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DRIVERS OF CHANGE IN THE DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO: THE RISE AND DECLINE OF THE STATE AND CHALLENGES FOR RECONSTRUCTION

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Crisis States Research Centre

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DRIVERS OF CHANGE IN THE DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO:

THE RISE AND DECLINE OF THE STATE AND CHALLENGES FOR RECONSTRUCTION

A LITERATURE REVIEW

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Executive Summary

Introduction

The purpose of this literature review is to bring together key research and debates in the French and English literature on the Democratic Republic of Congo/Zaire (DRC) concerning the political economy, social structure and politics of the country, to inform the international donor community's planning efforts within the long-term trajectory of change in the DRC.

In this relatively brief summary of what we have discovered is a voluminous literature, we attempt to: highlight where pressures for or against change are rooted; identify key issues that might inform donor options in the future; and draw conclusions regarding areas warranting further research. The literature, particularly work done through the early 1980s, is far too vast and rich to fully do justice to in the time frame that was allocated for this work, so we have concentrated on what we judged as the most important works in French and English.

The review is structured around six themes:

- **The evolution of the economy** in the DRC, the economic foundations of the state and society, and the interplay with contemporary politics and incentives.

- **How the state has functioned**, the structure of government and how this has evolved, both formally and in practice: How has the reach of the state and its authority changed/declined/developed? What have the key institutions of the state been, and to what extent have they impacted on the lives of ordinary people? Has the state provided services to its citizens, and how/why?

- **Government/political motivation**: How have government actors seen their role? To whom has accountability been built, formally and informally? The incentives and interest groups to which different groups of power holders have tended to respond.

- **The anatomy of intra-regional power and the role of traditional patterns of authority** (both regional dynamics within DRC that have driven the national political, economic and development agendas, and in the wider Great Lakes region).

- **How religious authority interacts with the contemporary state** and how/why these relationships have developed on the local and national level. Broader state-society relations and the possibility for citizen voice to be reflected or excluded in the political process.

- **Popular perceptions and expectations of the state:** What research exists on how the population would define a successful state? How Congolese citizens see politics and its relationship to family, local, ethnic and regional identities? Attitudes to corruption?

Looking at Congo/Zaire over the "longue durée", it becomes clear that *the central problem of state building is one of political and economic integration in the face of deeply rooted regional and local identities, networks of power and patterns of patronage*. This has profound implications for the international community's efforts to support the consolidation of peace and the promotion of development in the Democratic Republic of Congo following the elections of late 2006. Standard templates of "good governance" involving the devolution of power and the promotion of private and non-governmental agents of development may be, not only inadequate to the challenge of state-building, but positively counter-productive if not accompanied by singular efforts to support elite coalition formation and significantly increase capacity at the level of the central state.

We offer a revisionist reading of the history of Congo/Zaire, and some might even suggest a heretical reading, which sees the most important period of progress in state-building as the first decade of rule by Mobutu Sese Seko, who has often been portrayed as the archetypical model of a predator. We do so because important lessons need to be drawn from Mobutu's early efforts to build horizontal networks of power across Congolese elites and his subsequent almost "180 degree turnabout" to rely on regional and local vertical networks of power to remain in office for so many years. It was this fundamental shift in the basis of power of the Mobutu regime, which could be said to have unleashed the patterns of conflict that eventually led to civil war and the deaths of more than four million people in the late 1990s through the turn of the 21st Century.

In this summary, we step back from the literature review to first briefly look at the main characteristics of the tension between the centre and the regions and the shifting bases of state power over time. We then summarise the strategic areas for further research that might positively inform the international community's interventions in the DRC.

1.1.   Historical evolution of centralising and disaggregating patterns of state power

1.1.1. Colonial Legacy

In 1960, Congo emerged from what by all accounts was a brutal colonial period under Belgian authority with an economy that was the second most industrialised in Sub-Saharan Africa, founded largely on its mineral wealth, but which was also profoundly dualistic. Only a small proportion of the population worked in the "modern" or export sector, encompassing the mines and cash crops (particularly oil palm, cotton and coffee), while the vast majority remained in subsistence agriculture. The colonial authorities created a relatively centralised state administration, but inhibited the formation of a nation. The pattern was not altogether different from other colonial experiences, which codified and even "invented" tribal identities and authority structures, through what became a pattern of indirect rule. However, in its extreme prohibition of non-tribal forms of organisation until the last decade before independence and its failure to promote a common language through the territory, Belgium bequeathed to the population an emergent elite characterised by profound ethnic animosities (not only between regions, but within them as well, based on patterns of forced labour migration and systematic patterns of discrimination and privileging between ethnic groups). One of the first major episodes of "ethnic cleansing" on the African continent occurred in 1959-60, when the Luba of Kasai were forced to flee the then capital city of the region, setting in motion a pattern of ethnic rivalry still important to politics in the DRC.

Potential sources of wealth for aspiring elites were anchored in a disaggregated economy of separate enclaves with little or no integration between regional sites of wealth, nor between rural and urban systems of production and consumption, leaving as well a very narrow base for revenue generation to finance state activity. The new state had only a weak Force Publique, with no distinction between military and police functions. Little attention had been paid to developing health or education systems until the final years of colonial rule, leaving these entirely in the hands of religious organisations, particularly the powerful Catholic Church.

1960-1965: A cautionary tale for today

The first five years of independence (1960-1965) provide a "cautionary tale" for the DRC today. Elections held on independence led almost directly to civil war that pitted radical nationalists against moderate nationalists and both against "federalists and tribalists". Secessionist movements in mineral-rich Katanga and Southern Kasai received significant external support from developed countries who feared nationalists would lead the independent territory into alignment with the socialist world and whose own corporations wished privileged access to the mineral resources of the country. Secessionist movements drew their fighting strength from members of the *Force Publique*, which quickly divided on ethnic lines. The embryonic *Armée National Congolaise* (ANC) proved entirely ineffective in asserting control from the centre. Extreme instability led to five lost years of development in economic terms, as sites of production were captured by emergent local elites and resources diverted to finance warfare or to build new fortunes. This period of violence, ended only by the intervention of the United Nations, led to an expansion of tribalism both between and within regions.

The dilemma of the newly independent country was summed up by a keen observer of the period:

The very existence of the nation was threatened... from the interior and the exterior. From the interior, by the sterile conflicts of politicians who sacrificed the country and their compatriots to their own interests. Nothing counted for them but power ... Fill their own pockets, exploit the Congo and the Congolese, this was their trademark. Given such examples, both national and provincial administration were mired in inertia, inefficiency, and worse yet, corruption. ...[C]ertain politicians, to maintain themselves in power or to regain it, did not hesitate to seek help from foreign powers...[T]he social, economic and financial situation of the country is catastrophic.

Those words were spoken by Mobutu Sese Seko as he explained his seizure of power in 1965 (Young and Turner, 1985, p.42).

1965-1974: State-Building and Horizontal Elite Formation

Given the ultimate decline of the state and economy by the end of Mobutu's 32 year reign, it is often forgotten that Congo, or Zaire as the country was renamed during his rule, experienced its only significant period of state-building during his first decade in power. After he seized power with the backing of the notorious "Binza Group" and Western powers, Mobutu's regime consolidated authority across the entire territory of the country. The number of provinces was reduced, with a significant reduction in the power of local networks and a concerted effort was unleashed to marginalize traditional authorities. Mobutu's government set out to build a modern public administration dependent on the centre, ensuring that officials did not serve in their own territories of origin. While there was some effort to maintain an ethnic balance in appointments, those who held office served as officials of Zaire, not of their locality. Significantly, Mobutu passed a radically inclusive citizenship law that provided at least a basis for the integration of communities in the eastern Congo, further marginalizing traditional authorities who promoted exclusionary policies towards especially the peoples of Rwandan origin who had settled in the region over time.

From the point of view of political economy and a comparative understanding of development, Mobutu was implementing a strategy designed to construct a centralised system of patronage, which would allow the state to capture rents and discipline wealth holders, subjecting them to a national project. This essentially is the pattern that was followed more successfully in developmental latecomers like South Korea, Taiwan and Malaysia. Within the context of a single ruling party, the *Mouvement Populaire de la Révolution* (MPR), he created horizontal networks incorporating selected army officers, politicians, trade unionists, intellectuals and businessmen into the new regime. The regime nationalised the former Belgian *Union Minière* in 1967 creating Gecamines, which controlled the most important export earners, copper and cobalt. Further nationalisations followed as industrial production expanded, not only in mining, but in several lines of manufacturing. Land was at least nominally nationalised, sending strong signals to traditional authorities who presided over rural lands through customary rights.

The regime made significant gains in expanding education, achieving 92% enrolment in primary schools and an impressive expansion of secondary and tertiary educational sectors. Achievements in health service delivery were also significant, not only with a radical enlargement of educated health personnel, but also a 95% rate of vaccination against

childhood diseases and the establishment of a primary health care system that was envied in other parts of Sub-Saharan Africa.

The achievements during this period were too impressive to be dismissed as a "shadow play" by a purely avaricious regime. While some of his more grandiose projects were seen as "white elephants", like the massive Inga-Shaba power project, these have to be evaluated not only on economic criteria (and possibly the levels of graft associated with them), but also on their "integrative" rationale. Mobutu saw the project as a major means to ensure control over Katangan interests. Relative peace and security was established throughout the territory as Mobutu retained the position of General and direct command over the Zairian Armed Forces (FAZ). However, in this respect, probably fearing that the biggest threat he might face to his power in the future would emerge from the armed forces, he never developed the force into a strong and disciplined organisation – one of the central problems of his regime as time went on. Two other failings were central even during this early period: (1) like in so many developing countries at the time, Mobutu's regime relied far too heavily on debt-financed development, which proved even more debilitating than elsewhere given the President's erratic approach to economic policy; and (2) despite plans to the contrary, the regime neglected any significant push to improve agricultural productivity and rural economies.

1974-1980 A Shift in the Centre of Gravity of the State

Mobutu's state building project came to a virtual halt with the onset of economic crisis provoked by a major crash in copper prices, an enormous increase in the cost of oil and significant economic mismanagement. A long period of economic decline set in whereby per capita GDP by the early 1980s was about a third of its level in 1962. A radical informalisation of the economy began, with a rapid expansion of smuggling even in such cash crops as coffee. While the state continued a process of "Zairianisation" by expanding the range of nationalisations, Mobutu was forced to shift to a *new form of clientelism* to maintain power given constraints on the national budget. With the reduction of central government resources, Mobutu abandoned the project of horizontal integration of elites and moved towards what Peemans called, "networks of ethno-central penetration". He sought to consolidate his power through the multiplication of vertical networks based on ethnic and regional affiliation – reviving a tribalist logic at the core of the state. This is when he began to privilege his own ethnic group from Equateur in both administrative and military offices and this is when those sites and instruments of central accumulation – Gecamines and the powers of the Central Bank – began to be looted by regime insiders.

It was at this time too that there was a proliferation of separate security forces (and the reinforcement of the presidential guard), which the President hoped could be played off against one another so as not to threaten his position. Patterns of differential pay and the failure to pay soldiers at all led to the corrosion of the armed forces. Emboldened by the regime's weakness armed separatist revolts re-emerged in Shaba (Katanga) in 1977 and 1978 and could be put down only with the help of French and Moroccan troops. The first signs of elite opposition formation emerged at this time when Etienne Tshisekedi, resisting Mobutu's efforts to buy off Luba Kasains with state posts, emerged as a focal point for critics of the regime. At this time as well, the Catholic Church, which had been supportive of the regime, took its distance, though did not engage in open opposition. Mobutu was able to maintain authority by granting more leeway and access to resources to regional power brokers organised in vertical networks based mainly on ethnic ties.

1980-1990 "Autonomisation" of the elite with state decline

By 1980, Mobutu's regime was already subject to a permanent presence of the International Monetary Fund in the central bank, the customs offices and the Ministry of Finance and by 1983 the government was recipient of a World Bank Structural Adjustment Programme. By the end of the decade little was left of the state administration Mobutu had earlier created and possibilities to hold together alliances based on vertical networks in the regions evaporated with the evaporation of central state resources. Even as Mobutu made important concessions to regional power brokers, like introducing a new exclusionary citizenship law to placate tribal power brokers in the eastern Congo, vertical networks of power in the provinces began to operate on their own, further empowering traditional authorities and their efforts to accumulate land by expelling those they deemed "foreigners". Structural adjustment included the legalisation of artisanal mining and it was estimated that more gold was smuggled out of the country than officially exported.

Mobutu attempted to weaken sites of opposition and win back allies through actively promoting tribalist and ethnic rivalry. He split up the Kivu region into three provinces in a move that effectively granted traditional authorities considerably increased powers, promoting this as a case for "decentralisation and development". Conflict was exacerbated in the region by the operation of both Garang's SPLA from Sudan and Museveni's NRA from Uganda on the territory. These moves set into motion a process of internecine conflict in the region, which would later provide the sparks for both devastating wars that beset the country in the 1990s.

1990-1997: Unravelling and collapse of the state

The 1990s provided the "knock-out" blow to the Mobutu regime. It began with a sharp reduction in foreign aid as former international supporters of the regime pushed for political reform and the introduction of competitive politics. With the virtual drying up of resources within the central state the processes of autonomisation of regional networks massively deepened and elites formerly attached to Mobutu turned their attention to capturing sources of wealth accumulation and legitimation in the provinces. The 1990 turn to multiparty politics thus encouraged a massive reactivation of ethno-regional mobilisation. Most new parties were ethnically and regionally grounded and tribalism re-emerged as a major vehicle to compete for power. Essentially socio-economic problems like unemployment and land access were recast in tribal terms, as in Katanga and the Kivus. Mobutu continued to attempt to pit one tribal group against another. In an effort to weaken his then strongest political opponent, Etienne Tshisekedi, a Luba from Kasai Orientele, Mobutu's supporters in Katanga, where unemployment was rife due to the implosion of Gécamines, blamed the urban Luba population for stealing jobs, leading to ethnic conflict resulting in some 5,000 dead and displacement of 1.3 million people in 1992-93.

Local violence over land access in the Kivus broke out into full-scale warfare by 1993 opposing so-called "native" agriculturalists, particularly the Hunde against "non-native" Banyarwanda leading to thousands of dead and some 140,000 displaced people. With the massive influx of "refugees" on the heels of the Rwandan genocide in 1994, including the intact armed forces of the former Rwandan government and the *interahamwe* militias that had perpetrated the genocide, eastern Congo became a nightmare. Congolese populations of Tutsi origin became a target for both Hunde and other tribal groups who resented their socio-economic position and a target of the Hutu forces that had fled Rwanda.

The "national economy" was in a condition of implosion with sharp declines in GDP following on contraction of production in every sector but mining and even here the export of diamonds overtook all other exports. Most economic transactions in the provinces occurred with sites over the border, while regional power brokers captured what they could in rents derived from the movement of goods. Transactions in the unofficial economy by the early 1990s were estimated to be worth three times the value of official GDP. In Kasai Orientale, the implosion of Gécamines provided the Luba the opportunity to corner the diamond industry, which had become the country's most important export earner, though trade remained dominated by foreigners With Kasai being the major base of the opposition party UPDS Luba were regarded with an explosion of suspicion by revial ethnic groups. Even Bas-Congo saw a revival of "Kongo nationalism", not witnessed since the 1960s, and the outbreak of violent demonstrations in Kinshasa in 1996.

Mobutu hung on to power only because of the rivalry between opposing regionally based elites. However, when Uganda and Rwanda decided to back Laurent Kabila in an armed campaign originating in eastern Congo, the regime collapsed like a house of cards.

1997-2001: Civil war and state collapse

The regime of Laurent Kabila never consolidated authority over the territory. While Kabila's military campaign had the backing of a broad regional coalition including Uganda, Rwanda, Burundi, Angola, Zimbabwe, Tanzania, Zambia and Eritrea, after taking power the regime was almost entirely dependent on Rwanda and Uganda. Most of Kabila's fighting force had been made up of Banyarwanda and the Banyamulenge from the Kivu region. Regional power brokers from the Kivus, who had long labelled people of Rwandan descent in their locales as "foreigners", along with other regional power brokers in other parts of the country began to unleash a xenophobic anti-Tutsi campaign. This led Laurent Kabila to break with Rwanda and Uganda and to expel Rwandaphones from his regime in May 1998. He turned to three other ethno-regional groups for support: the Katanga network from his home region; the "Kasai network"; and Kinois from the capital. Eventually, he relied on support from the Mai-Mai, local armed groups often loyal to particular traditional authorities, and even the interahamwe.

The Banyarwandan and Banyamulenge almost immediately formed the Rassemblement congolais pour la démocratie (RCD) with backing from Rwanda and launched an offensive in August 1998. Kabila's forces, mainly his Presidential Guard, were no match for the RCD, whose soldiers after all had been at the heart of the force that won him power, and he retained his position only with the support of Angola and eventually Zimbabwe and Namibia. Kabila and his allies were pitted against the RCD-Goma, which had the support of Rwanda, the RCD-ML that was supported by Uganda and the *Mouvement de Liberation Congolais* (MLC) of Jean Pierre Bemba, also backed by Uganda.

The civil war completed the informalisation of the Congolese economy and saw the rise of new "merchants of war" who allied with one or another of the contending parties to the conflict. What was left of rural markets, trading networks and mineral extraction was all shaped by patterns of ethnic power brokerage and transactions between Congolese actors and interests from the belligerent external powers involved in the war.

2001-2006: Securing the Peace and State Reconstruction

For the first year after the peace the former belligerent parties who formed the transitional government did not meet together. But in the three years that followed, leading up to elections, which eventually were held in 2006, President Kabila attempted to build new alliances from the presidency. The participants in the transitional government did not succeed in developing national constituencies but remained locked into ethno-regional support bases, where regional power networks continue to be predominant. This pattern of political organisation was underpinned by an economy still largely functioning through informal, and perhaps formally illegal, transactions – particularly in the minerals sector.

A period of renewed economic growth ensued, but was heavily dependent on a massive inflow of foreign aid. Efforts were made to establish functioning ministries with assistance from the international financial institutions and bilateral donor agencies. While basic parameters of macroeconomic management were enforced, much of the economy remained informal and very little was accomplished in relaunching processes of production. A lion's share of the country's mineral resources continued to be under the control of regional power holders, exported illegally and hardly taxed by the embryonic new tax administration set up in Kinshasa. The long neglected agricultural sector further devastated by war remained moribund, with most donors concentrating on seeing the electoral process through before launching major new economic initiatives.

With only halting progress in the demobilisation of rival armies and the establishment of an integration national army and continued conflict in the Kivus, Ituri and Katanga, but armed with a new Constitution, the country headed towards the elections to be held in late 2006. The profound fragmentation of political and economic power along ethno-regional lines that had been greatly exacerbated by the years of civil war appear to remain as a crucial challenge to the consolidation of peace and the launching of development in the years to come.

Areas for Future Research

Based on a review of the literature, the report recommends new research under five headings:

1) *Research on the DRC Economy*:
    * Study of the Informal Economy, almost entirely neglected, outside of some local level anthropological work, since the early 1990s;
    * Patterns of service provision in the informal sector to understand how urban residence cope with housing, public transport, waste management, health and education;
    * Research on the transportation infrastructure that must underpin any plan for economic reconstruction in a context where many areas of the country are only accessible by air;
    * Research on agriculture including possibilities for improving productivity as well as reforming access to land;
    * Research on the condition of state owned enterprises as privatisation is moving ahead on an almost non-existent knowledge base of public sector assets;
    * Research on networks of domestic and foreign business interests

2) *Research on Fiscal Reconstruction*
    * Research is required as an immediate support to donor efforts to support OFIDA in order to better understand licit and illicit trade flows:

* Research is needed on the link between security provision and customs collection;

3) *Research on Politics*:
   * Study political networks and alliances, especially in the context of a newly formed parliament
   * Studying intra-regional politics, particularly in provinces where the existing knowledge base is almost inexistent as in Equateur and Orientale provinces.

4) *Research on Decentralisation*:
   * With the country about to embark on a major devolution of power to more than double the number of existing provinces, little is understood about relations between central and provincial governments, nor the role of Churches and civil society groups;
   * There is a crying need for a study of inter-provincial relationships and regional disparities, which need to be understood in terms of potential inter-regional redistribution in the context of decentralisation

5) *Research on civil society and popular perceptions of the state*
   * There is very little knowledge about how ordinary Congolese view the state.

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THE RISE AND DECLINE OF THE STATE AND CHALLENGES FOR RECONSTRUCTION

A LITERATURE REVIEW

1. INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this literature review is to bring together key research and debates in the French and English literature on the Democratic Republic of Congo/Zaire (DRC)[2] concerning the political economy, social structure and politics of the country, to inform the international donor community's planning efforts within the long-term trajectory of change in the DRC.

In this relatively brief summary of what we have discovered is a voluminous literature, we attempt to: highlight where pressures for or against change are rooted; identify key issues that might inform donor options in the future; and draw conclusions regarding areas warranting further research. The literature, particularly work done through the early 1980s, is far too vast and rich to fully do justice to in the time frame that was allocated for this work, so we have concentrated on what we judged as the most important works in French and English.[3]

The review is structured around six themes slightly modified from our Terms of Reference[4]:

- **The evolution of the economy** in the DRC, the economic foundations of the state and society, and the interplay with contemporary politics and incentives.

- **How the state has functioned**, the structure of government and how this has evolved, both formally and in practice: How has the reach of the state and its authority changed/declined/developed? What have the key institutions of the state been, and to what extent have they impacted on the lives of ordinary people? Has the state provided services to its citizens, and how/why?

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[2] Formerly Congo-Kinshasa and from 1971 Zaire. In this review we will use the name Congo at times as a short-hand reference to this territorial state despite changes in the official nomenclature.

[3] Our terms of reference asked us to review political economy, sociology, anthropological and socio-political perspectives and to relate to social, political, fiscal, economic, external (e.g. aid, colonial, cold war) and cultural factors affecting existing change dynamics in the DRC, particularly as they relate to government capacity, political change, accountability, democratization, poverty reduction and conflict. It should include key informal as well as formal structures affecting change in DRC (e.g. patron-client relations and patronage). We do not claim to have yet achieved this level of comprehensive coverage of the literature.

[4] For reasons of time and space we have incorporated treatment of traditional authority with the anatomy of intra-regional of power. We give only slight attention to inter-regional patterns of power in this draft and only a brief comment on popular perceptions of the state.

- **Government/political motivation**: How have government actors seen their role? To whom has accountability been built, formally and informally? The incentives and interest groups to which different groups of power holders have tended to respond.

- **The anatomy of intra-regional power and the role of traditional patterns of authority** (both regional dynamics within DRC that have driven the national political, economic and development agendas, and in the wider Great Lakes region).

- **How religious authority interacts with the contemporary state** and how/why these relationships have developed on the local and national level. Broader state-society relations and the possibility for citizen voice to be reflected or excluded in the political process.

- **Popular perceptions and expectations of the state:** What research exists on how the population would define a successful state? How Congolese citizens see politics and its relationship to family, local, ethnic and regional identities? Attitudes to corruption?

Looking at Congo/Zaire over the "longue durée", as in this review of the literature, it becomes clear that the central problem of state building is one of political and economic integration in the face of deeply rooted regional and local identities, networks of power and patterns of patronage. This has profound implications for the international community's efforts to support the consolidation of peace and the promotion of development in the Democratic Republic of Congo following the elections of late 2006. Standard templates of "good governance" involving the devolution of power and the promotion of private and non-governmental agents of development may be, not only inadequate to the challenge of state-building, but positively counter-productive if not accompanied by singular efforts to support elite coalition formation and significantly increase capacity at the level of the central state.

We offer a revisionist reading of the history of Congo/Zaire, and some might even suggest a heretical reading, which sees the most important period of progress in state-building as the first decade of rule by Mobutu Sese Seko, who has often been portrayed as the archetypical model of a predator.[5] We do so because important lessons need to be drawn from Mobutu's early efforts to build horizontal networks of power across Congolese elites and his subsequent almost "180 degree turnabout" to rely on regional and local vertical networks of power to remain in office for so many years.[6] It was this fundamental shift in the basis of power of the Mobutu regime, which could be said to have unleashed the patterns of conflict that eventually led to civil war and the deaths of more than four million people in the late 1990s through the turn of the 21st Century.

2.   EVOLUTION OF THE ECONOMY

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[5] Indeed, Peter Evans (1995), casts the Mobutu regime as a classic example of the predatory state.

[6] Of course Mobutu's ability to remain in office was profoundly influenced by the maintenance of sources of external support largely founded on the logic of the Cold War.

It seems almost banal to observe that in order to understand processes of state collapse or possibilities of reconstruction one needs to understand the economic dynamics of a place. However, there has been a surprising neglect of economic analysis in both academic and policy discussions of state reconstruction in the DRC (and more widely). There is an extensive literature on the colonial economy of Congo-Kinshasa[7] and a robust, if somewhat less extensive literature on the economy in the Mobutu era,[8] but very little scholarly study of the economy since the state unravelled and especially covering the past decade, where it is necessary to rely on analysis emerging from the policy community.[9] Surprisingly, we have found very little economic work in the otherwise rich French language literature on Congo-Zaire.[10]

The Congolese economy is characterized by (1) a plethora of economic activity in the "informal" sector, that is, beyond the purview of the state; (2) deep patterns of inequality and persistent poverty; (3) the enduring weakness of the agricultural sector, with a large percentage of people in forms of subsistence production; (4) abundant mineral resources, but significantly a *de*-industrialised mining sector and weak and un-diversified industrial production, more generally; (5) insufficient communication and transport systems, and a large but unexploited hydroelectric potential (Mutamba Lukusa 1999).

The country has been in economic crisis since the mid-1970s. While the 1980s saw a modest economic revival (average annual growth rate of 1.3%), the period between 1988 and 1998 was characterized by steep economic decline, a contraction in foreign trade, hyperinflation and currency breakdown. Lax budgetary policies and the waste of public resources have been a constant over the years. Recurrent attempts for macro-economic adjustment with the help of the Bretton Woods organisations have failed due to insufficient implementation of the respective reform programmes. In September 1991 the collapse of one of the richest copper mines of Gécamines (Kamoto) triggered a major economic and financial crash. At the same time, the country suffered from increasingly unsustainable levels of debt and a sharp decline in foreign aid (a decline of 41% between 1989 and 1990). The economic disintegration at the beginning of the 1990s (negative growth, hyperinflation) led to violent social conflict and pillage.

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[7] We have found detailed accounts of the colonial economy in Depelchin (1992), Ekpebu (1989), Hochschild (1998), Leslie (1993), Young (1968)

[8] An excellent source on the Mobutu economy is in German (Körner, 1998), while there is important material in the references cited in the previous note and in Shapiro (1992), Tshibaka (1986), UNCTAD, and Young and Turner (1985). By far and away the definitive treatment of the informal economy and its expansion with the decline of the Zairian economy is in the works of Janet MacGaffey (1991, 2000) – must reading for anyone working on the DRC.

[9] There are some exceptions (Jackson, 2002). On the recent period we rely on the staff papers of the IMF, World Bank papers, UN Security Council, successive reports by the International Crisis Group, the important report by Global Witness (2006) and the excellent investigative journalism of Colette Breakman (2006a). Research is now underway by the Crisis States Research Centre (Hesselbein, Mutebi and Putzel, 2006). A rich vein of data covering the entire post-independence period can be found in successive reports from the Banque Centrale du Congo.

[10] We say this realising there is some material in *Cahiers Africaines*, which we have not been able to review.

2.1.   Long-term trajectory, sources of wealth and persistent poverty[11]

The Belgian colonial authorities left an economy overly dependent on mineral extraction and plantation agriculture. Throughout the colonial period, the coercive power of the state was required to mobilise labour to work not only in the mining and agricultural sectors, but also in transportation and military service. Although the Belgian colonial authorities did little to contribute to "human development" within their colony, by the end of the colonial period, Congo was the second (after South Africa) most industrialised African territory. However, it was established as a sharply dualistic economy with a relatively small portion of the population working in the export sector covering copper, oil palm, cotton and coffee and the mines and a large proportion of the population surviving in subsistence agriculture. (Young, 1968; Leslie, 1993)

While the Mobutu regime is commonly seen as an era of kleptocracy, the first decade after he seized power saw a formative period of economic growth, which underpinned the expansion of the state (see state service in next section). The new government introduced a currency reform and Congo began to attract significant foreign investment. The most important export earners were copper and cobalt, produced by the former Belgian Union Minière, which was nationalized in 1967 and became known as Gecamines. Foreign aid actually decreased in Mobutu's first years, from 1965 (4.54 US $ per capita) to 2,71 US$ per capita in 1968.[12]

A further wave of nationalisations took place in 1973 and 1975 including banks, mineral companies, refineries, a car factory, air, ship and overland transportation, hotels and insurance companies (Banque Centrale, Rapport Annuel, p. 102). Nevertheless, industrial production expanded, especially in smelting, food processing, textiles, shoes, chemical industry, bicycle manufacturing and the production of barbed wire. Growth was significant during the early1970s, and big debt-financed infrastructure projects were started, including the Inga-Shaba complex, which included a hydroelectric power plant, 2000 kilometers of high voltage lines and some industrial sites. (Körner,1988: 512).

However, by the mid-1970s, a long period of economic crisis began, provoked by what Körner (1988) saw as a combination of the effects of a major crash in the price of copper, sharp rise in the price of imported oil and economic mismanagement by the regime. The IMF began negotiations in 1975/76 and by 1978 had assumed virtual control over the central bank, customs and the Ministry of Finance (Körner 1988). Many companies were reprivatised, the currency devalued and sharp cutbacks introduced in the state budget. A major Structural Adjustment Programme was introduced by 1983 and a debt rescheduling agreement with foreign creditors was adopted. While an expansion of official development assistance (ODA), motivated in large part by Zaire's strategic importance to the West, provided some relief, a long period of economic decline set in. Per capita GDP in the 1980s amounted to a third of that in 1962, and it declined even further in the 1990s (World Bank, 2006)

By 1990/1991, with the end of the Cold War, ODA came to a virtual standstill and serious pressure was exercised on the Mobutu regime to introduce political reform (see below). With hyperinflation of 1078% (1991), deeply rooted poverty affecting

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[11] This section draws on Gabi Hesselbein, on-going research, Crisis States Research Centre, LSE.

[12] Hesselbein calculations based on Banque Centrale data.

both urban and rural areas and all efforts at structural transformation of the economy inherited from the colonial regime halted, Zaire's economy was at the brink of the abyss.

Export earnings continued to decline throughout the period, even as diamond exports came to occupy a larger percentage of earnings in the 1990s (UNCTAD). GDP in constant prices shrunk by 20 % through the 1990s, due to declines in agriculture (-26.9%), manufacturing (- 39,87 %) and services (- 32,91%9. Only the increase in extractive mining prevented an even steeper decline.[13] The DRC found itself with a per capita income of 99 US $ per year, an average life expectancy of 45 by the late 1990s.

Little was left of the state as it evaporated in the face of the advance of rebel forces from 1997. Sources of mineral wealth had fallen largely into the hands of former influentials in the Mobutu state (see below) or the rebel groups vying for supremacy across the territory. The political dismemberment of the country was reflected in the patterns of trade and flow of economic resources and people emphasising more important economic connections between sub-regions of the Congo and neighbouring states than between regions of the Congo itself. This was shown in sharp relief in a study prepared for the OECD in 2001 (Maton et al, 2001).

After the years of "war economy", and with the Sun City peace accord implementation in 2002, international agencies launched a programme of economic restructuring that continues to this day. Stabilization measures initiated by the government in May 2001 were successful in breaking hyper-inflation (from 630 percent in 2000 to 8.8 percent in 2001) and in stabilizing the exchange rate. Economic growth returned in 2002 (3 percent) and continually increased (World Bank).

While per-capita income did not rise significantly above pre-war levels, foreign development aid became central to economic survival. From a marginal level of 2 – 5 US $ per capita until 2002, it rose by 2003 to an unprecedented level of 101.23 US $, matching the level of Gross National income that year.[14]

Starting from a condition of virtual collapse, annual GDP growth was reported at 5.6% in 2003 and 6.3% in 2004 (World Development Indicators, 2006). This growth rate was sustained by the rebuilding of the country through a massive in-flow of foreign aid. The liberalization of prices has enhanced the availability of food products in major cities (World Bank), but Congo remains a food-deficit country in terms of production. Shifting cultivation and subsistence farming abound and, in a structural sense, the agricultural sector has not seen major change since independence.

2.2.   Informal economy and the informalisation of economic activity

Development can *in part* be understood as the expansion of the formal economy, or the range of economic activities that occur within the purview of the state, governed by formal institutional arrangements involving contracts, regulation and taxation and

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[13] Hesselbein based on Banque Centrale.

[14] Hesselbein CSRC on-going research.

the shrinking of activities beyond the purview of the state. Of course, by its nature, informal economic activity is extremely hard to document and measure. It is wise to remember what Wyatt MacGaffey said on the subject in relation to Zaire's economy, "From official statistics … it is necessary to conclude that most of the population died of starvation some time ago" (MacGaffey 1982: 103). The economic crisis that began after 1974, followed by austerity programmes imposed by the IMF and the World Bank and the sharp and continuous devaluation of the Congolese Franc led to a massive shrinkage of the formal sector and expansion of informal activities of all kinds. As we shall see, this had a determining affect on the shape of the state and the pattern of politics of the later Mobutu years and beyond.

By 1978, output had fallen 17% below the level of 1974, and imports 50% below. The manufacturing sector was operating at only 40 % of capacity, inflation was almost 100%; and real wages and salaries were one quarter of the 1970 level." This was the context in which Janet Mac Gaffey described how the "second economy" overtook formal economic activity. (MacGaffey 1991). People started to take matters into their own hands. The more the state was unable to provide health, transportation, construction, education, the more actors beyond the purview of the state began to operate to fill the gap. MacGaffey (1991) reported that only about one million of an estimated four million people in the labour force were employed and earning a wage in the official economy.

According to a 1986 survey of household incomes and expenditures in Kinshasa, 25% of income came from wages and salaries, 29% from unknown sources, primarily illicit and described as 'je me debrouille (I get by)' and the rest from gifts, rents, saving, etc (Hayoux et al 1986, p. 36-37) An important consequence of this remarkable gap between wages and salaries and the income necessary for even a modest standard of living, was that the first and most time-consuming activity of officials at all levels of the bureaucracy was to get their wages, since they were often not paid, and then somehow to increase them by some five to twenty percent. Since regular rotation prevented officials from developing any economic enterprise, they relied instead on their position to extort fees for their services, which were nominally provided free of charge. It is this pattern that lays at the root of "public corruption" of all sorts and it is a pattern that has persisted to this day (Young and Turner, 1985 and Schatzberg, 1988).

As the state was retrenched from the mid-1970s it lost tremendous amounts of revenue from smuggling and fraudulent export of its primary goods. Since the 1970s, from 30-60 % of the coffee crop was smuggled or fraudulently exported; from 1975 to 1979 this illegal coffee trade was estimated to have cost the DRC $350 million (Quarterly Economic Review, Rwanda and Burundi, 1980). In 1979, smuggled diamonds equalled in carats 68% of official production (5.5 million carats were smuggled; official production was 8.06 million) a loss of nearly $59 million. Cobalt and ivory were also smuggled in massive amounts (Bezy et al. 1981, p. 172).

In 1983, fiscal and liberalization reforms legalized the artisanal production of diamonds and gold and license counters were established for their purchase. This measure was apparently successful in reducing diamond smuggling, given that official diamond exports increased considerably, tripling from 1983 to 1987. Gold exports also rose initially but soon declined. Data from Kivu and Lower Zaire showed that more gold was smuggled than was exported officially. The reform, however, was not implemented in rural areas where price controls continued to be imposed resulting in

food crops being extensively smuggled across the borders to benefit from higher prices and obtain scarce commodities (MacGaffey, 1991).

The unrecorded and illicit transactions of DRC's unofficial economy were estimated in the early 1990s to be three times the size of official GDP (MacGaffey, 1991, p.11). Today, the situation has hardly improved. Reports abound of cross-border illicit exports. Research conducted in 2005 and 2006, for example, confirmed the illicit transfer of minerals across the DRC-Zambia border, with government and security officials accepting false or inaccurate export certificates, or actively colluding with trading companies to evade control procedures. Large amounts of minerals are leaving the country undeclared, representing a huge loss for the Congolese economy – but a great gain for a small number of powerful actors. According to a local source, at least three quarters of the minerals leaving Katanga at the end of 2005 were exported illicitly.(Global Witness, 2006: 4).

Employment in the formal economy has been radically reduced over time. The breakdown of Gecamines led to a massive reduction in formal employment. Today, of almost a million workers employed in mining (150,000 or more in Katanga), only 35,000 are registered. (Braeckman 2006). Labour conditions in the artisanal mines are harsh, marked by the absence of safety precautions, the failure of both the government and companies to invest in health and safety, and pervasive abuse by officials at all levels in extracting payments from mine workers in what Global Witness (2006) has called a system of "institutionalised corruption".

The Interim Poverty Reduction Strategy paper estimated that, by the year 2000, formal employment represented only 2% of the population, 4% of the work-force and 8% of active male work force (in 1960, the figures were respectively, 8, 18 and 35%) (cited in World Bank, 2006a). In Kinshasa, some 90% of the population is engaged in the informal sector (World Bank 2006a). In the DRC, the economy is informal and understanding better how it works will be essential to designing strategies to promote growth and poverty reduction.

2.3.   Agricultural stagnation and neglect

While the agricultural sector in the DRC has long been claimed to be capable of becoming the bread-basket of Africa, since independence state officials have failed to launch significant structural change, while continuing to import food (Bokamba, 1986). Production has consistently stagnated or decreased and infrastructure and equipment progressively fell into disrepair. Development aid funds, including the agricultural products under the U.S. PL 480 programme, channelled through government organisations were often stolen by prominent government officials.

Overall performance in the agriculture sector was dismal, with increases in production of staple food crops falling well below estimated population growth since the early 1970s. The agricultural sector (commercial and subsistence agriculture) has thus experienced slow growth since independence. By 1992, except for products such as coffee, cocoa beans, and groundnuts, agricultural products did not reach pre-independence production levels. Subsistence agriculture employed about 60% of the country's working population. However, without adequate technology, Congolese farmers were unable to produce enough to satisfy the increasing needs of the urban

areas. In 1970, the sector contributed 16.6 percent to GDP. By 1980 this figure had risen to 18.9 percent and by 1986 to 20 percent, but this was more a consequence of contraction in other sectors than any achievement in agriculture where the value of production shrank in real terms, given high inflation rates (Leslie, 1993, pp.126-28).

As early as 1975, the World Bank criticised the government's lack of focus on agricultural investment and in 1982 the Bank assisted in implementing a recovery plan designed to increase food self-sufficiency, with plans for increased privatisation of the sector, liberalization of pricing policies, launching better marketing and extension services. While prices were liberalised and the private sector accorded a bigger role, successive donor programmes with the Ministry of Agriculture failed to bring about significant change. In fact, a report prepared for the World Bank (2006a: 10) noted that structural adjustment in agriculture dismantled state-run distribution and marketing systems precipitously before any alternatives had been developed, thus accelerating the collapse of the agricultural sector.

Problems in agriculture can be partially attributed to the local transport system, which deteriorated after independence. The Mobutu regime did little to maintain the system and there was an overall decapitalisation of the sector as producers became separated from markets. In the first half of the 1990s food crop, livestock and traditional export crop production contracted.

The agricultural sector to this day is a subject of neglect with a huge potential, both in developing production for an expanding urban population and in industrial and high value crops. It could serve as a key to launching manufacturing in food processing activities, if donors and state officials looked upon agriculture in the manner done for instance in Chile or Malaysia.

In the most important study on agriculture in recent years, the World Bank points to the urgency of revitalising the agricultural sector, especially the food-crop sector.[15] Aside from responding to what by all indications is an appalling nutritional conditionof the rural and urban poor[16], if agricultural production is ignored while the mining sector is restored, it will create the classic conditions of "Dutch disease", whereby earnings from natural resources will expand food imports and further depress incentives in agriculture (World Bank, 2006a).

We have found no other significant studies of the sector in recent years, perhaps reflecting the general gap in thinking about production among most development agencies and the African Union in recent years.

Mining, Minerals and the problem of de-industrialisation

The story of Gecamines tells of a profound process of de-industrialisation that has occurred over the last two decades in the DRC. Throughout the Mobutu years, Gecamines, while the object of abuse by government officials, remained instrumental to the Congolese economy and state revenues. In 1989, Gécamines accounted for 85% of Congo's export earnings (against 60% provided by the UMHK in 1960), and 42%

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[15] The Bank's report (2006a) emphasises how poor the data on agriculture is with an almost total breakdown of the monitoring and statistical functions of the state over more than a decade.
[16] The World Bank (2006a: 15) reports that, "two-thirds of the population—over 35 million people—does not have enough food to meet their minimum daily caloric requirement".

of public revenues, making it by far the most significant company in the Congo. In the 1990s, Gécamines' financial situation deteriorated due to several factors, including the degradation of infrastructure and equipment, collapse of the Kamoto mine, and ethnic riots in Shaba. These led to a fall in production, from 440,848 tons of copper, 54,043 tons of zinc in 1989 to only 32,412 tons of copper, 2,515 tons of zinc, 3,631 tons of cobalt in 1994. "According to IMF estimates, artisanal diamond mining in 2004 reached a record 22.1 million carats, compared to 8.8 million carats produced by formal industrial miners" (cited by EITI 2006).

At the turn of the century, the World Bank (2006) highlighted the need to restructure the struggling state enterprises, in particular Gécamines, drawing heavily on private partnerships to effectively restore production. The programme would pension off and retrain existing employees and then restructure the corporation with the help of foreign consultants. However, in the interim, government agencies have sold off much of the company's assets, which threatens the viability of the entire plan (Braeckman 2006a; Global Witness, 2006).

For example, Gécamines no longer has the rich Luiswishi open-pit mine near Lubumbashi, which has been sold to George Forrest, a Belgian businessman whose family has been operating in the DRC since 1922[17]. Several other mines around Kolwezi and plants in Likasi have also been sold off to various private operators. For example, American Mineral Fields, the Australian company Russel Resources and Zimbabwe's Ridgepointe Overseas, who funded Laurent-Désiré Kabila's military campaign and later the DRC's political and administrative reconstruction, have agreements for three Gecamines sites, as well as mining resources at Mongbwalu in the northeastern province of Ituri, and diamond concessions in Kisangani.[18]

The International Finance Corporation (IFC), the World Bank's private investment branch, has provided funds for a feasibility study carried out by Adastra, a Canadian mining company based in the UK, which is establishing a copper and cobalt project in Kolwezi. In October 2005, the IFC exercised its option so that it now has a 7.5% stake in Adastra's project. In April 2006, Adastra was taken over by First Quantum, another Canadian mining company (Global Witness, 2006) The Kolwezi project is especially noteworthy as it is the first investment in the DRC by the IFC, which funds private sector projects in developing countries. It is not yet known whether the IFC will invest in other mining projects in the country (Global Witness, 2006).

Sites owned by Gecamines include Kakanda/Kambove (copper), jointly with the International Panorama Resources Corporation; Kamfundwa (copper) jointly with the Harambee Mining Corporation and Sogemin; Kamoto (copper); Kipushi (copper, golad and zinc) jointly with Adastra Minerals Inc and the Zinc Corporation of SA Ltd; Kolwezi (copper); Kov (copper); copper smelters in Lubumbashi and copper refineries in Shituru. The company is reportedly still in possession of substantial ore reserves of copper (56 Mt contained metal), cobalt (4 Mt), germanium (3.4 Mt), and zinc (6.4 Mt).

After the transitional government came to power the World Bank pushed for quick privatisation of state assets. This was pursued on the basis of incredibly poor information (Hesselbein, Mutebi and Putzel, 2006) and may have served little more

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[17] Entreprise Générale Malta Forrest, official website. http://www.egmforrest.com/uk/histo.html
[18] Corporate Knights 2006; Global Witness 2006; Braeckman, C. (2006a)

than to legitimate the selling off of assets to domestic and foreign interests in a manner that could well have contributed to undermining programmes designed for sectoral reconstruction, as in the mining sector described above.

The DRC signed on to the Kimberly Process (diamond certification process) in 2003 and the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (EITI) in 2005. A national committee has been formed to monitor adherence to the EITI, with goals to improve accountability, reduce smuggling, enforce the new Mining Code, and restructure the sector.[19] The Lutundula Special Parliamentary Commission produced a report evaluating the legitimacy of mining and other business contracts concluded between 1996 and 2003. It remains unclear how the new National Assembly will deal with the Commission's findings (UN Security Council, 2006; Human Rights Watch, 2006).

In designing regulatory and incentive structures to ensure government receives substantial revenue from its natural resources, action should be taken to address the recommendations of the Lutundula Commission, including the termination or renegotiation of contracts, and prosecution of corrupt individuals.

3.   THE RISE AND DECLINE OF THE STATE

The political history of the post-independence period in the DRC needs to be reinterpreted in light of processes of accelerated state collapse unleashed in the 1990s. Much of the rich scholarship undertaken during the rule of Mobutu Sese Seko was devoted to a critical analysis of the rise of dictatorial authority, an anatomy of elite corruption, a documentation of foreign complicity in the maintenance of dictatorship and an effort to understand the peculiarities of Mobutu's personal authority. Re-reading this literature today, but asking new questions, like why the Congolese state *survived* for thirty years under Mobutu's rule and what underpinned what now seems like a rather long period of relative peace within much of the present day territory of the DRC can inform debates about the possible directions of change today, after a period of destructive civil war.

In hindsight, the Mobutu years can be understood as an era of aborted state-making. The ebbs and flows of state authority in post-independence Congo can be understood as a continuing tension between the establishment of a unified "Congolese" elite with a reference point in Kinshasa and institutions designed to exercise centralised authority over the whole territory on the one hand, and processes of "autonomisation", to use Peemans' (1997) terms, where elites articulated and utilised institutional arrangements based on historically founded or invented sub-national identities based on ethnicity (triabalism), region and language. When central state organisations were weak in terms of their control over resources and coercive power, provincial and regional organisations, networks and groups appealing to alternative institutional arrangements filled the void and expanded their power.

Drawing on the most important scholarship and privileging work in the French language, in this section we look at the changing networks of power behind the Congolese state and how the basis of the exercise of public authority changed over

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[19] http://www.eitransparency.org/section/countries/_democraticrepublicofcongo)

time and how this process was determined at strategic moments by the economic trajectory discussed above and also influenced the direction economic change took. We then consider in turn the key dimensions of state functions related to the provision of security and the provision of services with a focus on education and health.

3.1.   The Colonial Legacy – establishing a basis for a state but not a nation

While an analysis of pre-colonial and colonial history is beyond our scope here, suffice it to say that Belgian colonial rule, notoriously paternalistic and violent (Hochschild, 1998), attempted to impose a centralised authority over what had been in pre-colonial times, a society ruled by local "strongmen" (Willame, 1994) where networks of ethnic and tribal clusters were characterised by territorial mobility (Vansina, 1991). As in other colonial territories in Africa, the Belgian colonial authorities created strong chiefdoms, where none had existed (Willame 1997; Braeckman, 1996), transplanted cooperative ethnic groups from one region to another (for instance, Kasains to Katanga) (Nkamany A Baleme, 1997), and encouraged tribal delineations of the population to consolidate colonial authority. Virtually no forms of social organisation were permitted other than those based on tribe and ethnicity, which had a determinant effect on the shape of the post-independence political landscape.

While colonial rule succeeded in creating a fairly centralised state administration, it left no room for the development of a nation. As labour unions and political parties were prohibited under colonial rule, the multiple tribal associations (e.g. CONAKAT, ABAKO, BALUBAKAT, UNIMO) came to be important arenas of political mobilisation during the struggle for independence (Nkamany A Baleme 1997). Congolese "nationalism" at independence was therefore from the beginning not only directed against the colonial power but had also an ethnic and often separatist imprint. For many contestants for state power, the goal was not only to accede to independence but also to secure a privileged position for one's own ethnic group in the post-colonial order.

1960-1965: The First Republic

At independence, the two opposing ideologies were the *nationalism* of Lumumba and the *federalism (or tribalism)* of various regional leaders (Nkamany A Baleme 1997: 73, Bakajika 1997: 32). While the nationalists under the leadership of Lumumba won the general elections in 1960 (regional leaders had only a limited power base), the conflict between nationalists and federalist (tribalists) marked the First Republic and led to a series of conflicts and rebellions. Initially, there were three political centres (Diangitukwa 2001: 28f.): (1) Leopoldville with President Kasa-Vubu (a moderate nationalist) and Prime-Minister Lumumba (a radical nationalist); (2) the secession in Katanga led by Tshombe (federalist), supported by Belgium; and (3) the secession in Southern Kasai led by Kalonji (federalist), supported by Belgium. After the disempowerment of Lumumba and the abatement of the secessionist movements, the tensions between moderate nationalists and the radicalised "Lumumbistes", led by Antoine Gizenga, weakened the nationalist movement and culminated in a rebellion in Orientale Province (1964). The most powerful political network between 1960 and 1965 was the *Binza group* who backed the moderate nationalists (members were, among others, Mobutu, Ndele, Bomboko, Kandolo, Nendeka) and enjoyed the active

support of the Western world motivated by an objective of containing the spread of communism and maintaining access to Congo's raw materials (Diangitukwa 2001: 57ff.).[20] Having heavily influenced the course of the First Republic, the *Binza group* installed – with the support of the United States and Belgium – General Mobutu in power on 24 November 1965.

1965-1974 Mobutu's state-building project

During its first decade, the Mobutu regime appeared to be pursuing a modern political project (Willame 1992: 26f.). In order to overcome the divisions of the first Republic, his administration reduced the number of provinces, suppressed their autonomy and introduced a policy of moving administrative cadres to regions distinct from those of their origin (Nkamany A Baleme 1997: 63ff.). In 1967, Mobutu created the Mouvement Populaire de la Révolution (MPR) – declaring it the single party of the nation (Braeckman 1992: 168). The party in effect became the state and encompassed not only all the administrative organisations at the central and provincial levels, but also the trade unions, youth movements, and student organizations.

Peemans (1997: 91) argued that more important than the establishment of a single party was the formation of "networks of modernizing intermediation" whereby selected army officials, politicians, trade unionists, intellectuals and cadres were co-opted into the new regime. During this period there was a rapid expansion of the public sector and implementation of large industrial projects, which led to the establishment of a class of functionaries, albeit determined perhaps more by their allegiance to and dependence upon the Head of state than their skills in carrying out state functions. The *Binza group* remained at the centre of state power – all government organisations included members of the group - and they integrated the newly co-opted, in particular MPR functionaries (Diangitukwa 2001: 91f.) into the apparatus. Mobutu retained his position as a General, ensuring that the network enjoyed the sustained support of the Zairian armed forces (FAZ).

The period from 1965 to 1974 witnessed the development of "horizontal" affiliations among Congolese elites that sought to consolidate their economic and social basis by making use of the modern nation-state (Peemans 1997: 92). This strategy increased their power vis-à-vis the traditional authorities that had regained influence during the turbulence of the First Republic.

This was illustrated by the Mobutu regime's actions on citizenship and land rights. In the Kivus, at independence the status of the long established Banyarwanda people had not been resolved and their citizenship was put into question by Hunde tribal authorities. This had broken out in violence during 1963-64 and after the influx of refugees to the region following the massacre of some 200,000 Hutu in Burndi in 1972, violence against the Kinyarwanda-speaking peoples in Kivu broke out again at the instigation of Hunde and other traditional authorities. Mobutu moved in a sense against the traditional authorities introducing the 1972 Citizenship Decree, which was an inclusive law recognising most of the Banyarwanda population as citizens of Zaire. In 1973, Mobutu's General Property Law nationalised all land, which also was seen as a measure to marginalize traditional authority. (Mamdani, 2001: 242-43). On the

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[20] *Time* magazine (1963) described the Binza group, which got its name from the Leopoldville suburb where they were said to have met in 1960 to plot the overthrow of Lumumba, as a "band of anti-communist strong men".

whole, the modern elite's search for autonomy in the form of "horizontal networks" corresponded to the attempt to build what Young (1994) described as the construction of an "integral state".

1974-1980 A shift in the Centre of Gravity of Mobutu's state

Young, however, stated that the "integral state" soon became a "shattered illusion". From the Mid-1970s, Zaire turned away from its modernist course and was progressively transformed into what Willame (1992: 14ff.) and Braeckman (1992: 137ff.) have called an "absolute monarchy".

The phase from 1974 to 1980 was complex. While the sustained economic growth of the previous period came to a halt, the Mobutu regime reinforced the state's penetration of Zairian society by means of increasingly personalized networks (Peemans 1997: 92f.). During the "zairianisation" of the economy (1973-1974), the regime redistributed the property of the old colonial bourgeoisie to selected "beneficiaries" – a policy that provided the Mobutu regime with a new clientelist base. While such a redistribution would not necessarily have undermined the modernist project, the economic crisis inhibited further expansion of public sector contracts arresting the process of expansion of the new hierarchy of "modern" functionaries. As the expansion of "modernist" networks slowed down, the "modern" elite no longer had the means to contain traditional authority.

This evolution gave rise to "networks of ethno-centralist penetration" that allowed Mobutu to maintain control over the country despite the weakening of the "modern" state apparatus (Peemans 1997: 93). Mobutu's power was consolidated through the multiplication of "vertical" networks of influence where ethnic and regional affiliation gained in importance. Here, people from Mobutu's Equateur region – in particular from his own ethnic group, the Ngbandi – enjoyed a privileged position (Nkamany A Baleme 1997: 81f.). While access to public office had been linked to a regional quota system in the early years of the regime, from 1976 this no longer applied to the Equateur region. Since then, the Equateur region regularly supplied a disproportionate number of ministers, the majority of the high military command and the quasi-totality of the security services. Nonetheless, Mobutu was smart enough to maintain a certain ethnic and regional balance. The "patrons" of the diverse clientelist networks – that were subject to a process of rotation - included representatives of all ethnic groups and regions (Peemans 1997: 93).

Diangitukwa (2003: 99) argued that the move towards the "zairianisation" of the economy coincided with, or marked, the construction of a "patrimonial state". The *Binza Group* had woven a complex web of clientelist networks, a "système Mobutu" (Willame 1992: 13ff.), where power and money were intrinsically intertwined. Access to the country's resources was controlled by Mobutu himself. Having direct access to the state-owned enterprises (most notably Gécamines and Sozacom) and to the Central Bank, direct money withdrawals were frequent and uncontrolled. The motivation underlying this predatory practice was not simply personal self-enrichment but also the "buying" of national and international sources of support. Power and money in Zaire were therefore subject to both vertical and horizontal redistribution that guaranteed the stability of the system even during a period of economic decline.

The systematic pillaging of the country's resources did not only enrich Mobutu and his immediate entourage, but benefited the country's entire political class. The

"système Mobutu" was built on four pillars (Willame 1992: 39ff.): (1) The MPR as the single-state party, (2) a multitude of security services that ensured an effective system of control and repression (e.g. Centre national de recherches et d'investigations, Service national d'information, Service national d'intelligence et de protection, Service d'action et de renseignements militaires e.g. CNRI, SNI, SNIP, CADER), (3) the national army (FAZ) composed of a number of elite units, most notably the Presidential guard; and (4) the national administration as an instrument for the personal enrichment of otherwise underpaid functionaries.

1980-1990 "Autonomisation" of the elite with state decline

Throughout the 1980s, the mobilization and redistribution capacity of the Zairian state apparatus was further reduced, most notably due to the enduring economic crisis and the constraints imposed by structural adjustment (Peemans 1997: 93f.). As a consequence, an important part of the elite started seeking private means of accumulation that were less dependent on the central state and its (diminishing) redistribution capacity. These "independent" accumulation strategies required improved relations with the traditional authorities of the country. The latter maintained control over the distribution of land resources whose privatization was an important component of private accumulation, especially in rural and peri-urban zones. Altogether, there were therefore signs of potential autonomy from the Mobutu regime. This coincided with the appearance of Tshisekedi's UDPS (Union pour la démocratie et le progrès social) as an opposition party (founded in 1980), which – although initially repressed and co-opted by the regime – began to transform the political landscape (Willame 1992: 121ff.).

However, one of the most important sources of legitimacy for a state is the recognition it has within the international community of states. Despite developments during this period, Mobutu managed to maintain control over the country, in part, by reaffirming his status as uncontested negotiating partner of the Western world (Peemans 1997: 93). This allowed him to manipulate the foreign aid that continued to flow until the end of the 1980s, in particular the periodic support packages accorded by the IMF and the World Bank. On the whole, the Mobutu regime continued to control the complex web of clientelist networks. While instances of corruption and predation peaked in the 1980s (Dungia 1992: 73-74, Diangitukwa 2001: 117), the "autonomisation", again in Peemans' terms, of the clientelist networks remained limited.

1990-1997 Unravelling and collapse of the state

At the beginning of the 1990s, however, the Mobutu regime found itself in a seriously weakened position. While the extractive state industries (most notably Gécamines) suffered from a sharp contraction further diminishing the redistribution capacity of the state, the end of the Cold War led to the drying up of foreign aid flows and the alienation of long-standing international allies (most notably, Belgium and the United States) (De Villers 2005: 50ff.). While the Congolese state had continued to perform some basic functions throughout the 1980s, its politico-administrative and economic apparatus now started to decay.

This situation led to a comprehensive restructuring of the clientelist networks underlying the Congolese state (Peemans 1997: 94ff.). The phase between 1990 and 1997 witnessesed the multiplication of "multifunctional networks of autonomisation"

with important ethnic and regional roots. In light of the diminishing redistributive capacity of the Mobutu regime, the elites no longer focused exclusively on securing access to state-controlled resources, but instead began to look for a basis for private accumulation and legitimacy at the regional and local levels. Against this background, it becomes understandable why the return to multipartism in 1990 encouraged the reactivation of ethno-regional mobilization. Among the hundreds of new political parties, many had an exclusively regional or ethnic basis. As in the period between 1960 and 1965, "tribalism" became the preferred strategy in the struggle for power. This can be illustrated by the example of the conflicts in the Shaba and Kivu regions in the early 1990s. In both cases, socio-economic problems – the breakdown of Gécamines in Shaba and land conflicts in the Kivus – were posed in ethnic terms and led to ethnic violence and massive displacements.

Altogether, the "transition" between 1990 and 1997 cannot be reduced to the endless political conflicts between the "democratic opposition" led by Tshisekedi and the "despotic" Mobutu regime (Peemans 1997: 100). Instead, the development of increasingly "autonomised" networks undermined the stability of the Mobutu regime and threatened the integrity of the state. Nonetheless, Mobutu managed to stay in power until 1997. This was due to his ability to play one ethnic group off against the other and the fact that he maintained control of the diamond industry, the Central Bank and the most effective parts of his military and police forces (the Presidential Division - DSP - and the security services) (Peemans 1997: 98).

It was only the externally backed rebellion by Laurent Kabila – who had remained outside official Congolese politics since the 1960s – that put an end to the Mobutu regime. The rebellion began when Mobutu's governor in South Kivu ordered the expulsion of Tutsis from the province. Already under pressure from Hutus of the former Rwandan regime and interahamwe, the population rebelled in self-defence (Rogier, 2003:5) They would go on to form the backbone of Laurent Kabila's AFDL (Alliance des Forces Démocratiques pour la Libération du Congo-Zaire), which received heavy backing from Rwanda and Uganda.

This time lacking the military support of the Western countries (except France) and abandoned by his army, which was in a process of disintegration since the early 1990s (De Villers 2005: 54), Mobutu was chased from power in 1997.

1997-2001: Civil War and State Collapse

In general, it is very difficult to identify structured networks underlying the Laurent Kabila regime as there were substantial reconfigurations over the four years of his rule. While "networks of power" in Congo have always had a very substantial international component (most notably through the influence of the "Troika" Belgium, United States and France), their "internationalization" takes on extreme dimensions after the decline of Mobutu. Interestingly, however, the main international actors were henceforth "African" – in particular the neighbouring countries Rwanda, Uganda, Angola and Zimbabwe (Pourtier 1997: 9).

The liberation war of Kabila's AFDL (Alliance des Forces Démocratiques pour la Libération du Congo-Zaire) gained support from a broad regional coalition comprising Uganda, Rwanda, Burundi, Angola, Zimbabwe, Tanzania, Zambia and Eritrea (Diangitukwa 2001: 196). After his victory, Kabila was initially almost entirely dependent on "networks close to Rwanda and Uganda" (Diangitukwa 2001:

201ff.). The strategic posts were occupied by a number of Banyarwanda and Banyamulenge from the Kivu region, an ethnic group, allegedly of Rwandan descent, that had supplied the bulk of Kabila's AFDL. The close ties with Rwanda were evident. Members of what has been referred to by some as the "Tutsi lobby" occupied key positions in the Secretariat of the Presidency and the security services, while the new Congolese army (FAC) included numerous ex-members of the "Front Patriotique Rwandais" (FPR). The new head of the FAC, James Kabarebe, for instance, was a former FPR officer whom Kabila had "borrowed" from Rwandan President Paul Kagame during the AFDL liberation war.

This apparent dependence on "foreign" networks met widespread opposition among the Congolese population, stoked up by rival elites, and culminated in xenophobic anti-Tutsi sentiments (Diangitukwa 2001: 201ff.) Under mounting domestic pressure, Kabila broke with his Rwandan and Ugandan allies in May 1998 and chased the Banyarwanda and Banyamulenge from power. In order to consolidate his own power, Kabila built his "own" networks of power: (1) The "Katanga network", Kabila's home region that comprises members from Kabila's family and his own ethnic group, the Baluba. The "Balubakat" replaced the Banyarwanda and Banyamulenge and soon occupied most key positions in the regime (FAC, police, Central bank, administration); (2) the "Kasai network" that supplied a number of key members of the regime (e.g. Kanengele, Mpoyo, Kazadi); and (3) influential members from the Kinois ethnic group in Kinshasa (e.g. Inongo, Ndombasi, Mumengi).

While this reconfiguration of networks allowed Kabila to "congolise", his power base, it led to the formation of the "Rassemblement congolais pour la démocratie" (RCD) – a rebel movement in the eastern part of the country that regrouped the "betrayed" Banyarwanda and Banyamulenge and received the active support of Rwanda and Uganda (Diangitukwa 2001: 208ff.). The Kabila regime was too weak to counter an RCD offensive in August 1998 - led by the former head of the FAC, James Kabarebe – and the regime owed its survival to the intervention of the Angolan Army. Despite the Lusaka peace accords in 1999, the fragmentation of the Congolese state continued at an accelerated pace. By 2001, the Kabila regime controlled less than 50% of his territory and faced three main rebel movements (Diangitukwa 2001: 218ff.): (1) The RCD-Goma of Illunga, supported by Rwanda; (2) its dissident wing RCD-ML led by Wamba dia Wamba, supported by Uganda; and (3) the "Mouvement de Libération du Congo" (MLC) of Jean Pierre Bemba, equally supported by Uganda. The Kabila regime, on the other hand, could count on the armed forces of Angola, Zimbabwe and Namibia and enjoyed the support of the Mai-Mai and Interhamwe militias. This further fragmentation of the "internationalized networks" was accompanied by an increasing criminalization, as all sides engaged in the uncontrolled pillaging of the country's natural resources. These fighting forces mobilised on the basis of tribal affiliations. For instance, after Uganda backed Bemba to establish the MLC, the organisation immediately began recruiting among the Bangala tribes in Equateur, which had been an important base for Mobutu during his last years in power (Prunier, 2004: 379-80).

By 2000, there was significant pressure being exercised by the international community both the Congolese belligerents and their external supporters. The United Nations deployed 5000 troops in the year 2000 but, despite a string of ceasefire agreements, fighting continued. In January 2001 Laurent Kabila was assassinated and

his son, Joseph Kabila, assumed the presidency in Kinshasa.[21] Kabila Jr. immediately made overtures to the international community demonstrating a willingness to move towards peace.

2001-2006 Securing the Peace and putting the state back together

There is not a great deal of primary academic research covering the most recent period of state reconstruction.[22] A synthesis of this work supplemented by new primary research is provided in Hesselbein, Mutebi and Putzel (2006), from which discussion of this period throughout the review draws heavily. The period was dominated by internal manoeuvring between the four component parties, signatories to the Global and All-Inclusive Agreement on the Transition in the DRC of December 2002, under the so-called "1+4" agreement (one President and four vice-presidents). Ministries were allocated between the groups and seats allocated to a transitional assembly as well.[23] For the first year after the peace agreement the component parties of the transitional government did not sit down together and their relationship through the period remained tense. Conflict continued throughout the period, centred in the Kivus, Ituri and Katanga.

The transition period can be understood as one where "military political movements" (MPM) jockeyed for position to establish a claim on the state through a formal transformation into political parties (de Goede, 2006). The main contending "parties" were President Kabila's PPRD, Jean Pierre Bemba's MLC and the RCD-Goma under the leadership of Rubwera. Each of the main MPMs had established a territorial base during the war and access to resource extraction within the territory (See UN, 2001, 2001b, 2002a, 2002b; Lutundula Commission, 2005). Each had built alliances with vertical power networks based on tribal loyalties. By engaging in the peace process and subsequently the election campaign they hoped to secure what they won through war in terms of both access to resources for the alliance of interests behind each and legitimation in the eyes of the international community. From the outset it was clear that RCD-Goma could not win political power at the centre, given its base in the Bangrwanda communities in the east, but it probably hoped to secure a position in local state organisations in the east.

The period leading up to elections in July 2006 witnessed the construction of new networks of power as President Joseph Kabila sought to use his leading position to shore up international support and whittle down the power of his adversaries. As president he enjoyed the advantage of executive authority, privileged contacts with the international community and was best positioned to build up military forces loyal to himself both within the new national army and the presidential guard. Kabila remained isolated among Kinshasa's population where he was seen by many as a "foreigner" from the east, while the Vice-President, Jean Pierre Bemba appeared to gain popularity in the capital and the western regions of the country at the expense of the long-time opposition, Etienne Tshisikedi. The latter's UPDS, by not participating in the transitional organisations of government and announcing its intention to boycott elections, increasingly drifted into political obscurity. In an important study of

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[21] BBC News, Thursday, 18 January, 2001, 20:32 http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/africa/1124841.stm and ongoing research, Gabi Hesselbein, Crisis States Research Centre. On the torturous route to peace see Rogier, 2004.

[22] However, see the excellent Masters dissertation (Meike de Goede, 2006)

[23] See de Goede (2006) for a helpful collation of information on the transitional government.

political alignments in the immediate pre-election period, the International Crisis Group (2006c). suggested that elections would be determined largely by alliances built regionally based on ethnic allegiances and the support of chiefs and churches.

Evolution of security functions of the state

The issue of security sector reform – both armed forces and police – is absolutely crucial for moving towards peace and development in Congo. The central state's reach to various corners of the country remains weak and much of the poverty-stricken population lives in insecurity and subject to high rates of crime. A wide variety of armed groups and militias continue to operate within the territory. They are often backed by external interests and given their access to sources of mineral wealth they have a basis to be in ICG's (2006a: 1), "self-sustaining".

Efforts to reform the Congo's security sector had to start from scratch (ICG 2006a: 2). Security forces, both the army and police have been marked by predatory behaviour since colonial times. They have often been employed as instruments by individual politicians in pursuit of personal enrichment or power and in the process have a record of significant human rights abuses.

Belgian colonial authorities established a single Force publique (FP), with no distinction between military and police functions (ICG 2006a: 12f.). Like today, military commanders used "their considerable autonomy to pursue their own agendas". In line with the "ethnic matrix" of colonial rule (see above), the army began to fragment along ethnic lines after independence. Rebellions and secessionist movements in the early 1960s drew much of their support from the former local FP units. The "Armée nationale congolaise" (ANC) generally performed poorly when faced by serious threats requiring Belgian troops and American logistics to put down the "Lumumbist" rebellion in the east of the country (Nkamany A Baleme 1997: 62f.).

The Mobutu regime largely reproduced the military organization established under colonial rule. He used the army against both external and internal threats. Always aware of the danger of a coup he employed the "Forces armées congolaises" (FAZ) as an instrument to ensure his own survival (Bangoura 1994: 126). FAZ was placed under his direct control and recruitment was almost exclusively among his own ethnic group in his home region (Equateur province). He created a "two track army" (ICG 2006a: 2) whose externally trained elite units – in particular the Presidential Division (DSP) that functioned as Mobutu's last bastion (Bangoura 1994: 128) – received preferential training, pay and living conditions, while the rest of the FAZ was chronically neglected and underfinanced. This gave rise to a "sub-proletariat army" (Willame 1992: 52f.) characterised by systematic predation, trafficking and extortion. FAZ therefore remained incredibly weak as was illustrated during the two Shaba wars (1977 and 1978), when Congolese forces had to be saved by the intervention of French and Moroccan troops.

During the 1990s, as the state was unraveling, the condition of the FAZ continued to deteriorate (N'Gbanda 1998: 48). The army suffered from a veritable war between its Generals, in line with the trend towards autonomisation of the elite, which intensified tribalist and clientelist practises. While the DSP continued to receive beneficial treatment, the great majority of the soldiers were paid only erratically, virtually institutionalising abusive practices and desertions among the rank and file. Without

the support of Western countries (except France), the dysfunctional army was unable to withstand Kabila's rebellion in 1996/1997: Despite the renewed recruitment of international mercenaries (in particular Serbs), Mobutu's army disintegrated and the rebels captured Kinshasa with little resistance.

The state reconstituted by Laurent Kabila was extremely fragile. Kabila had to depend on his presidential guard (GSSP) and was unable to reconstitute an integrated army. ICGT (2006a: 3) claim this was due to his reliance on Rwandan General James Kaberebe, who was named commander of the Armed Forces of the Congo (FAC), but who continued to operate with Rwandan strategic interests in mind. The second rebellion, in 1998, demonstrated the weakness of Kabila's FAC, which, composed mainly of poorly motivated Ex-FAZ and inexperienced *kadogos* (or child soldiers), rapidly disbanded as rebels easily made their way to Kinshasa. Kabila's regime owed its survival to the active support of Angola, Zimbabwe, and Namibia, who were arrayed against Rwanda, Uganda and Burundi.
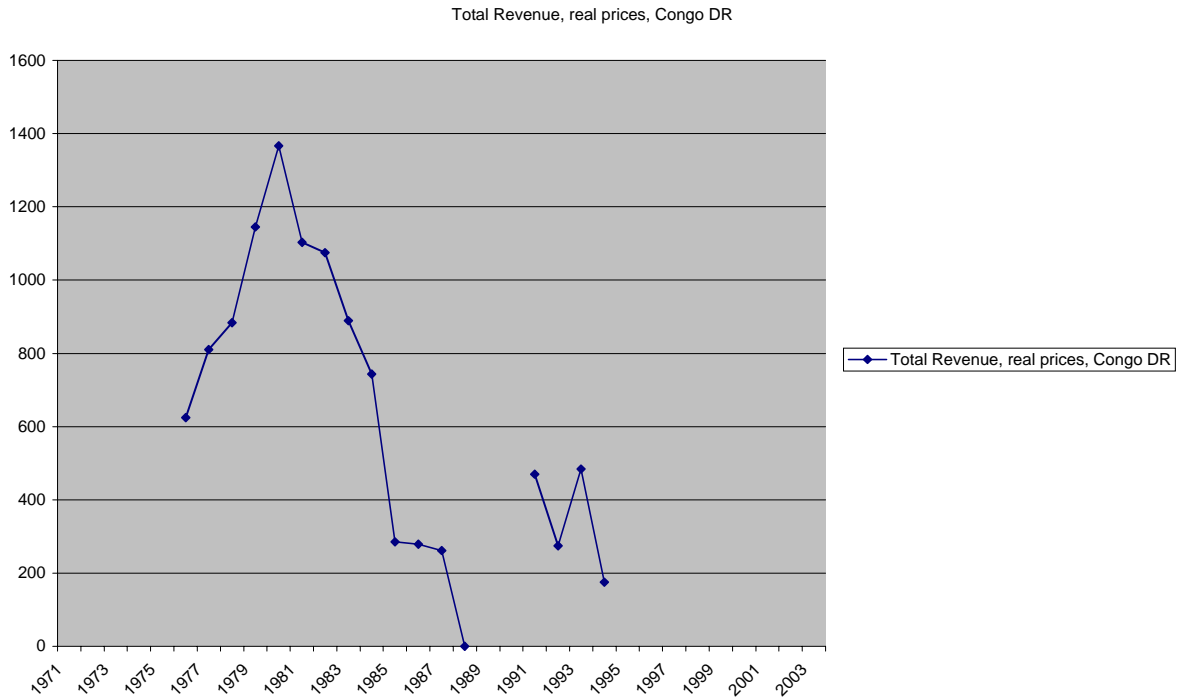
When Joseph Kabila assumed the presidency after his father was killed, he too had little trust in the national army. The presidential guard was reinforced with soldiers from his father's Lubakat tribe and its numbers grew to somewhere between 12,000 and 15,000 troops. Kabila set up a parallel national command called the Maison Militaire and the regular FAC remained weak and dependent on Zimbabwean and Angolan backing (ICG 2006a: 3).

By the end of the transitional government, the army remained weak and susceptible to quick collapse if faced with a serious threat. The issues that undermined the Congolese army in the past – most notably, tribalism, unequal treatment and rampant corruption – "are the same ones that plague the current armed forces" (ICG 2006a: 3). As the 2002 Sun City peace agreement addressed security sector reform somewhat superficially, it is not surprising that army reform fell far behind schedule (ibid.). De Goede (2006) provides the most recent study of security sector reform and demobilisation, demonstrating why so far military integration has failed and why the politicised FARDC cannot be relied on to guarantee national security. Real reform would require a much more systematic restructuring and retraining of forces and retirement of a significant proportion of sitting officers, but so far political actors, including the President, appear to fear that the creation of more professional forces would be a threat to their power and sources of income and prestige.[24]

Evolution of the fiscal basis of the state

The colonial state established a secure base of revenue from the export of plantation agricultural products and mining (Young, 1968) and, in a sense, the most important internally generated source of revenue has always been these sectors, with mining increasing in importance in the post-independence years. During the Mobutu years coffee, tea and pyrethrum were the top agricultural exports and copper, gold and diamonds the key exports from the mining sector. While in a review of this kind one would not normally present data, one graph can illustrate what underpinned the collapse of the state through the Mobutu years.

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[24] Ongoing Crisis States Research Centre research, 2006.

Total Revenue, real prices, Congo DR

Gabi Hesselbein, Crisis States Research, from IMF data.

The transitional government set up in 2001-2002 worked with the World Bank and the IMF to consolidate the revenue authority. In 2005, tax officials reported that only 45% of state revenue was raised domestically, while ODA in the form of grants and loans represented 55 per cent of government expenditure. Of the revenue generated domestically, 90% came from only 700 companies. Consistent with the past, customs revenues constitute an important share of domestically generated revenue, with 50% of customs take from Kinshasa and Matadi, about 20% from Lumumbashi, 9 from Kasumbalesa and only about 1% from the east by mid-2005, a pattern reflecting the reach of central state authority (Hesselbein, Mutebi and Putzel, 2006).

Projects are currently underway to reform the customs office (OFIDA) operations: at the control post at Kasumbalesa, the border crossing between the DRC and Zambia; at the port of Matadi, in southwestern DRC; and Kinshasa-Est. The Kasumbalesa project, costing between 2.5 million and 3 million euros, aims to re-organise and simplify OFIDA operations, partly through the provision of new premises, equipment and computer technology (allowing records to be computerized) and partly through training, technical assistance and capacity building. The project aims to provide a one-stop window for controls of exports and imports, to replace the many government agencies currently operating alongside each other at the border and competing for bribes. Following positive reports of an increase in recorded trade and revenues collected at the border[25], President Kabila signed on December 30, 2005, a decree designating the customs office (OFIDA) as the sole government agency to manage and value the imports at the port of Matadi.[26]

Aside from the work being done at the Crisis States Research Centre, we have not seen any other research underway on the construction of the fiscal basis of the state in the DRC, yet this is a strategic issue in state consolidation. An analysis of patterns of

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[25] Global Witness (2006) interviews with official and other sources, Lubumbashi, November 2005.

[26] IMF Staff Monitored Program, 2006.

revenue collection can provide a window on evolving networks of political authority and the relative condition of both central and provincial sites of state administration.

3.2.   Service delivery by the state – Education and Health

The specificity of Belgian colonial rule had far-reaching implications for the post-colonial state. In contrast to former French or English colonies where the process of political emancipation had started after the Second World War, the Belgium Congo suffered from a flagrant lack of educated elites able to run the country upon independence (Tshimanga 1997). Education had been left to missionaries and at independence there was not a single Congolese physician or engineer (Nohlen 1993: 739-41).

The Mobutu regime's initial period of state-building included an impressive development of service delivery. The state assumed control of education, including tertiary education, with significant expansion in access. By 1968/69, primary school enrolment (6 to 14 year-olds) reached a level of 92 %, while 8,401 students were educated at universities (Banque National du Congo, Rapport Annuel 1968-1969, p. 65)[27]. A national health system and a social security system, which employed 500.000 employees (ibid. p. 69) was created, including the biggest hospital in Africa, the "Mama Yema[28]" in Kinshasa. It is often forgotten that by the late 1970s smallpox was eradicated, Zaire achieved an impressive 95% coverage in vaccination against childhood diseases and the country was generally regarded as a model for primary and community health care in the developing world (Persyn and Ladrière, 2004). Today, many of the health care professionals trained during the Mobutu years are working in South Africa.

With the collapse of major industries, the challenge of reconstructing service delivery is all the more difficult. During the mid-1960s, major state-owned enterprises such as Gecamines and Minière de Bakwanga au Kasaï (Miba), which generated most of the country's earnings, had to provide their workers and their families with housing and free healthcare. (Braeckman 2006) However, since Gécamines's financial collapse in the 1990s, these services have deteriorated or ceased to function altogether, and the government has generally not replaced them.

There is little recent academic work on the service sector, though Marriage's (2006, chapter 4) comparative study documents the appalling conditions of services in several major urban areas and the entirely inadequate international offical and NGO intervention. There is an important set of policy studies related to the preparation of the Poverty Reduction Strategy to digest in this regard. The International Crisis Group (2006a) has provided a short critical assessment of the condition of state administration on the eve of the 2006 elections.

4.   GOVERNMENT AND POLITICAL MOTIVATION

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[27] University education only started in 1957. By 1960, the first eleven students graduated. By 1968, Congo had educated 1541 graduates (Rapport Annuel, p. 66)

[28] The hospital was named after Mobutu's mother and is now Kinshasa General Hospital – a pale imitation of its former capacity.

The bases of government motivation and political mobilization in Congo have to be understood in terms of "networks of power" as described above. Congo has always been governed by national and international "clientelist networks" (Diangitukwa 2001: 275), whose primary purpose remains to ensure the accumulative reproduction of their members. Accountability has therefore mainly been built to clients that help to secure the survival of the political class – and less so to the population by means of a political project of whatever kind.

As discussed above, the advent of the Mobutu regime led to the development of "horizontal" affiliations among the Congolese elites that sought to consolidate their economic and social basis by making use of the modern nation-state (Peemans 1997: 92). Even though these "horizontal" inter-elite affiliations were soon combined with "vertical" ties of distribution (along ethnic or regional lines), the dominant political cleavage that continued to grow with the consolidation of the Mobutu regime was the "*distinction between the spheres of the elite and the non-elite*" (Willame 1997: 6). While several scholars argue that one of the main features of the deterioration of the political situation in Congo over time was the enlargement of the gap between classes, it could well be that it was precisely the aborted processes of class formation, of horizontal integration, and the return to vertical forms of alignment and mobilisation that created the basis for violence and warfare in Congo. Income inequalities were acute in Zaire where an extremely rich ruling group, representing a tiny proportion of the population, controlled more than 45% of the national wealth. However, Mobutu's political acumen during the first decade of his rule was to ensure members of this elite basically overcame ethnic and tribal divisions, having lost touch in many instances with their constituencies. This was key to the years of relative stability.

The "perennity of intra-elite networks" can be illustrated with the example of the conflict between the Mobutu regime and the political opposition led by Tshisekedi at the beginning of the 1990s (Peemans 1997: 88ff.). The opposition did not have a distinct political and economic programme to introduce. Instead, they appeared to be motivated simply by a desire to control the state and its resources. However, with the outburst of intense violence between 1991 and 1993, the entire elite – including the opposition – seemed to realise that the survival of the upper class required a "pacification of the game" ("calmer le jeu").

Nevertheless, intra-elite accommodation faced a systematic crisis with the sharp decline in the state resources at the beginning of the 1990s, most notably due to economic contraction (Gécamines) and sharp declines in external assistance. It became increasingly difficult to redistribute wealth through vertical and horizontal channels thus destabilising existing "networks of power" (see above) and leading to increasing confrontation between the "haves," who could no longer redistribute, and the "have-nots" (Willame 1997: 6).

This took the form of a "generational divide" (De Villers 1998: 95ff.). The "generational cycle" whereby the younger generation ascends to the privileges of the older generation has had an important social function in African societies. In Congo, this cycle was disturbed in the sense that – faced with shrinking resources – the "selfish" older generation blocked the circulation of social wealth and prevented the ascension of the younger generation. The marginalisation of the young has lead to violent opposition against the "power of the old" and helps to explain the emergence of youth militias such as the JUFERI (Katanga) or the Mai-Mai (North Kivu).

As described above, the crisis of intra-elite accommodation motivated elites to seek a basis for private accumulation and legitimacy at the regional/local level. This meant a reactivation of ethno-regional mobilization – the second major form of political mobilization in Congo. As shown above, tribalism as a means of political organization has – to varying degrees – always been present in the political history of the country. While the "ethnic matrix" was introduced by the colonial administration, it was reproduced by the post-colonial elite during the First Republic. Being direct successors of the "tribal associations" of the late 1950s, the great majority of the political parties between 1960 and 1965 retained a distinct ethnic imprint and ethno-regional mobilization was the dominant means of political mobilization (Nkamany A Baleme 1997: 31ff.). While Mobutu fought the tribalist mobilisation during the early years of the regime (see above), his Zairian nationalism was transformed under conditions of economic crisis and the country saw the revival of a tribalist logic at the core of the Zairian state (Nkamany A Baleme 1997: 73ff.) – a logic that became more and more visible from the mid-1970s.

The return to multi-party competition in 1990 precipitated the reactivation of ethno-regional mobilization. Among the hundreds of new political parties, many had an exclusively regional or ethnic basis. As in the period between 1960 and 1965, "tribalism" became the preferred strategy in the struggle for power. Interestingly, due to a policy of inter-regional permutation of administrative cadres introduced in the mid-1960s, key politico-economic posts in the regions were often held by what were perceived as "foreign" elites (Nkamany A Baleme 1997: 65). Against this background, it was easy for "ethnic entrepreneurs" in each sub-national region to blame their economic misery on "foreigners" (outsiders) – the violent expulsion of Kasaians from Katanga and the ethnic conflicts in the Kivus have to be seen in this context. Recent processes under the Kabila regime(s) have confirmed the persistence of an ethnic logic at the core of the Congolese state.

The recurrent mobilisations of *"natives" vs. "non-natives"* (De Villers 1998: 86ff.) are closely related to forms of ethno-regional mobilisation. Citizenship and national identity in Congo are framed in terms of "nativeness".[29] The constitution of 1960 granted citizenship to every person whose ancestress were members of a tribe that inhabited Congolese territory before 18 October 1908 – citizenship was therefore defined by the deepness of ancestral roots. This has led to recurrent suspicion and hostility towards all those whose citizenship could be put into question – almost all politicians over the past 30 years have been accused of being "foreigners". Political mobilisations of "natives" vs. "non-natives" are a recurrent phenomenon and usually envisage the recapturing of resources (land, gold, and diamonds) or political offices believed to be occupied by "foreigners".

The question of "nativeness" is especially relevant in the case of people with "Rwandan-Urundian" roots. While they had initially been granted Congolese citizenship by Mobutu's 1972 Decree (see above), it was revoked in 1982 – a decision that was confirmed in 1992 (Mutamba Lukusa 2003: 51f.). In the context of conflicts over increasingly scarce land resources, "native" populations in the Kivus took the

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[29] Mahmood Mamdani (2001, Chapter 8) provides crucial insights into the problems of citizenship in the Eastern DRC, a must-read for anyone working in the country. See also Jackson, 'Of "Doubtful Nationality"', unpublished manucript.

revoked citizenship of the "non-native" Banyarwanda and Banyamulenge as an occasion for ethnic mobilisation and bloody persecution (De Villers 1998: 89).

5.   AN ANATOMY OF INTRA-REGIONAL DYNAMICS AND TRADITIONAL PATTERNS OF AUTHORITY

Pourtier (2003a: 21) argues that Congo has a very particular geography that predisposes the country to decentralized forms of administration. While the geographic centre of the Congo is characterized by a very low population density, the populated and (economically and politically) vibrant parts of the country – most notably the capital Kinshasa – are all situated at the periphery of the country (Pourtier 1997: 21). In this "splintered country" dominated by a multitude of centrifugal forces, the image of a "useful ring" describes a discontinuous territory that is largely oriented outward. The Congo comprises "a series of peripheries" that all have their specific identities and trade – often informally - by the majority with the neighbouring countries – at the expense of the internal market (see the economic section above). Recent history has witnessed an "archipelisation" of the country whereby the urban centres are less and less linked - not least because of the miserable condition of the transport system – and inter-Congolese exchanges are in sharp decline (Pourtier 2003a: 23). Cross-border exchanges have a distinct ethno-cultural imprint and create networks of spatial solidarity. On the whole, it is therefore more useful to think of Congo in terms of (cross-border) networks than in terms of spatial continuity.

Furthermore, Congo is generally characterized by a long-standing division between its western and eastern regions (De Villers 1998: 92). The "East" comprises the provinces of Katanga, the Kivus and Orientale (the common language is Swahili), whereas Kasai province occupies a "position charnière particulière". The "West" includes the rest of the country, but is particularly associated with Kinshasa and Equateur province. In ethnic terms, this "East-West" cleavage reflects the opposition between the "peuples de la savane" and the "peuples de la fôret". The origins of this "West-East geopolitics" (Mutamba Lukusa 2003: 50) go back to the beginnings of the Mobutu regime. Mobutu's intention was to control Kinshasa, traditionally at the mercy of the provinces of Bas-Congo and Bandundu, while at the same time containing the ambitions of the hostile Kasai region and subduing traditional authority in the east. The latter involved both making mischief between the different traditional leaders and completing the "encircling" of the Kasai region. With economic decline and the weakening of the central state, Mobutu stepped back from that project.

The advent of the Laurent Kabila regime reinforced the "East-West" cleavage. Coming from the east (with Katanga as his stronghold), Kabila reversed the "Zairianity" imposed by Mobutu (the country was re-baptized Congo) and changed the national language from Lingala to Swahili (De Villers 1998: 90ff). This imposed "Congolité" met with opposition and suspicion among the people in the "West", most notably in Kinshasa, a point that is essential in understanding recent political developments.

5.1.1. Katanga

Katanga province (formerly Shaba) is the archetype of a Congolese "periphery" that has always kept its distance vis-à-vis the central state (Pourtier 1997: 22), even as it has always remained central to the economic viability of the state. Long after the failure of the 1963 secessionist movement the people of Katanga including the elite retained an allegiance to what became Shaba viewing "Zaire" with some suspicion as a creation of Kinshasa. As discussed above, the government-owned Gécamine's operations mining copper and colbalt in Shaba earned between 60 and 80 percent of the country's hard currency. Shabans were resentful of subsiding the rest of the country. Mobutu continued to worry about secessionist sentiments in the province. It was with this in mind that he built the Inga-Shaba power-line project, often labeled in the literature and in the policy community as a great "white elephant" "Popular and elite allegiances to the former Katanga (now Shaba) persisted even after the first secession attempt ended in January 1963. Over the following decade Shabans viewed Zaire as comprising only those from Kinshasa, not themselves. Shaba once provided 60 percent to 80 percent of Zaire's hard currency through, the main producer of copper and cobalt, and the Shabans' consciousness of being a main source of economic prosperity was widespread and strengthened latent feelings of regional autonomy. It was very well known that President Mobutu, even at the peak of his strength in the late 1960s and early 1970s, continued to worry about a new secession As Willame (1997: 3) wrote, "In the event of a Katangese insurgency, Kinshasa could 'press the button' and cut the supply of electricity for the mining industry. In 1977 and 1978, the two Shaba wars (…) posed a direct threat of separatism and seriously endangered the viability of the political regime".

The separatist tendencies in Katanga resurfaced in the early 1990s, when President Mobutu – keen to weaken his strongest political opponent, Etienne Tshisekedi, a Luba from Kasai Orientale – stirred tensions between "native" Katangans and the large Luba immigrant community from Kasai (ICG 2006b: 1) who had held the bulk of the administrative, industrial, and technical posts since their arrival in the colonial period (Pourtier 1997: 145ff.). As Gécamines had virtually collapsed, "resulting unemployment and poverty provided fertile grounds for recruitment of angry youth. Mobutu's allies in the province blamed the urban Luba population for stealing their jobs and in 1992-1993 led ethnic purges during which over 5,000 people were killed and some 1,350,000 forcibly displaced" (ICG 2006b: 1). "The revival of Katangese secession was nevertheless unrealistic" (Willame 1997: 3). After the decline of Gécamines "no foreign company had any real interest in its copper or cobalt ventures".

 New tensions emerged in Katanga after Laurent Kabila seized power in 1997 (ICG 2006b: 1). After Kabila's break with his Rwandan and Ugandan allies in 1998, politicians from the northern parts of Katanga – mainly from his family and his ethnic group, the Baluba – came to occupy key posts in the security forces and the administration (Diangitukwa 2001: 201ff.). Since the advent of Kabila, Katanga province has been divided by three major conflicts, some of which have deep historical roots as explored thoroughly by the International Crisis Group (ICG 2006b).

The first is a <u>north – south divide</u> characterised by ethnic and economic differences (ICG 2006b: 5f.). Agriculture is dominant in the north and often referred to as the "useless Katanga" while mining of copper and cobalt has provided wealth to the

south. The dominance of politicians from the north in provincial and national political arenas has been a source of resentment in the south ever since independence and was central to the post-independence wars. Mobutu was able to suppress the conflict but it resurfaced after the rise of the Kabilas to power. Father and son peopled the security forces and administration with northerners and conflicts in the province during 2004 and 2005 appeared to be provoked by Kinshasa politicians intent on safeguarding mineral interests.

The second conflict described by ICG is between "originaires" and "non-originaires" (ICG 2006b: 4). This pits "native" Katangans against Kasain immigrants. During the colonial period, Luba from Kasai came to Katanga to run the mining sector and the administration and they became the target of ethnic cleansing campaigns in the early 1990s as described above. While this tension had died down, it resurfaced during the elections in 2006 and lay behind violent confrontations between Tshisekedi's UDPS and the Union des Nationalistes Fédéralistes du Congo (UNAFEC - Union of Federalist Nationalists of the Congo).[30]

The third divide is between the Mai-Mai of Northern Katanga. ICG (ICG 2006b: 2ff.) reported that Laurent Kabila created Mai-Mai militias in the region to counter Rwandan backed forces in the war in the late 1990s. Fighting between these militias in recent years has concerned taxing and poaching rights.

Economically, Katanga is by far Congo's richest province, with 34% of the cobalt and 10% of the copper reserves in the world (ICG 2006b: 8). With the collapse of Gécamines artisanal mining has become dominant in the province and a number of small entrepreneurs, operating beyond the bounds of legality, have entered the sector reportedly through political connections with Kinshasa (Rubbers 2004; Pourtier 2003b; ICG 2006b.).

The Katangese economy has always been oriented towards Southern Africa, most notably towards South Africa and its seaports (Pourtier 1997: 22f.; 2003a: 26f.). With the beginning of copper extraction in Lubumbashi in 1910, shipping connections were linked to the South African transport network. Until today, the province remains entirely dependent on neighbouring countries to the South. While there are road networks between Katanga and the neighbouring countries, there is no acceptable road connection that would link the province with the rest of the country.

5.1.2. Kasai

The question of Kasaian - mostly Luba - identity remains one of the most important aspects of contemporary Congolese geopolitics (Pourtier 1998: 139ff.). While the Luba represent the largest ethnic group in the country (between 5 and 10 million members according to different sources), they have always had a very limited territorial anchorage. Further deracinated by the impact of the Arab slave trade during the 19th century, the advent of colonial rule even reinforced their "mobility", since the exploitation of the colony – most notably the development of the mining industry in

Katanga – required the eastward migration of Luba workers. Considered as "superior negroes", the Luba received preferential treatment from the colonial administration, the Catholic Church and the commercial interests. This preferential treatment – combined with their mobility – facilitated the Luba's economic success and they came to be called the "Jews of the Congo". The highly visible social ascent of the Luba contributed to fuelling ethnic tensions and led to the development of an increasingly strong "Anti-Luba" sentiment among the "excluded".

In 1959-1960, this situation gave rise to the first displacement of the Luba – one of the first ethnically motivated displacements on the African continent (Pourtier 1998: 142f.). Faced with the dominance of the Luba in Luluabourg – at the time the main city of the unified Kasai province – the "native" Lulua organized the violent expatriation of between 90,000 and 140,000 Luba "immigrants". The latter were displaced towards their "ancestral lands" in the east of the province, in particular the city of Bakwanga that became Mbuji Mayi –today the second biggest city of the country. The displacements of 1959-1960 and the return to the "ancestral lands" reinforced the Luba ethnic "particularism". Upon independence, the Luba proclaimed the "Autonomous State of Southern Kasai", which became one of 22 "provincettes" after the defeat of the rebellion in 1962. The Mobutu regime confirmed the Lulua/Luba divorce. The formerly unified province of Kasai was divided into two regions – Kasai occidental (capital: Kanaga) and Kasai oriental (capital: Mbuji Mayi).

During the Second Republic, the Luba "remained highly visible in politics. President Mobutu's strategy was to consistently absorb the Luba elite into the highest levels of the political hierarchy in order to better control it. Since 1978 one of the harshest opponents of the regime among the Luba elite has been Etienne Tshisekedi, later named the "Zairian Moise," who, together with ten fellow Kasaians, led a protracted struggle against Mobutu" (Willame 1997: 3). In order to weaken his Luba opponent during the political transition of the early 1990s, Mobutu stirred up ethnic displacements of the Luba community from Katanga in 1992/93 (see above). Ironically, the massive displacements reinforced the ethnic homogeneity of the Luba-Kasai group and ultimately confirmed the rise of Mbuji Mayi as a key region in Congolese geopolitics – a situation that tended to strengthen Tshisekedi's position in national politics (Pourtier 1998: 153). Under Laurent Kabila, selected Kasaian elites (e.g. Kanengele, Mpoyo, Kazadi) were recruited to occupy key positions in the new regime (Diangitukwa 2001: 201ff.).

On the economic front, Kasai has dramatically gained in importance since the early 1990s. With the implosion of Gécamines, the Luba have - in their stronghold of Kasai oriental - taken over the diamond trade, the most important source of wealth in the Congo (Misser and Vallée 2000). While diamonds represented only 8% of total exports in 1970 (with Gécamines controlling 76%), their share in total exports rose to 47.9% in 1996 (with Gécamines controlling only 20%). These official statistics understate the "real" importance of diamonds in the economy since they constitute by their very characteristics a cornerstone of smuggling and contraband. The Kabila government has tried in vain to control the diamond industry in Kasai, in particular the Miba, but national and international "gemmocrats" have remained dominant.

Given the fact that, by the late 1990s, the province became the centre of the "real" economy of the DRC, Williame (1997: 3) argued that Kasaians — and notably the Luba — were "regarded with suspicion". This perception was reinforced by the central role they played in what was thenthe main opposition party, the UDPS.

Suspicion toward the Luba community could even be observed within Kasai oriental. The Tetelas (Samkuru) and Songyés (Kabinda) wanted autonomy from the Luba "dominateurs" in Mbuji Mayi (Pourtier 1997: 28).

Just like the Katangese economy, the Kasaian economy is heavily oriented towards the countries of Southern Africa, most notably South Africa (Pourtier 1997: 22f.; 2003: 26f.). When the national railways ceased to function in 1994, the province found itself in a "enclave situation". Regional elites, most notably in the "diamond capital Mbuji Mayi", reacted by setting up a self-organised system of air transportation that connected the province with Johannesburg and Dubai.

5.1.3. The Kivus

Until the 1970s, local elites in the Kivus remained aloof from national politics (Willame 1997: 3). In the 1980s, the province gained some autonomy from the Mobutu regime and the regional elite had considerable room for manoeuvre (Bucyalimwe Mararo 2005: 181).[31] The "Association Coopérative des Groupements d'Eleveurs au Nord-Kivu" (ACOGENOKI) reinforced its control over the northern part of the province, while the whole region was affected by the rebellions of Museveni's NRA (National Resistance Army) and Garang's SPLA (Sudanese People's Liberation Army) that both operated from Kivu territory.

In 1987, the Mobutu regime picked Kivu as a pilot region for a "découpage experimental" in the framework of a new policy of decentralisation and development (Bucyalimwe Mararo 2005: 161ff.). As a consequence, the following year Kivu was divided into three autonomous provinces: Maniema (capital: Kindu), South Kivu (capital: Bukavu) and North Kivu (capital: Goma). Instead of promoting decentralisation and development, the policy, together with exclusionary citizenship legislation, paved the way for instability in the 1990s. The Kivus increasingly were beyond the control of Kinshasa and became the "powder keg" of the Congo with all wars since the 1990s originating in this region.

The first war in 1993 was in no small part a conflict over land opposing "native" agriculturalists (in particular Hunde) and the "non-native" Banyarwanda – immigrants with Rwandan background (mostly of Hutu origin) who formed the majority of the population in the area by the early 1990s (Mathieu et al. 1997: 131ff.). During this "ethnic" war over increasingly scarce fertile land, between 3,000 and 14,000 people were killed and 140.000 displaced. With the influx of Hutu refugees (1.2 million) from Rwanda in 1994, the war became even more violent and was increasingly directed against the Tutsi population. From 1996, the ethnic violence shifted to target the Tutsis of South Kivu – the Banyamulenge who had lived in the area for many decades. While the "auto-defence" of the Banyamulenge was first directed against the Hutu refugee camps, it soon became the basis for Laurent Kabila's successful rebellion.[32]

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[31] Our information on the Kivus draws heavily from Bucyalimwe Mararo (2005) and given the obvious anti-Rwandan bias in his writings needs to be approached with some care. Further research should test some of what is reported here.

[32] See Stephen Jackson's "Sons of which Soil" (unpublished manuscript) for an in-depth discussion of the ways in which 'autochthony' adopted by the non-Rwandaphone population to denote "indigeneity" has served to mobilise grassroots violence against those labelled as "strangers" – a phenomenon which

After the war of 1996, and its successor in 1998, the Kivus were affected by high levels of violence leading to widespread killings and Kinshasa lost control of the province (Bucyalimwe Mararo 2005: 164ff.). The province became a "zone de non-droit" dominated and exploited by Rwanda, Uganda and Burundi. Bukavu became the stronghold of both anti-Mobutism and the fight against "Rwandan occupation", while Goma was dominated by the RCD. Maniema, finally, was also subject to increasing RCD influence.

Laurent Kabila was unable to regain control over the Kivus. After he broke from Rwandan and Ugandan allies in 1998, he expelled Kivu members from his entourage and regarded them as enemies (Bucyalimwe Mararo 2005: 182). This policy was reversed by Joseph Kabila who is said to count many people from the Kivus among his immediate entourage in the "Parti Populaire pour la Reconstruction et le Développement" (PPRD) – an alliance that appeared to be central to Kabila's electoral victory in 2006. Burcylalimwe Mararo (2005, 186) argues that the crisis in the Kivus has made the region central to DRC politics.

5.1.4. Orientale

According to Rene Lemarchand (1964: 130-131), the strength of the nationalist movement in Orientale province was a legacy of resentment toward Catholic missionaries that had ruthlessly eradicated Islamic organisations and practices in the province during the colonial period. The province became the political stronghold of Patrice Lumumba and provided 21 of the 33 assembly members his faction of the MNC gained in the 1960 elections (Lemarchand, 1964:224).[33] In 1960, as political chaos erupted in the newly independent country, Lumumba's followers, led by Antoine Gizenga and centred at Kisangani (then Stanleyville), attempted to establish a government to rival the central government at Kinshasa (then Leopoldville). The Stanleyville regime controlled most of the region until the central government reestablished control in 1962. There were further rebellions throughout the 1960s.

It is surprising, for a province so central to the DRC's political history , that outside of recent work by the ICG on Ituri, very little research exists.

5.1.5. Equateur

Equateur province was the home and stronghold of President Mobutu. As a consequence, people from the province – in particular from Mobutu's own ethnic group, the Ngbandi – enjoyed a privileged position and occupied the key post under the Mobutu regime (Nkamany A Baleme 1997: 81f.). While the province generally

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seems to be one of the sole bases of unity that national elites are promoting throughout the country's territory.

[33] Lumumba, born in Kasai, interestingly had entered politics as a member of one of the more important "clubs d'évolues" in Orientale province, the Association des Evolués de Stanleyville, which he joined in 1951. That year he was appointed president of the Association des Postiers de la Prvoncnce Orientale (APIPO), which he had joined while working as a postal clerk in Stanleyville. Lemarchand, 1964: 198-99).

received preferential treatment, there has always been a distinct cleavage between the people in the south (the Mongos) and the people in the north (the Bangelas) – the latter enjoying the bulk of the privileges (Pourtier 1997: 28).

After the end of the Mobutu regime and the loss of the associated privileges, the province has become the stronghold of Bemba's MLC (De Villers 2005: 48). Again we have not found significant scholarship on Equateur province, though ICG (2006c) reports on Bemba's family interests.

5.1.6. Lower-Congo

"Kongo nationalism," once an important political reference in the 1960s, was not a substantial driving ethnic force in the Second Republic. Shortly after independence, Kongo elites loudly proclaimed their rights as the first occupants of the capital city, but later quietly renounced the struggle for political autonomy. Entering into good relations with the Mobutu regime, they were allowed to concentrate freely in big business and trade, a position enhanced by the region's strategic location near the sea, and benefiting for many years from a relatively good road and railway system. In short, this region, which was a granary for the capital, softened its demand for purely political rewards and benefits" (Willame 1997: 4).

However, by the 1990s, "Kongo nationalism" witnessed a certain revival nourished by the utopia of restoring the ancient "Kingdom of Kongo" (De Villers 1998: 94). Motivated by grievances against "non-natives" who were heading certain public and state enterprises (Willame 1997: 4), a politico-religious organization by the name of "Royaume-Uni du Kongo" (RUK) held violent demonstrations in Kinshasa in early 1996 (De Villers 1998: 94). Under the Laurent Kabila regime, the RUK organised another protest in July 1998 that led to violent clashes with the army. Altogether, these claims for autonomy or even independence were largely symbolic in nature – the people in the province realized that their future depended on Kinshasa – and the fragmentation of the Kongolese leadership prevented the formation of a strong ethno-nationalist movement.

5.1.7. *Summary on intra-regional dynamics and traditional patterns of authority*

It is clear that over time, when the power of the central state has been weakened regional identities and networks have reasserted themselves. This is one of the central characteristics of the processes of state building and state breakdown in the DRC. Ethnic politics, which as we saw in the last section remain so central to political dynamics in the country today, have their basis in the political economy of the regions. This brief review of intra-regional dynamics suggests both their importance to Congolese politics and how little we understand about the particular characteristics of each region. It also suggests perhaps a more cautious, or at least less celebratory attitude towards plans for radical decentralisation in the country.

5.2.   The regional anatomy of power

There is an extensive literature on the Great Lakes region and patterns of conflict, which we have not fully digested in this review for reasons of time and space. What appears to be lacking in this literature is any detailed knowledge about the specific commercial ties that exist between both European corporate interests and political-business actors in the Congo and between regional corporate players and Congolese actors.

Congo-Zaire has for a long time been subject to multiple external interests that are often very difficult to disentangle. While most African countries faced the continued involvement of the former colonial power, Congo has from the beginning been confronted with the often contradictory interference of Belgium, the United States, and France – a "Troika" that came to play a crucial role in both the rise and survival of the Mobutu regime (Willame 1992). Beyond the influence of these "global" powers, the fate of the DRC is deeply enmeshed with regional dynamics in Eastern and Southern Africa as the neighboring countries have immediate, often highly contradictory stakes in the country. Two factors shape the DRC's relations with neighbours, mineral wealth and security. While the DRC is rich in water, hydro-electric energy and biodiversity, it is especially the abundant raw materials (the country is often referred to as a "geological scandal") that spark the interests of regional and international actors (Braeckman 2006: 181).

India and China are increasingly present in the exploitation of Congo's mineral resources (Braeckman 2006: 181f.). In Katanga, thousands of Asian traders buy bags of minerals directly from the diggers; especially China has an insatiable need for copper and cobalt. While Western donors link their support and investments to multiple conditionalities, Chinese, Indian and even Brazilian actors prove to be a lot more flexible.

Instability in the DRC and its base as a refuge for dissident armed movements from neighbouring countries also drive inter-regional currents of conflict. Angola is probably less interested in mineral wealth than the effect conflict within the DRC has on its own security. While there are many accusations of Rwandan interests in Eastern Congo's wealth, the Kagame government is probably most driven by the continued presence of the former Rwandan regime's armed forces and interahamwe just across its border.

6.   THE EVOLUTION OF RELIGIOUS AUTHORITY

Religion has figured prominently in Congo's politics since colonial times. About eighty percent of Congolese people are Christian, predominantly Roman Catholic. Most of the non-Christians follow either traditional religions or syncretic sects. Traditional religions embody such concepts as monotheism, animism, vitalism, spirit and ancestor worship, witchcraft and sorcery and vary widely among ethnic groups. The syncretic sects often combine Christianity with traditional beliefs and rituals. The most popular of these sects, Kimbanguism, was viewed as a threat to the colonial regime and was banned by the Belgians. Kimbanguism, officially "the church of Christ on Earth by the prophet Simon Kimbangu," by the early 2000s had about three million members, primarily among the Bakongo of Bas-Congo and Kinshasa.

The religious landscape in Congo was traditionally dominated by three main actors - the Catholic Church, the Protestant Church and the Kimbanguist Church, while Islam has recently gained in importance. Out of a population of 60 million, approximately 50% are Roman Catholic, 20% Protestant, 10% Kimbanguist, and 10% are Muslim (US State Department 2005). Since the onset of political transition in 1990, independent churches and prayer groups have mushroomed all over the country.

The Catholic Church was historically the most powerful religious actor whose importance is reflected by its material resources, the size of its infrastructure and the number of its followers (Oyatambwe 1997: 20f.). "The magnitude of its economic and social role throughout the country is demonstrated by the fact that, even after the collapse of state structures and institutions, the church remained one of the main pillars of the informal economy, as well as the primary provider of health care and education" (Willame 1997: 5).

The relationship between the Catholic Church and political authority in Congo has always been complex. Before independence, the Catholic Church was one of the central pillars of colonial rule that enjoyed a quasi-monopoly in the provision of health and education (Oyatambwe 1997: 15ff.). While protestant missionaries denounced the brutality of Belgium colonial rule, the Catholic Church remained largely silent and maintained close ties with the colonial power. After independence, the Catholic Church first took sides with Mobutu who was considered a force for stability after the violent turbulences of the First Republic that had also affected the Catholic Church (Braeckman 1992: 175ff.). In 1972, however, Mobutu's doctrine of "Zairian authenticity" involved, among others, the suppression of Christian first names, the abolition of Christian holidays and the subordination of Catholic organisations under the rule of the MPR. This led to major quarrels between the Catholic Church and the Mobutu regime. Under the leadership of Cardinal Malula, the Catholic Church seized the opportunity to denounce the increasingly dictatorial tendencies of the regime. Mobutu's response was firm: Malula was expelled from his residence and fled the country – he returned only after having accepted the submission of the Catholic Church under the MPR (Diangitukwa 1997: 96).

While the Catholic Church appeared to maintain a "critical distance" during the second half of the 1970s, it fell silent vis-à-vis the predation and despotism of the Mobutu regime throughout the 1980s (Oyatambwe 1997: 184ff.). In much the same way as he operated with ethno-regional elites, Mobutu managed to "buy" the silence of the Catholic elites for much of his time in power. It was only with the advent of the "democratisation process" in 1990 that the Catholic Church returned to a more critical stance towards the Mobutu regime. Here, one can account for a certain division between the "upper Church" and the "lower Church" (Willame 1994: 137). While the episcope issued a series of critical declarations, most notably in 1990, it maintained a dialogue with the Mobutu regime and participated prominently in the transition process (CNS, transitional Parliament) (Oyatambwe 1997: 184ff.). Despite an increasingly critical attitude towards the Mobutu regime, the Catholic hierarchy displayed serious cleavages as both Mobutu and Tshisekedi looked to their "own" bishops. The lower clergy, on the other hand, broke more decisively with the Mobutu regime, in particular after the organisation of the "marches of hope" ("marches d'espoir") in 1992 where a number of Christians died in a massacre perpetrated by the regime.

In contrast to the Catholic Church, the Protestant and Kimbanguist Churches have followed the "logic of power" by actively supporting the Mobutu regime (Diangitukwa 1997: 100ff.). Faced with the preferred treatment of the Catholic Church under colonial rule (Kimbanguist leaders were even persecuted and deported by the colonial administration), both churches perceived the advent of Mobutu and his "authentic" nationalist project as an opportunity to improve their own position and entered into open collaboration. This situation was skilfully exploited by the Mobutu regime. Given the opposition displayed by the Catholic Church in the early 1970s, Mobutu sought "to counter its profound influence in society and its powerful array of social services in the education and health sectors by granting protection to both the Protestant and especially to the "native" Kimbanguist Church" (Willame 1997: 4f.).

This led to the creation of a "system of shared power" as one ministry or vice-ministry was always reserved for the two churches (Diangitukwa 1997: 103ff.). The Kimbanguist Wamba was always accorded the vice-ministry of social affairs, while Protestants from Mobutu's Equateur region – most notably Bokeleale as President of the Church of Christ in Zaire (ECZ) – regularly occupied important posts. With the advent of the political transition, both the Kimbanguist Church and the Protestant Church – with the exception of a few Protestant elites in the Kasai region – maintained their collaboration with the Mobutu regime. ECZ President Bokeleale, for instance, remained a close intimate and advisor of President Mobutu. It was only at the lower level of the Protestant Church that some representatives sympathised with the UDPS.

In 2004 the main official churches concluded an ecumenical pact with a view to preparing the faithful for the elections (Braeckman 2005: 131). The potential constituents were invited to discuss the qualities of their candidates and were informed about the electoral procedures.

Since the fall of the Mobutu regime there has been a proliferation of prayer groups, evangelical churches, exorcists and messianic movements, particularly in the capital. A number of these organisations have their origins abroad. They have established radio and television programmes and their activities have been widely reported in the print media. Williame (1997:5) reported not only their expanding influence among the poor, but also among those close to the president, among army officers and even in the security services. Some view the mushrooming religious movements as attempts at social, cultural and political reconstruction that offer symbolic or real solutions to daily problems (Kuyu Mwissa 1996: 18ff.). The spiritual leaders of these "Christian neo-communities" are "pères sociaux" and opinion leaders that occupy increasingly important power positions.

Again, in the context of weak state organisations and political parties, religious organisations flourish. While playing a major role in service delivery, especially in health and education, both the more established churches and the proliferating evangelicals may play a more mixed role when it comes to combating HIV/AIDS or building allegiances to central state authority. While some religious organisations may help in the processes of social healing after war, some reinforce divisions within the population on ethnic and regional grounds. Gaining a better understanding, particularly of the new religious forces, is crucial to gaining more clarity about social and political networks in the country.

7. POPULAR PERCEPTIONS OF THE STATE

We have found very little literature exploring popular perceptions of the state. While some survey work on popular perceptions of the state in the context of service delivery has been done by the World Bank (cited in ICG, 2006c), we have found little scholarly work examining perceptions of the state from the ground up. Some work by Congolese scholars expresses sentiments about the state, but how much these could reasonably be argued to encompass "popular perceptions" is questionable (Nzongola-Ntalaja, 2002 and 2006).[34] There could well exist survey work reported in the grey literature of NGOs, but we have not explored this avenue. Clearly, though, there is room for serious investigation informed by political ethnography and social policy. One route forward would be to explore the work of Congolese authors and artists. Depelchin (1992, p.91) noted, "Young, Turner, Callaghy, Gould and Schatzberg, to mention only a few, pitch their analysis at a level automatically excluding from the discussion the discourses of artists, whether these are painters, musicians or poets."

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[34] We believe there may be some material in *Politique Africaine* No.84, as well as in the preparatory documents for the Povrety Reduction Strategy Paper, but were unable to access these.

8. AREAS FOR STRATEGIC RESEARCH

- **Research on the DRC Economy**
  Economic literature is extremely weak in the French language and not much better in the English language literature. Key areas of research need to be undertaken on:

  - Evolution of the informal economy since McGaffery's work in the 1990s and could be built on the methodologies she deployed;[35]

  - Research on understanding service provision in the informal sector is sorely needed (eg, housing, public transport, waste management, health and education)

  - Research on the restoration of infrastructure in the country, since existing patterns of air travel are unsustainable and cannot provide the basis for dynamic economic growth;

  - Research on the basis and potential for improving agricultural productivity is of strategic importance and seems wholly neglected, as is the issue of land rights and access to land (also a highly political issue);

  - Mapping the privatisation process appears crucial given the thin knowledge base on which major assets have been bargained off;

  - Research into alternative approaches for re-industrialising the mining sector would also be of strategic importance

  - There is a strategic need for research on the array of domestic and foreign private sector actors operating in the DRC. While some corners of the policy and NGO communities have made as start with this[36], almost nothing is known about private sector actors who are potentially extremely influential behind the scenes;

- **Research on Fiscal Reconstruction**
  Aside from work being undertaken by the Crisis States Research Centre, almost no scholarly research has been undertaken on the taxation system in the DRC.

  - There is clearly a need for research that might investigate the linkage between security provision and customs collection, which has shown to be crucial in other cases, as in fiscal reconstruction in Afghanistan;

  - Research should be undertaken as an immediate support to policy support being extended to OFIDA, to better understand licit and illicit trade flows as

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[35] Jackson (2002) is one of the few scholars to have taken this sort of work forward in the Kivus.

[36] See Corporate Knights 2006, UN Panel of Experts Reports (2001a, 2002a, 2002b) and the Lutundula Parliamentary Commission Report.

the basis for taxation;

- **Research on Politics**

  - Understanding Political Networks: the literature remains vague about the actual composition of political networks and further research needs to map these out in detail as a basis for solid understanding of current developments;

  - Research on shifting political alliances, especially in the context of what promises to be a newly formed parliament;

  - Intra-regional politics: There are huge gaps in the "provincial" studies of the DRC. Donors are operating on a "blind" basis in many parts of the country. Important provinces like Equateur and Orientale appear entirely underinvestigated;

  - Research looking at the relationship between formal political authorities and traditional authorities particularly important with moves towards decentralisation;

- **Research on decentralisation**

  - Study of relations between the centre and provinces and the various actors involved (churches, civil society etc)

  - Studies of interprovincial relationships, regional inequalities and patterns of inter-regional redistribution

- **Research on civil society and popular perceptions of the state**

  - Given the paucity of literature found in this area, new primary work needs to be carried out

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10. ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY ON KEY ENGLISH LANGUAGE WORKS ON POLITICS

Schatzberg, M.G. (2001) *Political Legitimacy in Middle Africa: Father, Family, Food*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.

Drawing on close, interpretive reading of either daily newspapers or weekly news magazines in eight African states as well as other primary sources, Schatzberg looks at the relationship between the government and its citizenry through political language and the metaphor of an idealized extended family. Regarding the DRC, he addresses the armed forces; church and state; civil society; corruption; cultural authenticity campaign; 'eating'; family festivals; final years of Mobutu regime; formal religion; indivisibility and unity of power; local cosmologies; president as father figure; punishment and pardon; soccer; sorcery; sports; and women. Headings include metaphor and matrix; representation of power; parameters of the political; alternative causalities; the father-chief: rights and responsibilities; gender and generation: women, the paternal order, and the alternation of power; democracy and the logic of legitimacy.

Schatzberg, M.G. (1991) *Mobutu or Chaos? The United States and Zaïre, 1960-1990.* Lanham: University Press of America.

The book examines U.S. relations with Mobutu from the sixties, when support was justified in terms of the Cold War, through the early 1990s. The brutal human rights violations committed by Mobutu's government raise new questions, both practical and moral, regarding the nature of future relations. It looks at the First Republic, 1960-65; the present tyranny: the Second Republic, 1965-1990- consolidation, decline, the opposition (internal, external); U.S. policy: evolution, interests, actors- the President, the State Department, the CIA, the Congress; and the crisis next time.

Schatzberg, M.G. (1988) *The Dialectics of Oppression in Zaire.* Bloomington: Indiana University Press.

Schatzberg looks at the triple helix: state, class and ethnicity in Africa; the state as ear: information, coercion and the political police; the state as bandit: armed forces, coercive force; the state as family, Mobutu as Father: political imagery; the insecure state, I: resistance within- the magistrature; the insecure state, II: resistance without- religious groups; and the dialectics of oppression.

Schatzberg, M.G. (1980) *Politics and Class in Zaire: Bureaucracy, Business, and Beer in Lisala.* New York: African Pub. Co.

In this book Schatzberg presents an overview of Lisala, an important governmental center, headquarters of three administrative units, and educational center in the northwest of the country; class and context: frameworks and issues; class analysis and Zairian politics; the weight of history: family background and social mobility: subregional service chiefs; lower-level clerks; territorial commissioners; party bureaucrats; education personnel; merchants; modal careers and indices of wealth; collectivity administration and the system of rural exploitation: collectivity budgets; agriculture; political economy of beer: reflections on policy in Zaire: beer: national and local perspectives; distribution; price control; development; the MPR: political mobility and social closure: overview; problems and activities in Mongala; the 1970 legislative elections; the elections and political mobility; economic independence: 30 November and the politics of class: formation;

implementation: who gets what and why?; effects and consequences; consciousness and context: historical evolution; popular perceptions and consciousness; 30 November and consciousness; the Zairian class system; and insecurity and scarcity.

Young, C. (1991) 'The Heritage of Colonialism.' In *Africa in World Politics*, ed. J.W. Harbeson and D. Rothchild, pp. 19-39. Oxford: Westview Press.

> This chapter presents a broad look at African colonial heritage; fragmentation of Africa; dream of African unity; influence of former colonizers; the French connection; the struggle to eliminate colonial influence; and colonial roots of regional crises;

Young, C. and Turner, T. (1985) *The Rise and Decline of the Zairian State*. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press.

> This book gives an overview of Zaire in the Mobutu Years, 1965-1980; the state and civil society: capital, town, and countryside; the dynamics of inequality: class formation; the ethnic dimension of civil society; the patrimonial state and personal rule; pursuit of legitimacy: party and ideology; regional administration; seventh scourge: the security forces; economic policy during the Mobutu years; Zairianization and radicalization: anatomy of a disaster; and Zaire in the international arena.

Young, C. (1965) *Politics in the Congo: Decolonization and Independence*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

> Young explores decolonization; paternalism; desegregating colonial society; the communes; disintegration of the system; a structure for independence; elites: chiefs, clerks and traders; the mass: workers and peasants; the politics of ethnicity; the rise of nationalism: from primary resistance to political parties; a profile of independence: 1960-1963; the political sector: parliament, parties and politicians; the administration and judiciary: resurgent bureaucracy; the politics of force: army and police; federalism: the quest for a constitution; and fragmentation: the new provinces.

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> Haskin explores the end of Belgian rule; the first intervention; Mobutu's return to power; terror and dissent; the final end of Mobutu; corruption and rebellion; and the transitional government.

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