



Imperial Hangovers: Belgium - The Economics of Decolonization

Author(s): Jean-Philippe Peemans

Source: *Journal of Contemporary History*, Apr., 1980, Vol. 15, No. 2 (Apr., 1980), pp. 257-286

Published by: Sage Publications, Ltd.

Stable URL: <https://www.jstor.org/stable/260513>

JSTOR is a not-for-profit service that helps scholars, researchers, and students discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content in a trusted digital archive. We use information technology and tools to increase productivity and facilitate new forms of scholarship. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.

Your use of the JSTOR archive indicates your acceptance of the Terms & Conditions of Use, available at <https://about.jstor.org/terms>



Sage Publications, Ltd. is collaborating with JSTOR to digitize, preserve and extend access to *Journal of Contemporary History*

JSTOR

Jean-Philippe Peemans

Imperial Hangovers: Belgium — The Economics of Decolonization

The following essay tries to assess the impact of the decolonization process on what could be called the 'Belgian power structure', that is to say, the specific type of equilibrium between social and political forces which is a feature of that country and also has economic roots. This already difficult task is further complicated by the absence of a synthetic study on the historical development of Belgian society.

It is true to say that 1960 saw the end of an era. But at the same time, contrary to some forecasts which exaggerated the economic importance of the Congo to the metropolis, the decolonization process had no economic consequences for Belgium. The colony was very important, but at a more subtle level. For example, despite its weakness in trading relations with the metropolis, it contributed significantly to the massive profits made by joint stock companies in Belgium itself. This leads to the question of how much influence was exerted by the colonial system upon the structures of economic power inside Belgium. And from there, one is led to examine the interplay between that economic power and other social and political powers.

To this end it is necessary to outline how, in turn, the colonial system, the decolonization process and post-colonial relations influenced or altered the interplay between the different elements of the Belgian 'power structure'.

The colonization of the Congo was a rather hazardous answer to general problems stemming from the contradictions in the in-

Journal of Contemporary History (SAGE, London and Beverly Hills),
Vol. 15 (1980), 257-86

dustrialization process. If Belgian industrialization got off to a very quick start, it was because of an extraordinary combination of factors: the ability to transfer the labour-saving techniques of the British 'industrial revolution' to the continental country with the lowest level of wages due to an unlimited supply of cheap labour, the availability of a European market thanks to its integration within the French Empire, which was itself at the same time a large buyer for military purposes, and a large supply of the raw materials required by current technology.¹ Thus from the beginning there was a contradiction, because the element, cheap labour, which was favourable for profit and rapid accumulation, was at the same time unfavourable to the development of a mass demand and a large national market for finished products. It resulted in a heavy dependency on foreign markets and in specializing in exports of semi-finished products.²

So on one hand, Belgian industry developed with capital-intensive enterprises in the mining and metal industries, located mainly in the southern part of the country (around 1900, 1 percent of enterprises, mainly joint stock companies, employed 50 percent of the workers), and on the other hand, there was an overwhelming majority of small-scale enterprises, using labour-intensive techniques, and largely oriented to the national market.³

The disparity between these two types of industries was still more accentuated by the heavy financial backing given to the large enterprises. Most of them were controlled by financial holdings, which monopolized the credit system, hampering the growth of small-scale enterprises. The greatest of these holdings, the *Société Générale de Belgique*, with its subsidiaries, controlled 40 percent of bank assets from 1850 to 1914.⁴

There were, of course, links between these features of the economic structure and certain elements of the socio-political structure. At the time of independence, the State was controlled by an alliance of the different factions of the francophone bourgeoisie in a system where less than five percent of the adult population had the right to vote. If there was a certain amount of agreement between these factions in order to maintain their privileges and common control of the State, there were also differences expressed in the rivalries between Catholics and Liberals. The catholic bourgeoisie, which was very conservative and strongly opposed to the ideas of the French revolution, was mainly a traditional, land-owning bourgeoisie, close to the nobility, and opposed to a rapid

industrialization which could endanger the social order. They largely controlled the countryside, both as landowners and also through the Church, which was in effect an organ of the State, and controlled the education and welfare networks. The liberal bourgeoisie was largely industrial, influenced by the moderate tendencies of the French Revolution, and advocated a policy of free trade and complete economic liberalism.⁵

Ideological conflicts were important in terms of power politics. Understandably the Catholics, who controlled the popular masses through their existing authoritarian and paternalistic social institutions, unlike the liberals who had almost no such power base, were fiercely opposed to any measure which would encroach upon their control over potential popular votes, while the Liberals tried to extend State action in the fields controlled by the Catholics in order to weaken this monopoly. In that struggle for influence, it was the political future of these different sections of the bourgeoisie which was at stake. These ideological struggles continued while those in the field of economics gradually died out between 1850 and 1870, a period of rapid economic growth, during which financial investment in the large industries increased, mainly through the *Société Générale*. Many of its old and new stockholders, most of whom belonged to landed families, thus became less resistant to an accelerated industrial growth, as it was for them an alternative means of increasing the return on their capital, as opposed to investing it in agriculture. At the same time, the increase in the industrial area controlled by the holding company progressively brought together the interests of stockholders, managers and entrepreneurs, Catholic as well as Liberal.⁶

Thus by 1880, there was some tendency towards fusing the economic interests of the Catholic and Liberal sections of the bourgeoisie, but the ideological conflict continued to play an important part, mainly because the Catholic ruling classes retained their nostalgia for the 'golden age' when they had had a monopoly over the cultural and social life of the masses.⁷

In the last twenty years of the nineteenth century, the dominant but conflicting partnership of two sections of the bourgeoisie began to be challenged in the economic as well as in the political field. It was a period of difficult economic adjustment marked by a high rate of technical progress in the industries launched by the first industrial revolution. Belgian traditional industries had to struggle to maintain a normal rate of profit in a context of high international

competition and low prices. This development occurred at the precise moment when newly-organized trade unions and workers' movements were trying to increase their level of wages and better their living standards. Despite a fierce resistance to these movements, the entrepreneurs were obliged to make concessions with consequent pressure on profits on capital investment.

There were two ways in which profits could be maintained or increased. The first way was to manufacture new products using new techniques. This path was followed in some countries then entering the second Industrial Revolution and able to accelerate their capital accumulation. Belgian industries largely missed that turning-point, probably because it required risky long-term investments. On the contrary, the financial groups tried to minimize risks, as the majority of their stockholders looked to industrial investment for greater security than could be obtained from land investment and also because their managers were mainly skilled engineers attached to the techniques and industries they had traditionally mastered.

The second way was to find a more favourable environment in which to exploit the old techniques; for example, in places with lower wages, and in countries trying to develop the techniques already mastered by Belgian industry. In both cases there were new opportunities to improve profits. That second method was largely followed by the Belgian financial groups which sponsored new investments in railways, mining and metallurgy in Russia, China and the Middle East.

It was in this search to find new fields of profitable investment that the colonization of the Congo took place. It is very clear that to start with this colonization did not obey any economic logic, as that part of Africa was looked on as an enormous vacuum by the financial groups interested by the new developing countries. There was absolutely no encouragement from them for the colonization of that part of Africa. The Congolese adventure began as a political initiative undertaken by King Leopold II, who was both a monarch anxious to defend the vital interests of his country which he ruled with scornful benevolence, and a man who regarded the new continents with the eyes of a merchant adventurer of old. He was indeed a kind of business tycoon well adapted to the problems of his time.

This is not the place to study in depth the role of a man who is still a figure of controversy and who aroused so much fascination and so much hatred. Nevertheless, his role was crucial if only

because he built a state apparatus in the colony which had all the features of the mercantilist epoch (monopoly of exploitation of the natural resources, extreme harshness of the methods used to mobilize manpower resources, confusion between private and public uses of State money), while at the same time he largely utilized resources provided by that policy of 'primitive accumulation' to lay down the infrastructure which prepared the ground for profitable investment. After twenty years of rather painful efforts, he had financed not only the external economies required by further investments, i.e. the construction of railways and the use of waterways, but he had also largely financed the expeditions which led to the discovery of rich deposits of non-ferrous metal in Katanga.⁸

From that moment onwards Belgian financial groupings actively participated in the colonial undertaking. They were granted very large privileges, though always in close partnership with the State. It is interesting to note that in 1910, less than four years after the large penetration of these financial interests in the colonial economy through the founding of the UMHK and other large companies, State monopolies were suppressed. After a short period of hesitation about which policy to follow, a very clear tendency of close cooperation between the colonial administration and the finance companies progressively emerged after the first world war. The administration used its full powers, through different kinds of constraints and pressures in order to undertake large public works, to mobilize a large volume of cheap manpower for the mines, the large plantations, and to foster exports. There was indeed a systematic bias in policy, which limited and hampered the development of petty traders and settlers in order to keep the manpower resources available for undertakings sponsored by the State or by the finance companies.

During that period, the latter completely reversed their attitudes towards operations abroad. Investments in other parts of the world, which were so important before the first world war, vanished almost completely. The reasons were evident: e.g. the experience of the Russian Revolution, Chinese instability in the twenties, and gave an impression of great insecurity, which contrasted sharply with the oasis of peace prevailing in the colony.⁹ At the same time, the control of mining, plantations and transport in the Congo provided high returns which also contrasted with the difficulties and slow growth of the traditional metropolitan industries. Thus the financial interests, through their holding companies, were able to

compensate between low and high profit undertakings which alleviated some of the problems of the aged Belgian industrial structure. Increasingly, these financial groups developed activities inside the colony and dominated its economy completely. At the beginning of the thirties it was estimated by a Senatorial commission that three-quarters of the assets of the colony belonged to four Belgian holding companies. Among them, the *Société Générale* held almost two-thirds of these assets.¹⁰

However, the economic dominance of these holding companies and the benefits therefrom were not separated from other features of the colonial system. This system as it developed in the interwar years was one in which de facto power stemmed from a narrow cooperation between three agents of social control: the colonial administration, the large enterprises sponsored by the finance houses, and the Catholic Church. Together, they devised a development policy which closely related the defence of their own particular interests with the elaboration of a rather complicated colonial doctrine, supposedly aimed at promoting the indigenous society to a state of 'civilization', which they had the right both to define and impose. That right was indeed the root of their de facto power, because the de jure power of control, that is to say Parliament, the Government and especially the Ministry of Colonies, recognized their special ability to master the specific problems of colonial policy. The colonial administration was the base of this triangle. In it was invested the right to control the indigenous population; the Catholic Church was recognized as having a special role in the field of morality and in the education of the colonized population, even by its adversaries in the metropolis; and finally, the finance companies, not least for the profits accruing to the metropolis, were given a free hand to control resources which were of vital interest to the colonial power.¹¹

From this collaboration and the de facto acceptance of the autonomy of administration, Church and finance companies in the colony, there emerged a specific colonial social order which was jealously guarded and insulated from the social and political norms that applied in the metropolis. There was also a high degree of mobility between the administration and business interests. The fact that high-ranking colonial civil servants could expect to end their careers with a position inside one or other of the finance companies cemented the bonds between these two institutions. The third one, i.e. the colonial Church, was greatly strengthened by the

fact that a large majority of the colonial élite were Catholics.¹² Catholics had an influence in the colonial system which was proportionately much greater than their influence at home.

A consequence of this situation was the Church's tendency to apply to the colonial situation the principles of the authoritarian paternalism its predecessors had longed to impose in the nineteenth century to solve the 'social question' inside the metropolis. All the features of that ideology were present and reinforced in the colonial context: the limitation of teaching to elementary and professional schools, the promotion of civic and moral behaviour through work and discipline and healthy leisure activities, the training of women for household tasks to protect the family, etc.¹³

The aim was to apply this model to society as a whole, but the lack of means limited its application to only some social groupings like the large mining enterprises. But there it was propagated at a high level of 'totalitarian' paternalism; the education of individuals, the regulation of social life all being closely linked with the search for higher productivity from the workers. That interplay of the economic, social and political elements of the colonial power system was all pervasive, and the colony was a privileged area insulated from all the movements which, in the metropolis, had progressively reduced the hegemony of the traditional ruling classes. The colonial system of power also prevented the development of trade unions, even among European workers. Similarly, it was largely able to eliminate competition from small and middle-scale settler enterprises. It is noteworthy that this supremacy of the finance houses upon the colonial economy was denounced for the first time during the thirties, precisely by those parliamentary representatives of middle-ranking enterprises, especially Flemish ones, who at the same time criticized the monopoly exerted on the credit system in Belgium itself by these finance houses.

This well illustrates one of the effects of the colonial system on the metropolitan social and political arena. Because the colony was an insulated region free from the political pressures brought about in Belgium by the rise of working-class movements, an area where capital could be accumulated with a minimum of institutional constraints, it strengthened, socially and politically, those groups in the metropolis which controlled the colonial system. They benefitted both indirectly and directly from the higher profits realized from the colonial economy.

They exerted total economic and political control in the Congo,

and justified their untrammelled power in terms of the needs imposed by the 'colonial reality'. The same justification could be and was advocated in the metropolis in order to foster a sense of colonial responsibility. Such a responsibility implied not only that the colony had to be protected from reforms which were socially and politically divisive inside the metropolis itself, but also that the defence of colonial interests required unity in the metropolis, especially united support for those actively engaged in the colonial adventure.

In short, its control of colonial affairs meant that the traditional right, mainly francophone, Catholic and unitarian, could maintain a dominating influence in Belgium, far greater than otherwise would have been the case. This occurred precisely at a time when its power was being challenged on many fronts, not only from the socialists, but also from the rising new Flemish bourgeoisie, which at the end of the twenties tried to assert its financial autonomy and to conquer leading positions in the State apparatus.¹⁴

It was in fact a very subtle struggle of power. The francophone Catholics, from the beginning of the 1920s a political minority in the southern part of the country, in face of the rising of the Socialist party, needed the support of the Flemish Catholics who controlled the majority of the popular votes in Flanders, through their populist programme aimed at defending the Flemish community as a whole against francophone supremacy, without class distinction. Such a programme was a powerful tool in the hands of the rising Flemish bourgeoisie which was at the same time an ally and a new rival for the control of the State. In this difficult struggle, the defence of the colonial heritage with its patriotic overtones was a good card to play to promote the status quo in a unitarian state structure.

The second world war reinforced the autonomy of the colonial power system, as the State had almost no means of exerting control, neither through its metropolitan administration, nor through its government in exile in London. The first period following the second world war did not reduce that large autonomy. At the same time, during most of the fifties, Congolese enterprises continued to provide an average rate of profit higher than their metropolitan counterparts controlled by the same financial holdings.¹⁵ Thus they masked the deep structural problems of Belgian industry. Consequently, the control of colonial assets continued to give the finance companies greater facilities for the accumulation and distribution

of profits than the situation of their metropolitan enterprises would normally have allowed.

Coming now to the process of decolonization between 1955 and 1960, it is essential to emphasize the great importance that their control of the colonial resources still had for the big financial holdings in Belgium.

The most remarkable feature after the second world war was that these financial groups could simultaneously secure highly profitable investments in the Congo and yet protect that privileged area from the interference and political rivalries of the metropolis. They were at least to maintain that situation during the ten years from 1945 to 1955.

To achieve this, a new development policy was established inside the colony after the second world war. This policy was undertaken by the 'enlightened' wing of the colonial administration, which recognized the reality of the 'social question' inside the colony, i.e. that section of the administration which was sensitive to the sharpening of social tensions among different categories of the African population at the end of the war, because influential in the decision-making process. Its objective was to eradicate the most salient features of the harshness of the manpower mobilization system (compulsory cultivation and too low agricultural prices, compulsory manpower recruitment, labour migration and too low wages), and to undertake the long-term stabilization of the colonial system.¹⁶

The new policy had three objectives. The first was the improvement of the living conditions of at least a section of the workers in the main cities and in the most important industries. The second was the development of a petty bourgeoisie of clerks, low-ranking civil servants, and teachers in the primary schools. They were supposed at the same time to become the instrument of an increasing apparatus of State control of the whole colonial society, and to have an increasing stake in the maintenance and development of the colonial system.¹⁷ This urban petty-middle class would be complemented by the promotion of some peasants to the rank of small independent farmers, differentiated from the rest of the rural communities and encouraged to produce an agricultural surplus.¹⁸ The third objective was the realization of a rather ambitious plan for a new infrastructure aimed at modernization and at sustaining the

economic activities of the private sector for export or for the domestic market.

The achievement of these ends required an increase in the role of the colonial state and in the finances at its disposal, via increased taxes and borrowing. The framework was laid out in the first Ten Year Plan for the colony which appeared in 1949. Its implementation was made easier by the huge increase in resources due to the booming Western demand for Congolese exports, up to the mid-fifties. This initiative by the colonial administration was not resisted by its two other partners and traditional pillars of the colonial order: the finance houses and the Catholic Church.

The finance houses were attracted first of all by the stabilization of the colonial system in order to ensure maximum security for their investments, and shared the conviction that the promotion of an indigenous middle class was the surest way to realize that goal. This is a conviction deeply entrenched in the consciousness of the Belgian bourgeoisie and was worked out in the metropolis itself from the end of the nineteenth century. At the same time, the promotion of an army of African workers and clerks was seen as a tool to maintain low costs in a growing economy which required more trained people, and as a device to check the pressures made by the European skilled workers, employees, and civil servants to improve their economic position, including the repeated efforts to organize trade unions aimed at the exclusive defence of European labour.

The finance houses were not opposed to an increase of direct and indirect labour costs, firstly because their industrial operations were more and more capital intensive, secondly because they were convinced that productivity increases required an improvement in the quality of labour. Their fear was that change might be too rapid, and they were ready to give support only to policies which kept a tight control over the pace of change, i.e. they wished to continue along their paternalistic and authoritarian way. There was again some parallel with the policy which had been pursued in Belgium: there, the protection of a stabilizing middle class could not lead them to compete with the activities controlled by the financial groups. The new conception gave fresh perspectives for action to the third traditional partner of the colonial order: the Catholic Church. Many missionaries had persistently criticized the crude system of manpower exploitation prevailing before, and they saw the legitimization of their presence and role in the colonial society precisely in terms of the promotion of a paternalistic mode of

economic and social progress for the African masses. The new policy gave new opportunities for the development of social and educational services largely controlled by the Church. Thus, the policy received support from the main partners of the colonial system of power, and it was favoured by the excellent conditions prevailing on the international markets for Congolese exports.

The ten years following the war saw a large increase in the value of mineral and agricultural exports, which fostered an enlargement of the domestic market, sustained also by the increase in public spending: therefore there was a place for the beginning of an import substitution process for consumer good industries, and some intermediary goods. But this type of growth was heavily dependent on external factors, as many obstacles limited the expansion of mass demand. Among these obstacles the most important was, of course, the very uneven distribution of income between the European and African sectors of the colonial society. These disparities were increased by the acceleration of the accumulation, as is usual in such cases. At the same time, the gap was also widening between cities and rural areas. In the cities, growth was mainly the result of the European settlers and companies relying on an unlimited supply of cheap labour. They were the main sources of employment increases, as the growing capital intensity in the mining and industrial activities provoked a huge increase in productivity and sharp reductions in the employment levels. At the same time, most of the African rural sector was stagnant, despite the ambitious programme of the Administration.¹⁹ The latter, in fact, encountered fierce resistance from the settlers in the rural areas, who were opposed to any measure which could improve the position of the African peasantry, because they feared that such improvement would reduce the manpower available, increase wages and create unfair competition for them. This crisis of the African peasantry tended to support a permanent migration to the cities, at a time when employment opportunities for unskilled labour were diminishing. But the tendency toward structural unemployment was not reflected in wage levels, because these were artificially protected by the Administrative measures.

Thus, underlying an apparent prosperity were deep structural problems, which, if not tackled in time, threatened serious social tensions and disruption. And in fact the Administration could not cope with the problem, pre-occupied as it was with the maintenance of a growing but stable administrative system. Even at that level,

problems were new and enormous. The main problem was the mode of integration of the low-ranking African civil servants promoted since the end of the war. These people hoped that the system would be more and more open to their aspirations, and work on the basis of qualification without any race barriers.²⁰ They wanted to be integrated and recognized as indispensable for the development of the Congo.²¹ Their hopes for promotion and respectability were nourished by official speeches about the future role of the indigenous élites in a very long process of modernization, which would finally lead to a kind of 'Belgian-Congolese Community'. This vaguely-defined concept was used at the beginning of the fifties to indicate that in the very distant future, some kind of association would exist between the metropolis and its colony. Neither the nature of this relationship nor the type of organization which would prevail in the Congo were precisely defined.²² The idea was vague enough to sustain the hopes of promotion by the emerging African petty-bourgeoisie and at the same time provoke a reaction from the European minority to protect its privileges for the future. It also began to claim the attention of the metropolitan social and political groups, who became aware that they had to have some kind of presence in the colony. If the situation was evolving slowly toward a type of association, it could, of course, have consequences in Belgium itself: for instance if it was moving in the direction of a kind of parliamentary representation of the colonies in the metropolitan power system 'à la française'.

Thus in the Congo, there was on one side the European interests, mainly settlers, traders and low-ranking civil servants, who feared any change in the relations between the Europeans and Africans, and whose associations for the defence of European interests flourished under different names and banners, and on the other side there was the penetration of metropolitan organizations. Their action was often able to prevent or diminish the impact of measures aimed at the development and stabilization of an African middle class. Thus, this latter group was more and more frustrated in its hopes for promotion²³ and began to attach more importance to other ways of gaining some power, such as the development of ethnic associations in the large cities, which were at the same time the cradle of grass-roots politics under the cover of cultural activities.

On the other side, there was a slow but persistent penetration of metropolitan organizations inside the colony. That penetration was

made easier by the fact that a growing number of Europeans were entering the colony, not as settlers, but as temporary immigrants. Inevitably they were more sensitive to the patterns of metropolitan social and political life and offered fertile ground for the penetration of the metropolitan rules of the game inside the colony. Trade unions, like the Christian CSC and the Socialist FGTB, were extending their recruitment among the Europeans, even if all kinds of measures, including intimidation, were taken by employers to limit their influence.²⁴ Political circles inspired by the different metropolitan parties were also active, even if there was no question of their being transformed into political parties inside the Congo. It is typical that at this time, most metropolitan-inspired organizations hesitated between being exclusively reserved for European members or becoming mixed in one way or another.

This penetration of metropolitan politics was greatly accelerated by the measures taken by the liberal Minister of Colonies, Buisseret, to promote the development of the public education network and later, to liberalize the conditions for the creation of associations, among which were trade unions.²⁵ These measures were very important because, for the first time in colonial history, they openly introduced elements which played a great role in the political life of the metropolis but had been carefully rejected by the traditional partners of the colonial order as threatening the stability of the system. Their immediate application was very restricted, but their potential dynamic was enormous, especially in the perspective of the future development of a Belgian Congolese Community. Thus, the colonial system ceased to be a closed one and became open to external influences and ready to participate in the political interaction which regulated the power structure in Belgium. The decisions themselves clearly now indicated that the colony was a part of Belgian politics, as they could not be efficiently opposed by the traditional pillars of the colonial order. So the rules of the game were, of course, completely transformed, as the former dominant partners were losing their monopoly on the decision-making process and as the colony was no longer insulated from metropolitan political and social influences.

From that moment, the situation in the colony reflected the progressive change in the balance of power. On one side, there was a growing radicalization of the African petty bourgeoisie, more and more frustrated by the resistance of the European vested interests to its full integration into colonial institutions.²⁶ This radicalization

corresponded with a certain instability in the European community, insecure, but divided, about its future. On the other side, there was a more and more overt penetration of metropolitan social and political groupings into the colonial society. Even if for the moment they had no official place in the power structure, they were developing their influence among the Europeans as well as among the Africans, in order to be present at the evolution toward what was seen as a kind of association between Belgium and the Congo.²⁷

These movements of course escaped from the control of the traditional pillars of the colonial order, who clearly realized that these developments threatened their power. Given the international context, the penetration of metropolitan politics was indeed not only the way toward a possible take-over by the metropolitan social and political forces, but it could also open the gate to African nationalism. Confronted with this rapidly changing new situation, the traditional partners of the colonial order could not control developments nor maintain their former unity of action. The new situation revealed the fragility of their former power monopoly which had only lasted as long as the colony was sealed off from metropolitan social and political influence.

In fact, the three partners of the former alliance did not react in the same manner to the threats to their power, influence or economic interest. The Catholic Church saw that its dominant position in the field of education, culture and social assistance was directly endangered by the facilities given to its liberal or socialist counterparts.²⁸ This would inevitably lead in the future to an erosion of its power, as had happened in Belgium, and to the loss of its predominance in the ideological formation of African élites. It was further challenged by an external development. From 1956 on, the Vatican itself realigned its policy toward the acceptance of political independence in Africa and no longer clung to the defence of the colonial system, which could threaten its presence in the long run. From that time onwards, the Catholic media in the colony were open to the expression of opinions supporting nationalism.²⁹

As for the finance companies' attitude, one can assert that they were extremely opposed to Belgian political influences entering the colony. For instance, it was only in mid-1959 that the European employers officially recognized the Congolese trade unions, largely sponsored by the big metropolitan trade unions.³⁰ They were also strongly opposed to the emerging African nationalism, but it seems they were incapable of understanding the accelerating pace of

change, being prisoners of their own ideology on African affairs. And if finally they accepted the idea of autonomy at some unspecified future date, their passive resistance to the 'Belgianization' of the colony had rendered impossible its implementation as the 'slow and orderly process' they advocated.

As far as the colonial administration was concerned, it was divided, being unable to cope with the rapid pace of change which eroded its power, or to elaborate a strategy which could maintain its dominance and freedom of action. Its former power was rooted in the recognition by the metropolitan government that the 'administration' was mastering the 'colonial sciences' to manage problems which were specifically African. When this specificity was eroded by metropolitan politics or by African nationalism, its power rapidly crumbled. With its experience rendered obsolete and its inability to face the new problems, the administration's fate was sealed. Its power vanished with the riots which broke out in Leopoldville in January 1959, for which it was blamed.³¹ In fact, even before these dramatic events, power had definitely shifted into the hands of the Brussels government.³²

With the weakening of the colonial administration, the Church and the financial groups had to rely on the Brussels government, which passed to a Catholic-Liberal coalition in 1958. The new government was concerned with the Congolese problem, and established a working group to prepare a declaration on the future of the colony. This group and the government hesitated between autonomy or independence as the solution. And after the January 1959 events, when the idea of independence was admitted, there was much discussion on its content and on its timing. The new Colonial Minister, M. Van Hemelrijk, was a Flemish Christian Democrat, opposed to the domination of the colonial French-speaking establishment. He denounced the narrow ties of interest existing between the colonial administration and the financial groups and favoured a quick movement toward independence. He had to give way to the more moderate A. De Schijver who tried to slow down the pace of change and delay independence by three to five years. But after less than three months, confronted with the united front of the Congolese political leaders, he had to concede complete independence for six months later, i.e. the end of June 1960.³³

This precipitateness appeared hazardous and inconsistent, contrasting sharply with the immobility of the preceding years. But it

reflected the deep contradictions of the situation. The shift of the decision-making process to the metropolis was only apparent. In fact, the Belgian government did not have the means to influence the evolution of the colony. The colonial administration had become a ghost while the Church as well as the financial groups were too strongly opposed to a 'Belgianization' of the colonial political and social life to allow Brussels to deal with the fundamental problems of the colonial regime, i.e. the crisis in the rural areas, increasing income disparities, the slowdown of industrialization and a growing social discontent in the large cities. There was simply no machinery to prepare for a slow progress to autonomy or independence through a progressive transfer of the metropolitan political and social institutions, which the Belgian politicians had in mind. This solution, therefore, could not become an alternative to the growing radical nationalism, in which the African petty bourgeoisie was becoming the main agent of change, and from which Belgian politics were excluded. A 'slow and orderly process' would have required costly economic and social investment at the least, to bring about a change in income distribution inside the colony. This, at the same time, would have meant an increase of State intervention, inevitably in the form of a massive penetration of Belgian political structures into the colony, as metropolitan economic and military aid would be needed.

There was no question of waging a colonial war to maintain the system, not only because Belgian politicians would not take the responsibility for it,³⁴ but also because there was no pressure from the main colonial interests in that direction. The settlers were far too weak to defend their position militarily.³⁵ The type of development promoted by the colonial State and the finance companies resulted in a privileged position for employees and civil servants in the European population, i.e. temporary settlers in the colony for career purposes and so concerned about their future reintegration into Belgian society. As to the financial interests, they knew perfectly well that, economically and militarily, an armed occupation of the Congo was unthinkable. Confronted with the inevitable loss of their former dominating influence, the finance companies simply tried to minimize the risks in a situation which was getting out of their control, by influencing the main agents of change in the dialogue established from 1959 on, between the Belgian politicians and the emerging Congolese political forces. These companies were not devoid of powerful means of acting on the course of events:

they controlled the basic industrial structure of the Congo, the financial assets and even the commercial channels to international markets. They hoped for a deal with the new African élites, who, though busy taking control of the State machine, would still need their experience, money and techniques. They could find allies from among the majority moderate Congolese leaders, but feared that the radical minority would come to power and threaten their interests and freedom of action through planning or nationalization. Thus they supported any measure which could weaken the future independent State as a powerful unitary structure. They had ties with the supporters of a federalist solution, who, however, lost out to the militant unitarist nationalists.³⁶ But this short-run defeat did not suppress the strategic aspects of these ties, which appeared of the utmost importance after July 1960, during the secession of the Katanga.

One important change occurred during the period preceding independence in the attitude of the finance companies toward the involvement of the Belgian government in Congolese affairs. As the transfer of power to a Congolese authority was taking place, the nature of the intervention of the Belgian State was also changing. It could no longer have a restricting influence on the position of Belgian businesses inside the Congo, but on the contrary, could only become a useful tool to protect Belgian interests and check the pressures which could be made on them by the Congolese authorities. Thus, the Belgian State and the finance companies were obliged to become partners to face the Congolese authorities and conceived at that moment the idea of what would become 'development aid'. A good illustration of that rapid evolution is the measure that the Belgian government took some days before independence, and which tended to minimize the mounting danger of a unitarist nationalist government. It suppressed the Chartered Companies (CSK, CNKI) in which the Colonial State retained a majority interest and which could thus have given the new Congolese Government the control of the UMHK and most of the investments made in the eastern part of the colony.³⁷

So much space has been given to the examination of the decolonization process because of the light it throws on the behaviour of the main partners of the colonial power system, the Catholic Church and the financial groups which were at the same time powerful partners also in the metropolitan power system. At the beginning of the fifties, in close cooperation with the colonial

administration, they were at the height of what can be called a specific global power system largely independent of the metropolis. 'Global' because in this system the partners not only defended their particular position and interests, but also had the power to impose a strategy of development in every field of social and economic life in the colony. This was expressed by a typical colonial ideology which not only justified their total power inside the dominated society, but legitimized their role in the face of metropolitan opinion. They had a monopoly of knowledge about Africa and the Africans, and what should be the path of future development. They felt almost completely secure about the future of the colony and about their ability to master its development for the benefit of the 'indigenous populations'.

In fact, as stated earlier, that ideology, authoritarian and paternalistic, was specifically geared toward the control of the African society in the same way as it had prevailed in the nineteenth century to protect the interests of the Catholic bourgeoisie in Belgium itself. In Belgium it had taken almost half a century for that dominance to give way to developing popular movements. In the Congo, the partners in the colonial system had been convinced of their ability to maintain their dominance for an indefinite time, and so refused to compromise as they had been progressively obliged to do inside the metropolis. The result was that the system was shattered to pieces in less than ten years. But if they could not at all forecast the fragility of their global power system, the two main partners, the Church and the financial groups, showed a rather astonishing eagerness to adapt themselves to the loss of their hegemony and to defend their particular positions and interests.

In less than five years, they propelled to the top of their own institutional hierarchy (the Church) or they were lobbying and courting (the financial groups) people whom only recently they had regarded as their dependents. The shift from the 'civilizing mission' to 'cooperation for development' was made as easily as in the other metropolises.³⁸

However, the 'civilizing mission' also had a metropolitan face. It had been presented there as a task which required also strengthened national unity to tackle the overseas problem with appropriate energy. As such the colonial enterprise mainly served the interests of the unitary francophone bourgeoisie inside Belgium: the success of the colonization certainly contributed to its long-lasting legality. The meaning of 'unity' was indeed in opposition to any transfer to

the colony of social-political questions dividing the Belgians, and by the same token, it reinforced the exclusive power of the groups which largely constituted a kind of 'overseas branch' of the francophone bourgeoisie. The loss of the colony, as a field of exclusive power, thus contributed to curtailing the influence of that social group inside Belgium during the sixties.

With the troubles which followed immediately on independence in July 1960, a large majority of the Europeans in the Congo left abruptly. Most of them were civil servants, and with them the structure of the former colonial administration physically disappeared. In the following months, most of the settlers and their families also left the Congo for ever. This dramatic return of the settlers to the metropolis was to have long-term consequences. Their integration into metropolitan life did not become a crucial political issue in Belgium. The problem was tackled without difficulty by the traditional political parties, a task which was eased by the fact that these parties, like the metropolitan social organizations, had contacts among the European urban population, at least in the last years of the colonial regime. Pensions, allocations, preferential recruitment and other measures were taken to solve the question of the reintegration of the former colonial civil servants. Their representatives behaved in fact according to the social rules prevailing in Belgium rather than as a specific 'colonial' lobby.³⁹ The settlers' interests themselves were not powerful enough to build a pressure group of expatriates as such, and could only attract the support of marginal circles on the extreme right, without greatly affecting the political process.

The most important consequences of this return arose in fact in the Congo itself, particularly in two directions: the maintenance of a large Belgian presence in the Congo, and its resultant effects in Belgium.

The departure of most of the former civil servants and settlers did not affect all the regions in the same way. In Katanga, the majority of the old colonial hands stayed on for at least two more years. In other regions, mainly the eastern and north-eastern, the Belgian presence vanished almost completely. But in the capital, formerly Leopoldville, another phenomenon did occur: a new wave of Belgian advisers, and even middle-ranking employees, the majority with no previous African experience, progressively replaced

the former colonial structure of European employment. This movement was accelerated with the rise to power of the so-called 'General Commissars' at the end of 1960, who were, in their majority, young people who had just completed their university studies, and who had some close friends among their former professors and class mates in Belgium.

The years 1960-1965 were years of great political instability: the colonial State had crumbled, and the different factions of the Congolese petty bourgeoisie fought each other fiercely to gain control of a State apparatus which was effectively losing its grip on events. The struggles were extremely complicated including as they did all elements emerging in a transitional period, i.e. ethnic regional groups interwoven with new ideological divisions, while a new petty bourgeoisie tried painfully to emerge from the political and economic chaos, and succeeded in enlarging its share in the declining national income.⁴⁰

The Belgian presence was pervasive in that difficult process, especially in Leopoldville and Elisabethville. In one way or another, this presence was felt in every important event, negotiation, change of government or military operation. They were advised, counselled, lobbied as much under the General Commissars and the Adoula Government as under the Tshombe Government and even when diplomatic ties were officially broken. In less than five years, the Belgian presence completely changed its outlook and structure, but maintained itself very firmly. Further, despite a sharp reduction in the absolute numbers of Belgians in the Congo, compared with the end of the colonial period, the number of people in Belgium personally concerned with Congolese affairs greatly increased. There was indeed a huge turnover among the people staying for some months, or generally a restricted number of years. A new generation was also concerned, in teaching, business and public services, who travelled back and forth, or stayed for much shorter periods than under the colonial regime.

Strangely enough, it was a 'new frontier' period for young people just leaving the universities. Arriving in the Congo, they were confronted with a society in complete turmoil, and were forced into close contact with the changing Congolese society. It was thus a situation which contrasted very much with the closed, insulated society, protected by its fragile consciousness of superiority, that their elders had known some years before. At the same time, many of them were involved in the international struggles which aimed at

influencing the direction of the new Republic. They were involved in all the manoeuvres which resulted from an increased influence among the western powers, sometimes made at Belgium's expense (in the Katanga affair for instance). They were also in the thick of Third World politics including elements which tried to check Belgian influence: the period of the open UNO intervention in Congolese affairs being the most difficult from that point of view.⁴¹

This situation certainly contributed to breaking down a certain narrow-mindedness for a lot of people who were living the experience in the field. The 'colony' had been a discovery for a generation at the beginning of the century, but a discovery which led finally to a kind of 'arrogant provincialism'. The Congolese crisis in a Third World perspective was like a new discovery, and for many, it was not only a cultural shock, but also a personal adventure.

This development was not restricted to Belgian expatriates. It also affected Belgian politicians and 'public opinion' in Belgium. In fact, the world of Belgian politics became much more concerned by what was happening in the Congo and its international aspects, than it had been during the colonial period, when Belgium as the colonial power theoretically had its 'civilising mission'. It was a process of 'learning by doing', through which most of the government and members of parliament, as well as the party leaders, discovered unexpected dimensions to Belgian involvement in international affairs.

Another interesting feature was that the main political groupings largely agreed on the policy which had to be followed, that was to participate actively in all western efforts to keep the Congo under Western influence, and at the same time defend Belgian interests as far as possible. That evolution was made easier by the fact that the Minister of Foreign Affairs, P. H. Spaak, was a former Secretary-General of NATO and a leading member of the Socialist Party.

Spaak's role was crucial for two reasons. Firstly, he actively manoeuvred internal Congolese politics. He gave to the Katanga secession a support which, while as discrete as possible, was essential to protect Belgian interests over there, especially when they were threatened by UN pressures. The price paid for this support until the end of 1962 was of course the continuous denunciation of Belgian neo-colonialism by numerous Third World countries, and repeated tensions with the Congolese Government. But at the same time, there was a policy of collaboration with Leopoldville, in

order to reinforce the pro-Western moderates, and favour a peaceful reunification, which would at the same time stabilize the country and not be as hostile to Belgian interests, including those in Katanga. Such a policy, given the international context, could only be applied in close cooperation with the United States, and by framing the protection of Belgian interests in a broader Western context. Secondly, he succeeded in softening the opposition to such a policy in Belgium itself. There was opposition from certain Flemish and Socialist quarters, who blamed the finance companies for their political blindness and irresponsibility during the colonial period, and who favoured complete disengagement from the Congo. On the other hand, there were the pressures made by the finance companies to maintain the Katanga secession as long as possible and to help it more overtly. Spaak neutralized the first group by presenting his policy toward the Congo as a part of Belgium's international responsibility stemming from its alliances, and he convinced the financial interests that his policy would better ensure their security in the long run. Finally, he achieved a degree of unity between the Belgian political and business worlds, which became an important element in promoting an active involvement in the political development of the former colony. The Congolese crisis thus had the paradoxical result of promoting unity and cooperation between these two partners in the Belgian power system, in the exact way which had been desired by the financial groups during the colonial period, but not then achieved. This illustrates the fact that the most significant consequences of the decolonization crisis were in the subtle changes in the Belgian power structures and the ways the political élites behaved towards their changing situation in the Congo.

As far as metropolitan public opinion was concerned, there was a complex evolution, through the decolonization crisis, into an understanding of Third World problems, perhaps different from other Western countries. For it was also a 'new discovery of Africa'. All the comfortable views on the success of the Belgian paternalistic colonial system, which had been diffused through the education and the mass media, were of course shattered. At the same time, Belgian public opinion discovered African and Asian nationalism in their most violent expression, making Belgium the target of sharp attacks against its past and present African policy. Newspapers of all tendencies were full of information about the crisis and the space devoted to the situation in the Congo was cer-

tainly ten times larger than in the 'gold age' of the colonial period. But there was an evident lack of analytical equipment with which to tackle the problem. Reactions in the mass media reflected a deep malaise and a rather emotional approach. If some papers condemned the 'irresponsibility' of all the partners in the decolonization, most of them also denounced an international plot against Belgium. The first phase faded away rather quickly. Thereafter the media concentrated on the humanitarian aspects of the 'drama', where Belgians as well as the Congolese populations appeared as the victims of an international plot by which Afro-Asian nationalism was preparing the ground for communism,⁴² and consequently insisted that Belgium had to accept new responsibilities to compensate for its former 'irresponsibility'. These ideas played a certain part in making easier the framing of the continuous involvement inside the Congolese crisis, in a multilateral Western perspective. They contributed to the approval by 'the silent majority', even of a joint US-Belgium military intervention in Stanleyville at the end of 1964.

That event was nevertheless the start of a new development in public opinion especially among the young and in the universities, where it was seen as an overt neo-colonialist operation. From that moment, Belgian involvement in Congolese affairs was repeatedly denounced as a manifestation of second-hand imperialism. This criticism increased with the years, especially at the end of the sixties, when the Mobutu regime began to repress student protest inside Zaïre universities. But that movement was part of the general radicalization of an active youth minority which occurred in Belgium as elsewhere, and which was focused mainly on the Vietnam war. But it gave birth to a rather impressive number of pamphlets and unpublished papers, which revealed an active sympathy with Third World nationalism and a new spring-board for neo-marxism.⁴³

Zaïre's problems, however, never led to mass demonstrations like those which denounced the US intervention in Vietnam. And it was only as late as 1978 that the radical minority could make its voice heard inside the power system, when its theses were more or less repeated by the Chairman of the Flemish Socialist Party in order to denounce the corruption of the Zaïre regime. In terms of power politics, that tendency thus remained rather marginal, and the scene was dominated by the continuation of the policy undertaken by P. H. Spaak.

The rise to power and the consolidation of the Mobuto regime, since 1965, has given new perspectives to the partnership between the Belgian political and business worlds concerning Zaïre affairs. On one side they were confronted with a more stable political power which progressively asserted its independence, sometimes through temporary clashes with the former metropolis, as in the 1966 take-over of the UMHK and its transformation into the *Gecamines*. The finance companies lost the freedom of action they had maintained under the Katanga secession. They had to recognize the full authority of the new regime which asserted its objectives: to use State power and control national resources in order to increase its bargaining power with foreign capital and consolidate the economic position of the small privileged groups linked with the regime.⁴⁴ The UMHK affair was very important. Although another subsidiary of the *Société Générale*, the SGM, maintained a large degree of control over its management and its handling of commercial problems, the affair demonstrated that the financial groups could maintain their stake in the country only if they submitted to the objectives of the new regime and recognized it as a full partner in the decision-making process. It showed also that the support of the Belgian State was absolutely necessary in the new bargaining process and that even a close cooperation with the United States and multinational Western institutions was required. The amount of indemnities to be paid to the UMHK had finally been agreed partly under the pressures made by the World Bank and IMF on the Zaïre regime.⁴⁵ From that moment onwards, the Belgian political and financial world undertook a policy of close and multiform cooperation with the Kinshasa Government. That cooperation became more and more institutionalized through State to State relations, with the development of loans, credits and the financing of important technical assistance in the civilian as well as in the military field.⁴⁶ The largest part of the so-called development aid was devoted to Zaïre, a situation which was strongly approved by Belgian industrial interests.⁴⁷ At the end of the sixties, that cooperation reached a climax with a renegotiation of the Zaïre bilateral debt with Belgium and the official visit of King Baudouin.⁴⁸ The axis of cooperation was very clear. The State to State relations created a good climate for an involvement of the financial groups in the great projects undertaken by the Kinshasa regime, mainly in the infrastructure.

These projects were realized with large international financing,

but they had an important spill-over effect for Belgian industry. For instance, in 1971, orders given to Belgian enterprises in the Inga and Inga-Shaba projects represented 50 percent of orders received by these enterprises from projects in Third World countries. From the beginning of the seventies the Zaïre debt largely shifted from public to private loans granted by multinational bank groups. Belgian groups, mainly the *Société Générale*, were rather well-placed in that movement. The Belgian groups were heavily involved in the Zaïre economy, through State investments or indebtedment, and their presence depended largely on the relations existing between Zaïre and Belgium. At the same time, they had less economic responsibility for the operations in which they participated, and which were often denounced as prestige and uneconomic spending. They were thus actively concerned with the type of policy followed by the Zaïre regime which tried to use the country export resources as a tool to promote, through State control, the economic position of a small privileged group linked with State power. However, it is noteworthy that they took no direct risks and made no direct new investments. As other small and middle-sized foreign enterprises also did not increase their own investment, that situation was invoked to justify the 'Zaïrinization' measures of 1973, which took over all that category of foreign ownership.⁴⁹ In fact, these measures have struck at the last remnants of the settlers' era, but they have not hit the financial groups as such.

From 1974 onwards, the Zaïre economy drifted into a crisis, due simultaneously to the fall of copper prices, to the deepening of the agricultural crisis, and to mismanagement at all levels of the State structure. The regime saw its bargaining counters with foreign capital weaken one after the other, and it was reduced to a very unfavourable position. Progressively forced to renegotiate its debt from such a position, it had to allow controls on its public spending, so degenerating to a situation in which it came to be almost dependent on multinational Western tutorship. This was a rather new situation, as Western powers tried at the same time to stabilize a country they considered strategically important while putting heavy pressures and constraints on their 'ally'.

Belgium occupied a key position in the difficult discussions between the Western powers and the Zaïre regime. It was not a forefront position, but its intervention was looked upon as absolutely necessary by its Western partners to supervise and even manage the 'reconstruction' tasks. At the same time, the Zaïre

authorities often tried to use their 'special relations' with Brussels to get a softening of certain conditions from other Western creditors with less traditional sympathy for Zaïre problems.

To conclude: if the decolonization process has quickly and completely destroyed the social and political system established by Belgium to ensure its domination in the Congo, it has not eliminated the presence of the former metropolis in Central Africa. On one hand, the Belgian power system has been closely involved with the emergence of a regime that was the negation of all the principles and mechanisms that had been advocated to ensure an orderly process of democratization: an authoritarian and corrupt regime using the economic surplus extracted from the export sector to consolidate a social group which could be called an oligarchy as well as a State bourgeoisie, and using the slogans of the most violent nationalism to realize an apparent consensus: all features which are officially distrusted by the Belgian political and economic power circles.⁵⁰ On the other hand, this involvement has led not only to a multi-lateral cooperation with this regime, but it has also led to a pragmatic consensus of action between the partners of the Belgian system of power which had never been reached before in the field of colonial policy. And finally, it has given to Belgium an international responsibility, even greater than during the colonial period, as the emerging state was looked on as having a special strategic importance, and as Belgium was recognized as having a 'special' responsibility in this area by its Western allies.

Far from having been eliminated from the international scene because of the loss of its 'Empire', Belgium has thus maintained its role in a changing world largely through its involvement in the evolution of its former colony. It has even been the best school of international power politics for its political class, which has adapted itself rather easily to a kind of pragmatic machiavelianism, to cope as well with the special blend of Third World dictatorship that has developed in Zaïre as with the forces which tried to insert themselves in it. At the same time, the main Belgian financial groups have been able to maintain a large influence on the Zaïre economy and largely to hold on to their interests.⁵¹ Nonetheless, the Zaïre economy is a stagnating one, so that Belgian finance companies there were unable to keep pace with the accelerated movements of international investments or with the rate of growth of output and investment in Belgium itself. During the sixties and the seventies, the stagnation and the rampaging crisis of

the Zaïre economy contrasted sharply with the emergence of new industrial nations in South East Asia and Latin America. The maintenance of Belgian interests in Zaïre was thus not a way of keeping pace with the trends of international trade and finance. And it is very clear that during this period, there was absolutely no reshaping of the structure of Belgian investments toward the new growth economics of the Third World. Belgian business was almost absent from that restructuring of the world economy in sharp contrast with the behaviour of the United States, Japan and Germany. Only from 1974 onwards, after the shock of the oil crisis, did Belgian business make a new and successful effort to penetrate the Arab countries, but under the form of sales or contracts with public enterprises and institutions, not under the form of direct investment; in this perspective, today Algeria has replaced Zaïre as the first trading partner of Belgium in Africa.

Since 1960, Belgian investment abroad has mainly followed the direction of the other EEC countries, in enterprises and sectors linked with Belgium's traditional exports, in order to ensure their protection or promotion.⁵²

As for the financial groups, they operated mainly in two directions. The companies they sponsored in the mining sector of the colony before 1960 undertook new direct investment in the same sector but mainly in non-Third World countries, Canada and Australia for instance. On the other hand, they largely developed their own banking operation, trying to take up a good position of broker in the field of international financial operations and of investments realized in Western Europe by multinational enterprises. But that movement was not spectacular and simply kept pace with the growing internationalization of the Western European economies. Paradoxically enough, in the last twenty years, the Belgian economy has become more and more European-centred, and there was no overseas substitute for the former importance of the colonial investments relative to the metropolitan assets.

There was thus an apparent discrepancy between the relative importance that Zaïre kept for Belgium in the network of its international relations and the weakening of its economic weight relative to the new dimensions of the Belgian economy. There is probably a link between that diminishing economic importance of Zaïre from a bilateral point of view, and the growing multi-lateral aspects of Belgian economic relations with its former colony. It is more and more in the broader context of the growing financial and

economic interdependence with other Western countries that a 'Zaire policy' has still a meaning for the formulators of Belgian policies.

Notes

1. See for example, J. Mokyr, *Industrialization in the Low Countries, 1795-1850* (Yale University Press 1976).
2. J. M. Wautelet, *Division économique du travail et production élargie du capital; Belgique 1873-1913* (University of Louvain 1976).
3. Institut National de Statistique, *Recensement économique et social 1937*, vol. 2, 476-479.
4. B. S. Chlepner, *Le marché financier belge depuis cent ans* (Brussels 1930), 21-30, 95-130.
5. P. Delfosse, *La formation des familles politiques en Belgique, 1830-1914* (University of Louvain 1979).
6. M. Quévit, *Les causes du déclin wallon* (Brussels 1978), 62-78.
7. I. Cassiers, *Réflexions préliminaires par une analyse du rôle de l'Etat en Belgique, 1880-1914* (University of Louvain 1976); P. Joye and R. Lewin, *L'Eglise et le mouvement ouvrier en Belgique* (Brussels 1967).
8. J. Ph. Peemans, 'Capital accumulation in the Congo under colonialism: the role of the state', in P. Duignan and L. H. Gann (eds.), *Colonialism in Africa*, vol. IV (Cambridge University Press 1974), 164-169.
9. P. Berthe, *Les investissements belges à l'étranger. Reflets et perspectives de la vie économique*, 17, 2 (1978), 87-100.
10. Sénat, Commission des Colonies, Discussion du budget pour l'exercice 1934, Documents parlementaires, no. 85 (Brussels 1934).
11. J. Stengers, 'La Belgique et le Congo' in *Histoire de la Belgique contemporaine, 1914-1970, la Renaissance du Livre* (Brussels 1974), 394-400.
12. J. L. Veccut, *The 'classical' age of Belgian colonialism: outline for a social history, 1910-1940*, unpublished paper presented to the Seminar on Zaïre, SOAS, London, October 1978.
13. P. Delfosse, op. cit., 14-19.
14. C. H. Höjer, 'Le régime parlementaire belge de 1918 à 1940', *CRISP* (Brussels 1969), 3-62, 313-368; V. Lorwin, 'Belgium: religion, class and language in national politics', in R. Dach, (ed.), *Political opposition in Western democracies* (Yale University Press 1966), 147-187.
15. See for example, *Bulletin de la Banque Centrale du Congo belge et du Ruanda Urundi*, no. 11 (1956), 419-430; no. 11 (1959), 435-441; Banque Nationale de Belgique, *Statistiques économiques belges, 1950-1960*, vol. 2, 218-231, 338-340.
16. See J. Ph. Peemans, 'Capital accumulation in the Congo under colonialism: the role of the State', in P. Duignan and L. H. Gann (eds.), *Colonialism in Africa*, vol. IV (Cambridge University Press 1974), 192-196.
17. Congrès Colonial National, 6th Sess., *Comptes rendus de séances et rapports*

préparatoires (Brussels 1948); Institut de Sociologie Solvay, *Vers la promotion de l'économie indigène* (Brussels 1956).

18. Guy Malengreau, *Vers un paysannat indigène: les lotissements agricoles au Congo Belge* (Brussels 1949).

19. P. Bouvier, *L'accession du Congo Belge à l'indépendance* (Brussels 1965), 78-83.

20. R. Anstey, 'Belgian Rule in the Congo and the aspirations of the Evolué Class', in P. Duignan and L. H. Gann (eds.), *Colonialism in Africa*, op. cit., vol. II, 1970.

21. J. Stengers, 'Une décolonisation précipitée: le cas du Congo Belge', *Culture et développement*, vol. X, 4 (1978), 533-538.

22. L. A. M. Petillon, Discours d'ouverture à la session ordinaire du Conseil de Gouvernement, Session de 1952, Léopoldville, Conseil de Gouvernement, 1952.

23. C. Young, *Politics in the Congo* (Princeton University Press 1965), 75-86.

24. P. Joye and R. Lewin, 'Les trusts au Congo', *SPE* (Brussels 1961), 190-201.

25. A. J. J. Van Bilsen, 'Bilan de la politique Coloniale d'une législature 1954-1958', *La Revue Nouvelle*, May 1958.

26. See for instance P. Lumumba, *Le Congo Terre d'avenir, est-il menacé?* (Brussels 1961), 66-69.

27. From that moment Belgian political parties repeatedly took up positions over the future of the Colony: le Manifeste du P.S.C. sur le Congo, Information No. 9, 15 April 1956; P.S.B. Un programme pour le Congo et le Rwanda Urundi, rapports présentés au Congrès extraordinaire des 30 Juin et 1er Juillet 56 (Brussels 1956).

28. A. A. J. Van Bilsen, *Vers l'indépendance du Congo et du Rwanda Urundi* (Brussels 1958), 120-121.

29. J. Meynard, J. Ladriere, F. Perin, *La décision politique en Belgique* (Paris 1965), 349-351.

30. Le 20 Mai à Léopoldville: Pacte social? Le train des décisions gouvernementales: des pressions contradictoires qui se neutralisent, Courrier hebdomadaire du *CRISP*, Brussels No. 19, 1959.

31. Rapport de la Commission Parlementaire sur les événements de janvier 1959, Documents parlementaires, Chambre des Représentants, Document 100, 27 March 1959.

32. J. Stengers, 'La Belgique et le Congo. Politique coloniale et décolonisation', in *Histoire de la Belgique contemporaine, 1914-1970* (Brussels 1974), 422-423.

33. J. Meynard, J. Ladriere and F. Perin, op. cit., 355-359.

34. L'envoi de militaires belges au Congo, *CRISP*, No. 40, 1959.

35. *Eurafrica*, Revue de la Fedacol, 1959, No. 1, 6-1; No. 2, 16-22.

36. J. Gérard-Libois and B. Verhaegen, Congo 60, Les dossiers du *CRISP* (Brussels 1961).

37. P. Joye and R. Lewin, op. cit., 288-295.

38. See for instance the speech made by L. Bekaert, President of the FIB (Belgian Federation of Enterprises) and a leading Belgian industrialist, in January 1960, to advocate future cooperation with the Congo (FEB, Rapport annuel, 1973, Brussels, 77).

39. F. Baudhuin, *Histoire économique de la Belgique, 1957-1968* (Brussels 1970), 222-235.

40. J. Ph. Peemans, 'The social and economic development of Zaïre since independence: an historical outline', in *African Affairs*, 74, 295 (April 1975), 154-157.

41. J. Gérard Libois and B. Verhaegen, *Congo 1960, 1961, 1962, 1963, 1964* (Brussels 1961 to 1965).

42. One could read for instance in *La libre Belgique*, 8 November 1965: 'La crise congolaise pourrait mener à un coup d'Etat, l'actuelle confusion politique ne sert que les visées chinoises.'

43. See for example, Comité Zaïre, *La CIA et le Zaïre* (Antwerp 1977); Comité Zaïre, *Zaïre, le dossier de la recolonisation* (Brussels and Paris 1978).

44. J. Ph. Peemans, op. cit., 160-165.

45. R. E. Verhaeren, 'La Société Générale et l'Union Minière', *La Revue Nouvelle* (November 1972), 371-374.

46. B. Piret, 'L'aide belge au Zaïre', *Contradictions*, no. 1 (1972), 111-137.

47. FEB, *La présence économique belge dans le monde* (Brussels 1973), 76-90.

48. J. Gérard-Libois, 'Dix ans de relations Belgique-Congo', in *CRISP*, 29 May 1970.

49. Lutumba Lu-Vilu, 'De la Zaïreization à la rétrocession et au dialogue Nord-Sud, 1973-1975', *OIL* (Brussels 1976).

50. B. Verhaegen, 'Impérialisme technologique et bourgeoisie nationale au Zaïre, Connaissance du Tiers Monde', Cahiers Jussieu, 4, Collection 10/18 (Paris 1978), 347-380.

51. F. Chonneux, 'L'après Congo et le Zaïre', *La Revue Nouvelle* (November 1972), 379-381.

52. *Reflets et perspectives de la vie économique, Présence de l'économie belge dans le monde* (Brussels 1978), 101-112, 125-130.