argued that they were amongst Africa’s keenest students of late nineteenth and early twentieth century nation-building and the construction of ‘imagined communities’.

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<sup>2</sup> 'Conversation between the Secretary of State and the Prime Minister of the Republic of the Congo, 27 July 1960', 28 July 1960, RG59 E3111 Box 7, File 5.2 'Conferences', United States' State Department archives, College Park MD (hereafter USSD).

<sup>3</sup> The report of the 2001 Belgian parliamentary enquiry can be found online at: [http://www.lachambre.be/kvvcr/pdf\\_sections/comm/lmb/conclusions.pdf](http://www.lachambre.be/kvvcr/pdf_sections/comm/lmb/conclusions.pdf), and its findings are discussed in De Vos et al, *Les secrets de l'affaire Lumumba*.

<sup>4</sup> De Witte, *The Assassination of Patrice Lumumba*, xxi. A virtually identical approach can be seen in the much earlier book, Jules Chome's *Moise Tshombe et l'escroquerie katangaise*.

<sup>5</sup> Kent, *America, the UN and Decolonisation: Cold War Conflict in the Congo*, 13.

<sup>6</sup> See for example Boehme, 'The Involvement of the Belgian Central Bank in the Katanga Secession.

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<sup>7</sup> See <http://radiokapi.net/actualite/2013/03/23/lubumbashi-le-calme-est-revenu-apres-la-reddition-des-miliciens-bakata-katanga-la-monusco/> (accessed 24 March 2013).

<sup>8</sup> For evidence of this demonization, see Kalb, *The Congo Cables*, 78-103; Kent, *America, the UN and Decolonisation*, 23-30; De Witte, *Assassination of Patrice Lumumba*, 15-19.

<sup>9</sup> Charter of the Organisation of African Unity, agreed in Addis Ababa, 1963, in Mazrui, *Towards a Pax Africana*, 219-229. This decision was of course influenced in significant part by the perceived lessons of the Katangese experience. For a broader examination of the tendency of decolonisation debates to 'read backwards' from outcome to process, see Cooper, *Decolonization and African Society*, 6-7. For stimulating analysis of specific alternative 'nationalisms', see Allman, *Quills of the Porcupine*; Macola, *Liberal Nationalism in Central Africa*; and Lecocq, *Disputed Desert*.

<sup>10</sup> Anderson, *Imagined Communities*; Ranger, 'Towards a Usable African Past'.

<sup>11</sup> See amongst other studies: Geschiere. *The Perils of Belonging: Autochthony, Citizenship and Exclusion in Africa and Europe* and Geschiere and Nyamnjoh, 'Capitalism and Autochthony'.

<sup>12</sup> Apter, *The Political Kingdom in Uganda*. It may be noted that, as in Katanga, such repressive actions did not end the political relevance or deployment of Bugandan identity, which reasserted itself in the 1990s: see Englebert, 'Born-again Uganda or the Limits of Traditional Resurgence in Africa'.

<sup>13</sup> Yakemtchouk, *Aux Origines du Séparatisme Katangais*, 33.

<sup>14</sup> The best summary of the complex development of 'ethnic' and 'national' politics remains Young, *Politics in the Congo*, 232-306.

<sup>15</sup> Jewsiewicki, 'Rural Society and the Belgian Colonial Economy', 97.

<sup>16</sup> Anstey, *King Leopold's Legacy*, 38.

<sup>17</sup> Yakemtchouk, *Aux Origines du Séparatisme Katangais*, 35-6.

<sup>18</sup> For a more detailed analysis, see Yakemtchouk, *Aux Origines du Séparatisme Katangais*, passim.

<sup>19</sup> Bustin, *Lunda under Belgian Rule*, 149-150.

<sup>20</sup> Bogumil Jewsiewicki, 'The Formation of the Political Culture of Ethnicity in the Belgian Congo'.

<sup>21</sup> Gérard-Libois, *Katanga Secession*, 5.

<sup>22</sup> Gérard-Libois, *Katanga Secession*, 13.

<sup>23</sup> Such nostalgic reconstructions of the Lunda empire were also influential on some Belgian advisors during this period, some of whom went on to support the secession. See for example, Albert Melot, advisor to Tshombe during 1964-65: interview with author, Namur, 11 January 2007.

<sup>24</sup> This phenomenon has been most successfully analysed in west Africa: see for example, Allman, *The Quills of the Porcupine*, passim.

<sup>25</sup> Communication by the Mwant Yav, 31 January 1959, cited in Bustin, *Lunda under Belgian Rule*, 189.

<sup>26</sup> Bustin, *Lunda under Belgian Rule*, 193; this work was subsequently published as Crine-Mavar, 'Histoire traditionnelle du Shaba'.

<sup>27</sup> In this sense, Katanga's rejection of Congo resembled the refusal of Ivorian leaders to remain within a reconstructed post-colonial French West Africa.

<sup>28</sup> Quoted in Gérard-Libois, *Katanga Secession*, 13-14.

<sup>29</sup> *L'Essor du Congo*, 26 May 1959, quoted in Bustin, *Lunda under Belgian Rule*, 181.

<sup>30</sup> Bustin, *Lunda under Belgian Rule*, 180.

<sup>31</sup> Conakat's distrust had strong foundations: notoriously, Congo's Governor Paelinck had during his investiture spoken in Tshiluba as follows: "You Kasaians, who live in the Katanga...I, for my part, will not forsake you... Ask me for what you need and you will get it.": cited in Lemarchand, *Political Awakening in the Belgian Congo*, 237-8. Author's correspondence with Henry Rosy, Provincial Secretary of Katanga, 1999.

<sup>32</sup> 'Katangais, ou es tu?', *Katanga*. Elisabethville, 1 February 1958).

<sup>33</sup> CRISP, *Congo 1960*, quoted in Gérard-Libois, *Katanga Secession*, 17.

<sup>34</sup> G. Munongo, 'Comment est né le nationalisme katangais', Elisabethville, 16 June 1962 (mimeo), cited in Lemarchand, 'Katanga: Background to Secession'.

<sup>35</sup> Lemarchand, 'The Limits of Self-Determination', 415.

<sup>36</sup> Lemarchand, *Political Awakening*, 238.

<sup>37</sup> The term is used by Crawford Young in *The Politics of Cultural Pluralism*, 175. For a sustained analysis of the political history of Balubakat and northern Katanga, see Kennes, *Essai Biographique sur Laurent Désiré Kabila*.

<sup>38</sup> Parallels can be drawn in this respect with the political message of the United National Independence Party in its campaigns in the Copperbelt region of Northern Rhodesia/Zambia across the Katangese border.

<sup>39</sup> Young, *Politics in the Congo*, 271.

<sup>40</sup> Gérard-Libois, *Katanga Secession*, 63-65.

<sup>41</sup> Proclamation of Independence of Katanga, 11 July 1960, Appendix II, Gérard-Libois, *Katanga Secession*, 328.

- <sup>42</sup> Conakat can in this respect be sharply contrasted with the role of the Kabaka Yekka ('king only') separatist party in the run up to Ugandan independence.
- <sup>43</sup> Kent, *America, the UN and Decolonisation*, 16.
- <sup>44</sup> Hoskyns, *Congo Since Independence*, 158-9.
- <sup>45</sup> Resolution adopted in 886<sup>th</sup> Session of UN Security Council, 9 August 1960, Appendix II, Gérard-Libois, *Katanga Secession*, 330.
- <sup>46</sup> For details of Hammarskjöld's report to the UN, see UK UN Mission to FO, 6 August 1960, FO/371/146775, National Archives of the UK (hereafter TNA).
- <sup>47</sup> Hoskyns, *Congo Since Independence*, 163.
- <sup>48</sup> The extent of this Belgian support should not be exaggerated: only a handful of Belgian officers were in Katanga in July-August 1960 and a total of 177 served there during the secession.
- <sup>49</sup> Vandewalle, 'A propos de la gendarmerie katangaise', 60; Pire, 'La Sécession katangaise', 46.
- <sup>50</sup> Gérard-Libois, *Katanga Secession*, 114; *Moniteur Katangais*, no. 2, 15 August 1960, 21-23.
- <sup>51</sup> Kennes, 'Fin du cycle post-colonial au Katanga', 418.
- <sup>52</sup> Pire, 'La Sécession', 51; author's interview with René Pire, Namur, 12 December 2007.
- <sup>53</sup> Gerard-Libois, *Katanga Secession*, 331.
- <sup>54</sup> Young, *Politics in the Congo*, 340.
- <sup>55</sup> Interview with Col. Vandewalle, TV documentary 'La Secession Katangaise'.
- <sup>56</sup> De Witte, *Assassination of Lumumba*, 63.
- <sup>57</sup> See for example 'Qui est le Général Muke?', *Echo du Katanga* (Elisabethville), 31 October 1961.
- <sup>58</sup> This inaccurate characterisation tends to be replicated in secondary studies, for example Pasteger, *Visage des Affreux*.
- <sup>59</sup> Discussions with former Katangese gendarmes, anonymous, Kinshasa, April 2012.
- <sup>60</sup> It should be noted that Katanga was hardly unique in its use of European officers in its early stages of 'independence'. Many African states did so, for example Ghana: indeed, the commander of the Ghanaian contingent of the UN forces in Congo was British. The Congolese national army the ANC was itself utilising Belgian military advisors by the end of 1960 and continued to do so during and after the secession.
- <sup>61</sup> Colvin, *The Rise and Fall of Moïse Tshombe*, 18-19.
- <sup>62</sup> Brion and Moreau, *De la mine à Mars*, 310-311.
- <sup>63</sup> Telegramme no. 192, Belg Brazza to Brussels, 6 February 1961, file NA 15946, 'Congo-ONU', January-February 1960, Belgian Foreign Affairs archives.
- <sup>64</sup> Hughes, 'Fighting for White Rule in Africa'.
- <sup>65</sup> *Daily Express* (London), 2 March 1960, cited in Gérard-Libois, *Katanga Secession*, 53-56.
- <sup>66</sup> Hughes, 'Fighting for White Rule', 604-6. See also James, *Britain and the Congo Crisis*.
- <sup>67</sup> Velez, *Salazar, Tchombé, O Envolvimento de Portugal na Questao do Catanga (1961-1967)*, 82-86, 88-103.
- <sup>68</sup> Katanga's banknotes were introduced on 9 January 1961. The lyrics of the national anthem, 'La Katangaise', read in part: "notre bannière au vent, symbole pour tout ceux,, que ses riches croissettes". I am grateful to Kimberley Chadwick for bringing this to my attention.
- <sup>69</sup> See for example the correspondence related to the request in July-August 1962 by Kibwe for the payment of 'exceptional surcharges' imposed on UMHK's SOGECHIM subsidiary: see 'Surtaxe exceptionnelle sur les dividendes', 1960-1962, UMHK papers file 1942, Belgian National Archives. See also 'Tensions Croissantes avec Les Autorités Katangaises (1961)' in Brion and Moreau, *De La Mine a Mars*, 316-318. For comparable mine company-state relations in independent Zambia, see Larmer, *Mineworkers in Zambia*, 59-81.
- <sup>70</sup> See *L'Essor du Katanga*, 23 March 1961, in which Tshombe spelled out these economic policies.
- <sup>71</sup> Vleurinck, *46 Angry Men*.
- <sup>72</sup> For example, the signing of accords with the state of South Kasai: *L'Essor du Katanga* (Elisabethville), 3 February 1961.
- <sup>73</sup> 'Présentation du nouveau recteur de L'Université de l'Etat', *L'Essor du Katanga*, 16 January 1961.
- <sup>74</sup> 'La Gendarmerie Katangaise en action', *L'Essor du Katanga*, 25 January 1961. Photos of gendarmes on the battlefield appear in *L'Essor du Katanga*, 27 January and 17 February 1961.
- <sup>75</sup> 'Messe de Requiem à Elisabethville à la mémoire des héros katangais', *L'Essor du Katanga*, 19 January 1961.
- <sup>76</sup> *L'Essor du Katanga*, 14 August 1961.
- <sup>77</sup> *L'Essor du Katanga*, 26 August 1961.
- <sup>78</sup> '4000 Ans D'Histoire', special issue of *Katanga*, monthly review of the Friends of Katanga, Brussels, July 1961, 16.
- <sup>79</sup> Interview with Evariste Kimba, *L'Essor du Katanga*, 22 April 1961. The location of the Kasongo Nyembo's throne at Kinkunki village provided the basis for this claim to the loyalty of the Luba kingdom: by this definition, those who allied with the central Congolese state against their king could be considered rebels.

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<sup>80</sup> ‘Radio Katanga’ programme schedule, listed daily in *L’Essor du Katanga* for example 27 April 1961. ‘Radio Katanga’ is the subject of a book-length study: Nicolai, *Ici Radio Katanga*.

<sup>81</sup> *L’Essor du Katanga*, 9 January 1961, ‘Le Président Tshombé s’adresse aux femmes Baluba du Katanga’.

<sup>82</sup> Probably the best summary of these processes remains Gérard-Libois. Kent has added much to our understanding of the role of the UN and the US: *America, the UN and Decolonisation*, 83-144.

<sup>83</sup> Kent, *America, the UN and Decolonisation*, 64-82.

<sup>84</sup> ‘Le Président Tshombe et Le Ministre Evariste Kimba sont arrêtés par l’armée Congolaise à Coquilhatville’, *L’Essor du Katanga*, 27 April 1961 ; Gérard-Libois, *Katanga Secession*, 188.

<sup>85</sup> See for example ‘Tshombe’s Political Orientation’, Wayne Fredericks to Mr McGhee, 12 July 1962, RG59, E3111 (Bureau of African Affairs), Box 6, File 1.D/1.1. ‘The President (Tshombe)’, 1961 and 1963, USSD.

<sup>86</sup> ‘Our Congo Policy after the London Talks’, William Brubeck to McGeorge Bundy, 21 May 1962, RG59, E3111 (Bureau of African Affairs), Box 7, File 5.2 ‘Conferences’, USSD.

<sup>87</sup> The Thant Plan continues to be a reference point for contemporary autonomist movements in Katanga.

<sup>88</sup> Gérard-Libois, *Katanga Secession*, 273.

<sup>89</sup> Gérard-Libois, *Katanga Secession*, 275.

<sup>90</sup> A detailed account of the mutiny is provided in CRISP, *Congo 1967*, 365-375.

<sup>91</sup> Larmer, ‘Local Conflicts in a Transnational War’.

<sup>92</sup> For a longer version of this history see Larmer, ‘Of Local Identities and Transnational Conflict’. A book-length history of the ex-Katangese gendarmes will be published in book form by the authors of this article in late 2014.