

Ethnic associations in Katanga province, the Democratic Republic of Congo: multi-tier system, shifting identities and the relativity of autochthony

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ABSTRACT

This article unravels the world of ethnic associations in Katanga that emerged as a result of rural–urban migration. These associations constitute a multi-tier system reflecting ethnic, provincial and national identity levels. Primarily meant to organise mutual aid and foster cultural values, they have behaved as interest groups since democracy was re-established in the 1990s. Representing ethnic communities, they try to influence the distribution of spoils through lobbying activities, emphasising the right of ‘autochthons’ to be prioritised regarding employment and development. Political and socio-economic changes trigger identity shifts and ethnic associations adapt by inventing alternative ‘autochthony’/‘allochthony’ dichotomies, causing friction between communities. The multi-tier system provides forums where ethnic differences can be negotiated and ethnic communities can integrate. In its current manner of functioning it is only effective at mitigating acute crises. In order to resolve more complex political issues, it would benefit from a preventive approach within a permanent framework of consultation between associations and authorities.

INTRODUCTION

Colonial rule and the concomitant industrialisation and urbanisation changed the social fabric of many African countries in a radical way. These processes induced the typical rural to urban labour migration, which resulted in the birth of multi-ethnic urban environments where

migrants founded mutual aid and home town associations to build solidarity among people hailing from the same village or region, and to contribute to the development of the place of origin, in order to maintain the link with 'home' (Little 1957: 581–3; Barkan *et al.* 1991: 461–2; Woods 1994: 466; N'Sanda Buleli 2005: 92–3; Evans 2010: 397–8). These associations fostered a sense of belonging, descent and common culture among urban dwellers, consolidating ethnic identities which were already bureaucratically institutionalised by colonial rulers who classified African communities by assigning to them a unique tribal identity and geographic location (Berman 1998: 321; Evans 2010: 410). In contrast to the static view of primordialists postulating that ethnic identities are given, natural and immutable, Berman (1998: 305) sees modern African ethnicity as 'a social construction of the colonial period through the reactions of pre-colonial societies to social, economic, cultural and political forces of colonialism'. Lonsdale (1994: 138–41) distinguishes between an internal and external dimension of socially constructed ethnicity: 'moral ethnicity' refers to a complex system of social obligations inside the group that charges members, rich and poor, with rights and responsibilities to each other, whereas 'political tribalism' refers to instrumentalisation of ethnic identity in the competition with other groups for access to scarce state resources (Berman *et al.* 2004: 4–5).

In the context of the Cold War, many African post-colonial states became single-party regimes, shifting the emphasis from nationalism and the idea of the modern nation state to the cult of the leader. Neopatrimonial leaders exercised power through vertical ethnic patron-client networks reaching from the villages to the centre of power, linking elites with the rest of the population (Chabal & Daloz 1999: 21; Bayart 2006: 272; Berman 2010: 14; Englebert & Dunn 2013: 132–3). The relationship between ethnicity and democracy has been at the heart of a theoretical debate on political developments in Africa since the wave of democratisation in the 1990s. Until the 1960s, political scientists advocated the idea that ethnicity and democracy were incompatible because ethnic conflicts were regarded 'as primordial and irrational manifestations of traditional rivalries and passions, leaving little room for explanations based on the objectives and interests of those involved in such conflicts' (Reilly 2001: 1). Beissinger (2008: 89–91), however, suggests that under the right conditions, ethnicity is not an obstacle to democracy, arguing that economically, culturally and politically satisfied minorities can favour institutionalised forms of multi-ethnic engagements; the stability of societies is threatened not

by their ethnic diversity as such, but by the state failing to recognise and mediate competing ethnic interests (Agbu 2011: 18).

Several authors assert that democratisation and global economic liberalisation have contributed to the rise of autochthony discourses in large parts of Africa – in contexts of a dysfunctional state and scarcity of resources (Bayart *et al.* 2001: 188–9; Ceuppens & Geschiere 2005: 387; Bøås & Dunn 2013: 125–7): patronage politics became entwined with new democratic forms and politics of belonging (Hickey 2011: 42). Geschiere & Nyamnjoh (2000: 424) consider autochthony as a special form of ethnicity: ethnicity ‘evokes the existence of a more or less defined ethnic group with its own cultural substance and specific name and history’, whereas autochthony, although ‘equally capable of arousing strong emotions regarding the defence of home and ancestral lands’, is more elusive, making it politically applicable ‘from village to region to country’. The idea of autochthony narrows the identity issue down to the question of ‘who authentically belongs where?’. Political and economic liberalisation have contributed to a feeling of uncertainty to which autochthony discourses respond by promising security for those ‘born from the soil’ against competing ‘others from elsewhere’, in the struggle for resources (Bøås & Dunn 2013: 16–24). Geschiere & Jackson (2006: 5–6) emphasise the relative emptiness of autochthony, allowing political manipulators to redefine the ‘Other’ opportunistically. Jackson (2006: 100–6) observes that in the eastern Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) ethnic, provincial as well as national identities have been used as criteria to exclude ‘allochthons’. Hilgers (2011: 38) argues that autochthony is not only about who was first in the order of migration, but also about which group contributed to the development of a given space. The case of the Sanga presented in this paper supports this view: Sanga consider themselves autochthons of the mineral-rich district of Kolwezi in DRC’s former Katanga province because they claim to be the first who mastered the art of copper foundry, thus laying the basis for the mining industry. Hilgers (2011: 42) adds that tensions can arise when there is no consensus among groups about what constitutes a contribution to development, or if those that have contributed to it most were not the first arrivals in the area.

Local elites are crucial in the politicisation of ethnicity. ‘Ethnic elites are primarily concerned with the distribution of political power, while “ordinary citizens” predominantly care about their socio-economic position’ (Langer 2005: 28), but elites are also supposed to comply with the moral obligation of supporting their communities. Office-seeking elites have to compete for electoral support and use local communities

as their power bases, basically relying on existing ethnic patron-client networks (Geschiere & Gugler 1998: 313; Berman 2010: 25–6). Ethnicity and autochthony discourses have great mobilising power because elections rouse fear of being outvoted by ‘strangers’ (Ceuppens & Geschiere 2005: 389).¹ In this perspective, ethnic and hometown associations have resurged as vehicles for the politics of belonging (Geschiere & Gugler 1998: 313; Evans 2010: 398; Hickey 2011: 42). Elections in Ivory Coast motivated leaders of hometown associations to contest the official land policy which protected migrants by making autochthony claims to gain electoral support of their local base (Chauveau 2000: 113). Multi-party politics prompted the Cameroonian regime to support regional elite associations, which became mobilisation instruments for the president’s party in regions where alleged ‘strangers’ were suspected of supporting opposition parties (Ceuppens & Geschiere 2005: 391).

Economic hardship in a context of a state unable to provide adequately public goods, combined with the (re)-introduction of competitive elections, seems to fuel a sense of uncertainty deepening the emotional appeal of autochthony. Several authors underscore the violent consequences of ethnic mobilisation and production of autochthonous discourse, and the active involvement of ethnic associations in these processes (Agbese 1996: 147; Nyamnjoh & Rowlands 1998: 321; Van Hoyweghen & Vlassenroot 2000: 106–7; Jenkins 2012: 592; Bøås & Dunn 2013: 29–32). However, few studies have paid attention to the role of these associations in conflict resolution. Hickey (2011: 42) notes that hometown associations ‘can accommodate both progressive and exclusive political discourses that permeate and define debates over citizenship in Africa’. Orvis (2001: 31) argues that ethnic associations ‘are often the public ethnic face of patron-client networks operating in large part along the norms of moral ethnicity’, providing means, however imperfect, of accountability and participation. He emphasises that collective activity guided by moral ethnicity and taking the form of ethnic or patronage organisations ‘is every bit as much part of African civil society as are trade unions, professional associations, or churches’ (Orvis 2001: 18). Page *et al.* (2010: 364) advance the argument that ‘a desire for belonging is not only a force that can lead to increased local conflicts; it can also simultaneously be a platform for conviviality’. Moral conviviality describes ideas about how diverse groups should live together, and the process by which local elites can be disciplined for transgressing such norms (Page *et al.* 2010: 359). It has also been suggested that inter-ethnic elite alliances can avoid ethnic mobilisation and destructive struggle (Langer 2005: 27).

This article investigates the organisational structure and behaviour of urban socio-cultural associations (*mutuelles*) in Katanga, which identify with a particular ethnic community or geographic region (hereafter referred to as ‘ethnic associations’ or ‘provincial organisations’). It confirms that they employ autochthony discourses in an attempt to reach socio-political goals, and opportunistically redefine ‘autochthony’ under changing political or economic conditions. Several studies link questions of belonging primarily to conflicts over access to land (Agbese 1996: 147; Vlassenroot 2000: 267–8; Bøås & Dunn 2013: 5), whereas this paper pays attention to the socio-political role of ethnic associations in inter-ethnic quarrels over employment in industrialised areas. I also reveal that these associations constitute a three-tier system which reflects multi-level citizenship, including ethnic, provincial and national identities. Englebort emphasises the necessity of mediation among ethnic associations because they compete for the same state-sponsored resources (2003: 36). The system I describe allows collaboration between members of different communities, and case studies show that local governments interact with this system in order to resolve ethnic conflicts. Agreeing with Berman’s (2004: 3) premise ‘that ethnic pluralism is and will remain a fundamental characteristic of African modernity that must be recognised and incorporated within any project of democratic nation-building’, I suggest that it is a structure conducive to mutual consultation, which has the potential to enhance conviviality between communities.

The existence of different types of ethnic and regional associations in Katanga has been reported before (Kizobo 2001; De Boeck 2005). In order to map the network of associations and reveal inter-associational relationships, I carried out qualitative research based on semi-structured and informal interviews with both ordinary and board members, enabling observation of potentially diverging opinions on the association’s functioning.² Additional data were obtained from interviews with academics, politicians, traditional chiefs and local executives, and from analysis of documents and local newspapers.

ETHNIC ASSOCIATIONS FROM A HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

Colonial period and independence

The history of ethnic associations goes back to the early days of Belgian colonial rule when the industrialisation of Southern Katanga started with the exploitation of the so-called ‘copper belt’ by the colonial mining company Union Minière du Haut-Katanga (UMHK), which

became one of the largest cobalt and copper producers in the world and the most important employer in Katanga (Gérard-Libois 1966: 322; Rubbers 2006: 116). Because local communities opposed forced labour, colonial companies recruited labourers in distant areas, causing migration to the urban centres that developed near the mining sites. These townships became multi-ethnic environments where communities hailing from different regions within and outside Katanga had to live and work together. In this context ethnic associations were founded in the 1920s to organise mutual aid among migrants from the same region, as well as to safeguard common cultural values (Grevisse 1951: 312–13; Dibwe Dia Mwembu & Mutombo 2005: 36). The sense of ethnic consciousness was further stimulated by the colonial bureaucracy that categorised populations based on their ethnic affiliation when creating the territorial organisation of the state (Young 1965: 265–6). After World War II, ethnic organisations gained momentum from the initiative of so-called *évolués*, the new Congolese urban elites who had benefited from a relatively advanced education and had regular jobs.³ Aware of their special position but frustrated because their ambitions were ignored by the Belgian economic actors and administration, they became actively involved in ethnic and regional associations, some of which transformed into political parties in the run-up to the elections organised by the coloniser at the end of the 1950s (Bakajika 2004: 50–65).⁴ In Katanga, associations representing ‘autochthonous’ groups (*originaires*) united in the Confédération des Associations Tribales du Katanga (CONAKAT) to counterbalance politically communities originating from other provinces (*non-originaires*), especially those from Kasai, who were well organised and won the communal elections of 1957 (Young 1965: 121–2; Gérard-Libois 1966: 14–16).⁵ The Belgians preferred working with labourers from Kasai, particularly Luba-Kasai, who were considered more docile than local inhabitants. As a result, they were able to climb the socio-economic ladder and were therefore resentfully scorned by ‘autochthons’ for being accomplices of the colonial power (Goossens 2000: 248). The ambition to regain control over Katanga’s economic and political space was at the heart of the foundation of CONAKAT and stimulated the awakening of a Katangan identity. To be able to achieve this ambition, the organisation adopted the federalist ideology: rightist colonists and Catholic missionaries supported the creation of CONAKAT, and UMHK funded the organisation, as it was believed that their interests would be better served in an autonomous Katanga than under a future centralist Congolese government (Young 1965: 494; Gérard-

Libois 1966: 61, 323; Dibwe Dia Mwembu & Mutombo 2005: 40–6).⁶ Disagreeing with its regionalist discourse, Association des Baluba du Katanga (BALUBAKAT) – representing Luba-Katanga – left CONAKAT to form a cartel with Association des Tshokwe du Congo, de l'Angola et de la Rhodésie (ATCAR) uniting Tshokwe, and Fédération des Associations des Ressortissants de la Province du Kasai (FEDEKA), the organisation of Kasaians in Katanga. This cartel aligned with the centralist party Mouvement National Congolais of Patrice Lumumba, the first prime minister of independent Congo (Gérard-Libois 1966: 27–9).⁷ CONAKAT leader Moïse Tshombe declared Katanga's secession immediately after Congo became independent on 30 June 1960, thus unleashing a civil war that separated North Katanga (politically dominated by BALUBAKAT) from the South (controlled by CONAKAT) (Bakajika 1997: 115–17). The central government lost its grip over events and Congo was plunged into chaos: chief of staff Mobutu Sese Seko neutralised the government in September 1960 and replaced it by a College of Commissioners. Patrice Lumumba was arrested and transferred to Katanga, where he was murdered with the alleged complicity of Tshombe's government, which was supported by Belgium (De Witte 1999: 234–77). The Katangan crisis revealed that ethnic and regional oppositions coincided with political cleavages: BALUBAKAT (Luba-Katanga) versus CONAKAT (dominated by Ruund), North versus South Katanga, unitary state versus federalism, and left-winged non-capitalist policy (BALUBAKAT) versus right-winged liberalism and neo-colonialism (CONAKAT) (Gorus 2000: 112).

Mobutu and the democratisation process

General Mobutu put an end to the First Congolese Republic in 1965 and established a one-party system together with Mouvement Populaire de la Révolution (MPR) to stop the political impasse caused by quarrelling ethnic parties (Gorus 2000: 113). At first, ethnic associations were prohibited, but were tolerated again in the 1970s as long as they confined themselves to social and cultural functions (Kabila 1994: 22–3; Vlassenroot & Büscher 2009: 60). The MPR was the supreme state organ in Zaïre, monopolising the political space and controlling all aspects of life, including associational life (Nzongola-Ntalaja 2002: 172–3).⁸ Mobutu's Zairianisation policy was based on the nationalisation of foreign companies to gain control over the economic sector,

enabling the redistribution of resources among political elites. Ethnic patronage networks became the link between state and society: they contributed to the consolidation of Mobutu's position of power, but also to institutionalised ethnicity (Vlassenroot & Büscher 2009: 56–7). On 24 April 1990, under pressure of the international community, Mobutu announced the end of the MPR state and reluctantly accepted the introduction of a multi-party system. Ethnic associations saw their chance and took part in the struggle for representation in the Sovereign National Conference, an institution created to prepare the country for political transition (Van Hoyweghen & Vlassenroot 2000: 106). Associations of Katangan 'autochthonous' ethnic groups were ideologically linked with Union des Fédéralistes et des Républicains Indépendants (UFERI), a new political party led by the Katangan politicians Jean Nguza Karl-I-Bond and Gabriel Kyungu Wa Kumwanza (Kabila 1994: 41–2; Bakajika 1997: 184–5). UFERI wanted to create an autonomous Katanga to be governed by 'autochthonous' Katangans, who were frustrated because Kasaïans held strategic positions in public companies and administrations in Katanga. To this end, it accused Kasaïans of abusing their positions to marginalise 'autochthons' economically, and organised their expulsion from Katanga (Bakajika 1997: 131–49; Rubbers 2006: 125–6). Mobutu applied a divide-and-rule strategy to maintain power, sowing discord among the opposition by playing UFERI off against Union pour la Démocratie et le Progrès Social (UDPS), Etienne Tshisekedi wa Mulumba's party that was supported by Kasaïans living in Katanga.⁹

After Laurent-Désiré Kabila's accession to power in May 1997, political parties were banned once again. The new president, a native of northern Katanga and a BALUBAKAT youth leader in the 1960s, created a Katangan network dominated by Luba-Katanga, appointing them to key positions in the army, the administration and the economy, and thereby taking control of the entire DRC (Gorus 2000: 122). With the re-initiation of the democratisation process and the prospect of elections in the 2000s, ethnic organisations again became active in Congolese politics.

‘AUTOCHTHONOUS’ AND ‘ALLOCHTHONOUS’ ASSOCIATIONS IN
A THREE-TIER SYSTEM

A typology of ethnic and regional organisations in Katanga

Before the promulgation of the law of 28 February 2015, determining the modalities of the installation of new provinces, the DRC was

divided into ten provinces and the capital Kinshasa.¹⁰ Provinces were subdivided into districts, districts into territories (*territoires*); *territoires* are composed of chiefdoms (*chefferies*) and sectors, themselves consisting of groups (*groupements*) encompassing several villages.¹¹ North Katanga included the districts of Tanganika and Haut-Lomami, whereas the South was composed of the districts of Lualaba, Haut-Katanga and Kolwezi. People from all Congolese provinces and from different regions within Katanga migrated in the course of the country's history to Katangan cities and organised themselves in associations. Two types can be distinguished: associations based on ethnic identity representing members of specific communities; and organisations based on provincial identity representing natives from one and the same province (some of these organisations regroup associations of the first type). My field research revealed the existence of ten provincial organisations in Katanga (Table I). Seventeen ethnic associations identifying with 'autochthonous' groups from Katanga compose the Fondation Katangaise (FONKAT) (Table II). Members of communities originating from other provinces are represented by COREKOR (East Kasai), COKASOC (Western Kasai), COSKI (South Kivu), CONOKI (North Kivu), SOREMA (Maniema), COREBAC (Bas-Congo), COREBAND (Bandundu), Okapi (Orientale) and Monano (Equateur). The top of the pyramidal system features Entente Inter-Provinciale (EIP), a formal umbrella organisation composed of provincial organisations, and symbol of the Congolese nation (Figure 1).

Organisational structure, membership and objectives

The constitutions of ethnic associations define the group they represent by referring to kinship, a common native language and/or region of origin. Generally the constitutions stipulate that all members of the ethnic community are 'by right' members of the association (*membres de droit*). This particular concept of membership tends to encompass the entire community of the association, even though only a portion of the members regularly participates in their activities. Ethnic associations mostly use *jus sanguinis* to determine membership: the majority of them require that at least one parent be a member of their community, some of them specifying that it must be the father. This means that individuals with parents of different ethnic backgrounds have the right to choose. One's ethnic identity can be the result of a rational choice that takes into account advantages and disadvantages of being

TABLE I
Provincial organisations in Katanga

Organisation	Represented province	Number of member associations
Fondation Katangaise (FONKAT)	Katanga	17
Coordination des Ressortissants des Communautés du Kasai-Oriental (COREKOR)	East Kasai	4
Communautés du Kasai-Occidental (COKASOC)	West Kasai	12
Communautés du Sud-Kivu (COSKI)	South Kivu	4
Coordination du Nord-Kivu (CONOKI)	North Kivu	3
Solidarité des Ressortissants du Maniema (SOREMA)	Maniema	—*
Communauté des Ressortissants du Bandundu (COREBAND)	Bandundu	—*
Communauté des Ressortissants de Bas-Congo (COREBAC)	Bas-Congo	—*
Okapi	Orientale	—
Monano	Equateur	—

*Organisations with subdivisions at territory (SOREMA) or district (COREBAND, COREBAC) level.

affiliated with a specific ethnic group.¹² In addition, some associations accept acquisition of membership through marriage or adoption. Membership of provincial organisations is granted to natives or their descendants of the province, but can also be acquired.¹³ This shows that ethnic boundaries are considered porous, permitting the formation or transformation of one's ethnic identity. The governance of the associations is structured hierarchically. Generally, there is a national committee located in Lubumbashi, and various subordinate executive committees in the cities (*villes*) and townships (*cités*) of former Katanga, as well as in the capital Kinshasa.¹⁴ In the cities, ethnic associations are represented by executive committees on urban, communal and, in some cases, neighbourhood levels. Buluba-i-Bukata (Luba-Katanga) and Sempya (Bemba and related groups), who represent large communities covering several *territoires*, have a more complex structure with subdivisions at this administrative level. The chairpersons of their national committees are elected according to a rotation system that permits the *territoires* to take turns in proposing eligible candidates. Additionally, associations have separate youth and women's divisions governed by their own committees. This organisational structure enables committee leaders to interact with their members in every layer of urban society, and local authorities can communicate with

TABLE II
Member associations of FONKAT

Association	Ethnic group	District of origin
Association socio-culturelle Bululai-Bukata (BALUBAKAT)	Luba-Katanga	Haut-Lomami, Tanganika, Kolwezi, Haut-Katanga
Association des Luba de Kongolo (LUBAKO)	Luba-Katanga	Tanganika
Association des Bakusu de Lubunda (ASBAKUL)	Kusu	Tanganika
Association des Basongye du Katanga (ASSOBAKAT)	Songye-Katanga	Tanganika
Association socio-culturelle Twibunge	Hemba	Tanganika
Association Luende	Holoholo, Kalanga	Tanganika
Association Muyaya	Yashi	Tanganika
Association socio-culturelle Bunvuano Bwa Batabwa	Tabwa	Tanganika, Haut-Katanga
Association socio-culturelle Sempya	Bemba, Lamba, Lala, Aushi, Zela, Lomotwa	Haut-Katanga
Association des Shila du Lac Moëro (ASHILAC)	Shila	Haut-Katanga
Association socio-culturelle Lwanzo Lwa Mikuba	Sanga, Yeke	Kolwezi, Haut-Katanga
Nsakwa ya Bakaonde	Kaonde	Kolwezi, Haut-Katanga
Association des Ndembu Frères (ASSONDEF)	Ndembu	Lualaba, Kolwezi
Regroupement socio-culturel Divar	Lunda (Ruund)	Lualaba
Mutuelle culturelle Kulivwa	Tshokwe	Lualaba
Association des Minungu	Minungu	Lualaba
Association Luena-Lovale	Luena	Lualaba

communities through the mediation of ethnic associations. Together with other civil society actors, ethnic associations can thus participate in the political decision making. Burgomasters and mayors are able to inform and consult local committees of associations; for example, when they have to announce administrative measures affecting the population, or want to raise public awareness about vaccination programmes or prevention campaigns against child marriage, they can appeal to them to transmit the message to their respective communities (Burgomaster, Kikula *commune* in Likasi city, 2014 int.; Mayor, Kolwezi city, 2014 int.). Members of executive committees are elected by a general assembly for a period defined by the association's internal rules. Associations usually also have a council of wise men, a consultative and arbitration body that mediates in case of internal discord and advises the executive committee about the association's objectives.

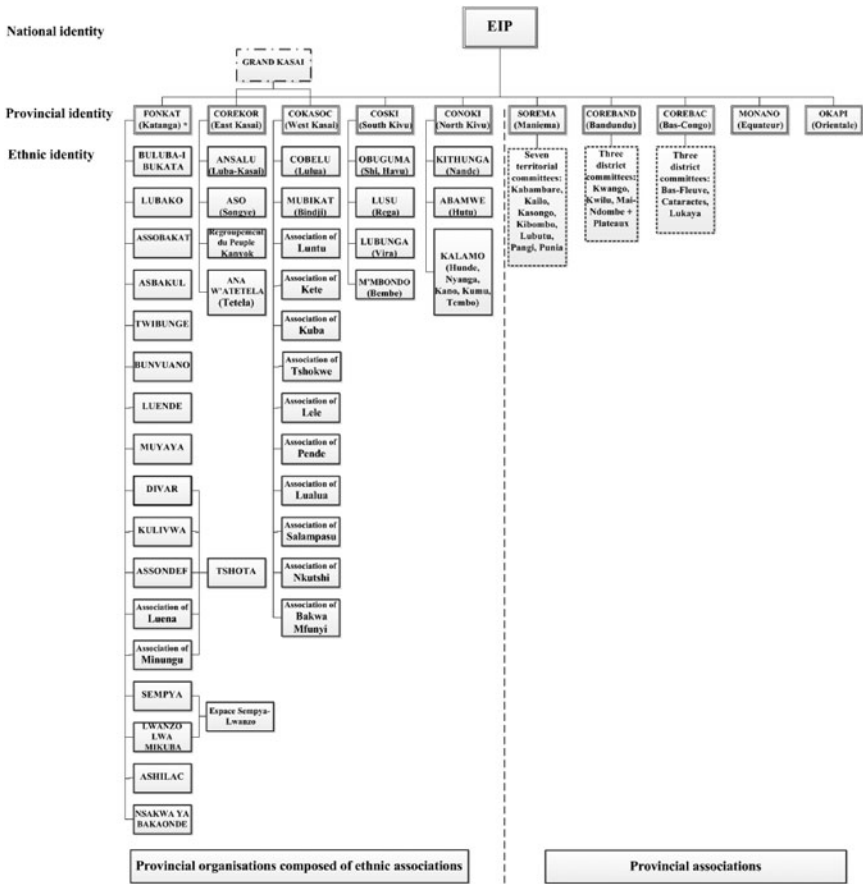


Figure 1 Multi-tier system with national, provincial and ethnic identity levels.
 * For details about FONKAT member associations, see Table II.

Traditional chiefs can have a seat on this council, and, as protectors of traditional values and customs, symbolically inaugurate newly elected executive committees. Being moral leaders of their community, chiefs are the links between the traditional rural population and the modern urban association. Executive committees can appeal to chiefs to mobilise the subjects they rule in order to engage the rural community in the association’s actions.¹⁵ Primary goals of ethnic associations are the promotion of cultural traditions and values and the organisation of mutual aid amongst members (e.g. offering material support to poor families in case of sickness, death or marriage), in order to reinforce the internal cohesion within the group. Ethnic associations also endeavour to

contribute to the development of the region of origin. Social, cultural and developmental activities are supposed to be funded by means of regular contributions from members, and by donations and legacies. Due to harsh economic conditions in present-day DRC, members cannot pay their contributions, which means that associations suffer from chronic cash shortage. The intention to establish a system of mutual aid based on a solidarity fund remains largely unfulfilled. To remedy this, occasionally fundraising is organised among elite members of the community, enabling them to build a personal clientele. Elites of the community (ministers, members of parliament, company directors) often lead the associations (e.g. Kulivwa is chaired by a minister, Buluba-i-Bukata by a mining company director), and constitute the important category of honorary members: they enhance the perception of prestige of the association, and are supposed to meet the moral obligation of taking care of their community. They are called upon to assist families in distress, provide jobs and fellowships or lobby for local development:

The objective of mutual aid is not really achieved because members do not pay contributions as they should. Everything rests on the shoulders of the representatives, of a company director ... I belong to the Tshokwe community. The community says 'we need him, nobody else' ... So they want me as their representative. What can I do in return for these people? For example, their children move into the city to study, but they are broke ... When they arrive, the chairman or the secretary of the association advises them to contact the representative. When they visit me and tell me that they were sent by the association, I take action. We help them pay for their schooling.
(Member of provincial parliament, 2013 int.)

This way structural mutual aid is reduced to ad hoc interventions based on charity, with those in power assuming the role of benefactors. In their power positions, elites can selectively decide who gets help or which development project they will sponsor.

Provincial organisations are led by executive committees whose members are elected by means of a rotation system that allows member associations or regional subdivisions to take turns providing the chairperson. They primarily defend economic and political interests of communities of the province they represent, and mediate disputes between member associations. COREKOR and COKASOC were created by Kasaians to join forces against the policy favouring 'autochthons' after the violent events of the 1990s.¹⁶ FONKAT has been actively defending the right of Katangans to benefit from Katanga's natural resources and also promoting the employment of 'autochthons' in

their own province by exerting pressure on the human resources departments of the local government and of companies to nominate 'autochthonous' Katangans.¹⁷ When FONKAT is aware of job vacancies, member associations are asked to look for eligible candidates within their communities. Provincial organisations also play a mediating role in the process of integrating communities through their presence in the EIP organisation.

EIP was created in 2003 in Kinshasa in order to re-build the Congolese nation after years of war by promoting solidarity between different communities and by mediating inter-community conflicts.¹⁸ There is an EIP committee in each DRC province, composed of members of executive committees of all provincial organisations who work in that province. The Lubumbashi committee organises monthly meetings for the communities to exchange ideas.

The complexity of the Katangan associational system has been increased by strategic alliances between two or more ethnic associations. The associations representing communities from the former Lualaba district (Divar, Kulivwa, ASSONDEF, Association des Minungu and Association Luena-Lovale) constitute the Group of Five, also known as Tshota. Although these groups are culturally close to each other (e.g. they use cognate vernaculars), their mutual understanding is not always good. During the years of struggle for independence ATCAR, the political organisation of Tshokwe, allied with BALUBAKAT and FEDEKA against CONAKAT, which was dominated by Ruund. Tshota was created to reconcile the five communities and to cultivate solidarity among them so as to reinforce their position in the struggle for the economic development of Lualaba. Members of Lwanzo Lwa Mikuba (Sanga) and Sempya (Bemba) have banded together in Espace Sempya-Lwanzo to elaborate common policies.¹⁹ Lwanzo has regarded this alliance as a political instrument to defend Sanga interests in the district of Kolwezi against members of Tshota communities, who migrated to Kolwezi to work in the mining industry.

Politicisation of ethnic associations

Since the reintroduction of multi-party politics, personal political ambitions seem to have relegated the associations' primary objectives to the background. More and more, ethnic associations are serving the selfish ambitions of their leading members who seek access to political power (Kizobo 2011: 5). A member of parliament put it this way:

‘Politicians give donations according to their own needs ... They use these associations for electoral purposes, political purposes. And it stops there. Once they are elected, they want nothing more to do with the ethnic associations’ (Member of national parliament, 2013 int.). A Sempya member explained:

We have seen that things have changed since the elections. Politicians use the associations for political ends. They want to make use of their grass-roots connections ... Since then, it is no longer about mutual aid, about fraternity. It’s changed; now it is about politics. Since then, our associations have started to lose their cultural values.

(Member, Sempya, 2013 int.)

That politics are never far away is strikingly illustrated by the example of Sempya. At the end of 2005, Sempya chairman Jean-Claude Muyambo Kyassa was removed from office by an internal coup and replaced by the wealthy businessman Moïse Katumbi Chapwe (*Quiproquo* 30.1.2.2005; *L’Etendard* 31.1–6.2.2006). Barrister Muyambo supported the political movement Coalition des Démocrates Congolais of Pierre Pay-Pay, a presidential candidate from North Kivu. In view of the presidential elections of July 2006, the association’s council of wise men thought Katumbi, a member of Joseph Kabila’s party Parti Populaire pour la Reconstruction et le Développement (PPRD), would be a more reliable chairman to strengthen Sempya’s position in the president’s camp.²⁰ Katumbi was appointed governor of Katanga in 2007. During the electoral campaigns, ethnic associations mobilised their members to vote for their preferred candidates. These candidates, members of the upper class of the community, stimulated the local mobilisation by showing off their generosity. A Kulivwa member confirmed that ‘politicians in this country use ethnic associations for political goals ... Politicians consider the ethnic community as their electoral constituency. They are nothing without their constituency. To convince voters, they donate T-shirts, bicycles, agricultural products’ (Member, Kulivwa, 2011 int.). In the run-up to the elections of November 2011 Edmond Mbaz-a-Mbang, *ministre près le gouverneur* of Katanga, main sponsor of Divar and candidate for the national parliament, started an urbanisation project and a broadcasting station in his constituency; he also donated motorcycles to local chiefs (*La Fraternité* 21.1.2011).²¹ The late Augustin Katumba Mwanke, one of the most influential members of Sempya, was a member of parliament with business connections in the mining industry and a close collaborator of President Kabila. He supported the construction of houses, a hospital, an airport and a

radio/TV station in his native village Pweto (*Quiiproquo* 13.4.2012). During the campaign of 2011 he received the full support of Sempya and was elected in the constituency of Pweto. Ethnic associations compete with each other for positions near the summit of the system, expecting to gain benefits from lobbying activities. But political ambitions can also trigger internal rivalry and induce factionalism. Examples are Sempya and Buluba-i-Bukata, who incorporate multiple ethnic groups and/or territorial constituencies, some of which feel politically neglected by their association's national committee. Some Luba-Katanga from Kongolo *territoire* in Tanganika seceded from Buluba-i-Bukata to start LUBAKO, which was approved for FONKAT membership. Members of Shila, an ethnic fishing community living near Lake Moero in Haut-Katanga, created ASHILAC, which is also recognised by FONKAT (Shila are Bemba-speakers who can simultaneously be members of ASHILAC and Sempya) (Table II).

DYNAMICS OF THE MULTI-TIER SYSTEM: THE RELATIVITY OF
AUTOCHTHONY AND HOW TO STRIKE A BALANCE BETWEEN
OPPOSITION AND RECONCILIATION

The DRC is qualified as a weak state, unable to provide adequate public services and goods to its citizens (Trefon 2010: 702). As a result of precarious economic conditions and political instability, the relationship between several communities in Katanga has been strained, deteriorating sometimes into open conflicts. Ethnic associations and provincial organisations can either incite or moderate these conflicts. The next paragraphs demonstrate how identities in the DRC shift in the context of changing socio-political and/or economic environments, revealing the relativity of 'autochthony', and how these altering conditions can cause new frictions between associations.

The importance of the provincial identity

After the violent events of the early 1990s, the opposition between Kasaïans and Katangans has been mitigated as a result of several political events. In 1995, governor Kyungu Wa Kumwanza was replaced by the moderate Ngoie Mulume. In 1996, Laurent-Désiré Kabila started a rebellion against Mobutu, relegating the conflict between Katangans and Kasaïans to the background. Once he became president, Kabila prohibited political parties and used a nationalist discourse in an attempt to

unite the Congolese populations (Dibwe Dia Mwembu 2006: 126). Many Kasaians returned to Katanga and recovered their properties. However, people originating from other provinces continued to experience difficulties in finding work in local administrations and public services. Board members of their associations asserted that this is the result of an employment policy prioritising Katangan 'autochthons'. A Luba-Kasai leader described the importance of provincial identity as follows:

It has diminished, but I would be lying if I said that it is over ... Here in Katanga employment is available but not for Kasaians ... This mentality has weakened, but it is still present in the people's minds, just not with the same intensity as before ... probably with the same intensity, but less visible.

(Committee member, ANSALU, 2014 int.)

In periods of political tension, dissensions between communities are manipulated to political ends. In the run-up to the presidential elections of 28 November 2011, Tshisekedi, leader of the opposition party UDPS, started his campaign with a public rally in Lubumbashi in July 2011. Kyungu Wa Kumwanza, speaker of the Katangan parliament, president of the party Union Nationale des Fédéralistes du Congo (UNAFEC) and honorary member of Buluba-i-Bukata, had advised Kasaians in May 2011 to leave Katanga and to register for the elections in their own provinces (*Le Potentiel* 6.6.2011).²² Tshisekedi's rallies took place without incidents after governor Katumbi called for tolerance. The same day, FONKAT issued a declaration stressing that Katangans had complied with 'the line of conduct recommended by Fondation Katangaise' and had 'respected the fundamental principles of democracy and republican values'. The declaration was meant to prevent violent incidents after Tshisekedi's speech (Committee member, FONKAT, 2014 int.). Nonetheless, on 4 and 5 November 2011, clashes between UNAFEC and UDPS supporters occurred in Lubumbashi. Katumbi made an appeal for peace to the party leaders, and asked the chairman of EIP to convene a meeting of leaders of the provincial organisations to discuss the situation. A joint declaration was prepared on 8 November 2011 and a message to the communities in Katanga was broadcasted in several languages. The declaration was unequivocal:

We condemn in the strongest terms the incidents of the past days in Lubumbashi, incidents which resulted in several wounded persons and destruction ... Therefore, united as one person, we make a solemn and heartfelt plea to our communities for peace, agreement and love, and remind

each of our members to abstain from any resentful, offensive, provocative, humiliating and partisan behaviour.

This joint effort to avoid escalation of violence between communities demonstrates the importance the local government attached to the mediating role of EIP in inter-group conflicts.

Redefining the 'other': northerners versus southerners

When Kasaians left Katanga in the early 1990s, abandoning their properties and jobs, the redistribution of vacant positions among 'autochthonous' Katangans caused new friction. People from the industrialised south felt disadvantaged by those from the agrarian north. Luba-Katanga in particular were accused of being too greedy (Dibwe Dia Mwembu & Mutombo 2005: 108). Since 1991, five of the seven governors of Katanga have been Luba-Katanga. The same assessment can be made for directors in the provincial administration (ICG 2006: 6). This predominance of northerners frustrated many southerners because Lubumbashi, the seat of the provincial government, is located in their southern Haut-Katanga. Southerners sometimes called the North the 'useless' Katanga, and blamed Luba-Katanga for using their positions to profit from the southern mineral riches. The 'autochthony' discourse was transferred to the sub-provincial level, creating the still existing dichotomy between northern and southern 'autochthons', which flared up now and then, especially when regional balances were at stake in questions of employment and development of infrastructure. Governor Katumbi is a Bemba through his mother and a powerful member of Sempya. In May 2010, Luba-Katanga elites demanded in an open letter that Katumbi be removed from office, as they suspected him to have inequitably spent the provincial budget for the rehabilitation of infrastructure in northern Haut-Lomami and Tanganika.²³ They accused him of disregarding the regional balance when partitioning positions in government, public administration, companies and financial management. The youth division of Espace Sempya-Lwanzo evaluated the situation in the opposite way. In November 2010, they accused Katumbi of disadvantaging his own people under the pretext of fighting tribalism: they asserted that Haut-Katanga was the only district in the DRC not governed by 'autochthons', because 'Sempya-Lwanzo' elites did not defend their community's interests.²⁴ Tensions between Sempya and Buluba-i-Bukata peaked already in January 2010, shortly after a broadcast interview with Jean-Claude Kazembe

Musonda, co-founder of Espace Sempya-Lwanzo and Member of Parliament, and the publication of a manifesto in which he defended the Congolese decentralisation (Kazembe Musonda 2009).²⁵ The Buluba-i-Bukata youth section responded by means of an incisive open letter, pleading unequivocally for the unity of Katanga. The letter also described Bemba and Lamba as ‘low, illiterate people’ suspected of ‘recruiting mercenaries to destroy the Luba-Katanga’. Sempya’s youth division promptly responded with a letter, emphasising that ‘Katanga is ours, and nothing and nobody will change that, especially not Katangans from secondary regions who left their places of origin for their own benefit’, and urgently requesting the proclamation of Haut-Katanga province (both letters were published in *Quiproquo* 5.1.2010). FONKAT stepped in and convened a general assembly. Negotiations among the parties involved enabled the assembly to ease the tension between the two communities. A resolution was adopted, prohibiting youth divisions of associations to involve the media in inter-community disputes without having consulted FONKAT in order to resolve a problem (Committee member, FONKAT, 2014 int.).

Redefining the ‘other’: Lwanzo versus Tshota

The controversy about decentralisation in the DRC and the question of regional balance in Kolwezi created another ‘autochthony’/‘allochthony’ dichotomy – this time at the district level. The prospect of the merger of mineral-rich, industrialised Kolwezi district and agrarian Lualaba district to create new Lualaba province has been a sticky problem for Lwanzo Lwa Mikuba, who consider the Sanga as ‘autochthons’ of Kolwezi. According to their oral tradition, Sanga mastered the art of copper casting long before the Belgians arrived in the area. Lwanzo has contended that Sanga are underrepresented as employees in international mining companies that operate on their ancestral lands.²⁶ In an attempt to remedy this situation, they have been putting pressure on human resources executives of these companies by sending them letters deploring the alleged discrimination, requesting negotiations and organising protest marches (CEDEMOL 2011, 2012).²⁷

If they had been unable to get their own province, Lwanzo would have preferred to merge with Haut-Katanga because of the cultural traditions Sanga share with ethnic groups from that district. Their opponents in the debate were members of Tshota communities who hail from

Lualaba but live and work in Kolwezi. Lwanzo contended that Sanga are marginalised in their own region by Tshota. Tshota accused Lwanzo of tribalism for wanting their own province and argued that a Lualaba province without Kolwezi is not economically viable (Kovijaan 2007: 54). A televised interview in May 2012 with a local member of Divar was perceived as an insult to Lwanzo because it was suggested that Luba-Katanga and Lunda were the only real ethnic communities in Katanga, all other groups being subgroups.²⁸ Lwanzo addressed a letter to the mayor of Kolwezi city asking for her intervention, and listing their grievances against Tshota:

The exclusive control over the large majority of politico-administrative positions in the District by those originating from Lualaba ... The control in public and private companies over the majority of strategic functions, especially in human resources ... at the expense of other Congolese, in particular Sanga ... The abuse of media, to the point of distorting history and reality about autochthony.²⁹

The mayor organised a meeting with FONKAT and involved the director of the prosecution of the Kolwezi High Court, who advised a reconciliation mediated by FONKAT. FONKAT seemed unable to unblock the situation: according to Lwanzo, FONKAT was powerless in Kolwezi due to pressure exercised by Tshota, constituting 45% of the members of the FONKAT general assembly (Committee member, Lwanzo, 2014 int.). The incident was symptomatic of the conflict between Lwanzo and Tshota regarding the economic and political consequences of decentralisation: FONKAT refrained from taking a position in this matter, because modalities of the decentralisation process were still under discussion at the national level (Committee member, FONKAT 2014 int.).

The Sun City peace agreement of 2003 provided a transitional government pending general elections. It was proportionally composed of President Kabila's PPRD, rebellion movements, the political opposition and the civil society. The mayoralty of the city of Likasi was awarded to Rassemblement Congolais pour la Démocratie and acting mayor Idesbald Petwe Kapande (PPRD), a Sanga, had to be replaced by Hélène Yav Nguz from the Ruund community. As Sanga consider themselves as 'autochthons' in Likasi, the local Lwanzo committee disagreed with Yav Nguz's nomination. Tshota made an appeal to FONKAT, who asked the national Lwanzo committee to convince their Likasi division that the dispute was about a presidential ordinance exceeding ambitions of ethnic groups. They also involved Governor Kisula Ngoy, who

entrusted Sanga chief Pande with the task of explaining the political decision to his community. This way Yav Nguz could enter office.

CONCLUSION

Ethnicity, however elusive, is and will remain an important aspect of culturally heterogeneous African societies, an aspect that certainly cannot be ignored in the context of democratic processes. Ethnic associations, initially founded by migrants for socio-cultural purposes, have reinforced ethnic consciousness in modern African cities. Membership is principally conferred by imagined kinship, emphasising the importance of common language, cultural traditions and descent. Since the wave of democratisation in the 1990s, these associations tend to behave as lobby groups, mobilising the community's solidarity for political ends. For local politicians they serve as 'a perfect basis for mobilisation', while the associations consider these politicians 'as the best protectors of the interests of their members' (Van Hoyweghen & Vlassenroot 2000: 106–7). Elites rely mainly on their ethnic group for electoral support to gain access to the state, particularly when political parties lack ideological differences (Berman 2010: 25–6). In the context of a state unable to deliver public goods and services, leaders of ethnic associations deem it indispensable to be represented as an ethnic group in the centres of power, to increase their amount of leverage in order to serve their communities in terms of redistributing scarce resources. Ethnic associations have become vehicles of belonging, employing autochthony discourses by claiming that 'autochthons' have the right to be prioritised when it comes to benefitting from their own soil's riches. In Katanga they adapt easily to changing political and socio-economic realities by inventing alternative 'autochthony'/'allochthony' dichotomies, redefining boundaries of their 'own soil' and emphasising ethnic, sub-regional or provincial identities, dependent on the situation. The idea that individuals can adopt different identities concurrently or at different time points fits into the constructivist view, conceiving 'ethnic identities as malleable and constituting registries from which people can draw according to the circumstances' (Englebert & Dunn 2013: 74). Provincial organisations like FONKAT are continuing their activities notwithstanding the fact that due to the constitutional decentralisation, the provinces they represent no longer exist and are replaced by smaller ones which territorially correspond with former districts. However, it is conceivable that in the longer term, new provinces will

form the basis for the creation of new organisations, which might invent and consolidate new identities and eventually be a catalyst for the emergence of new ‘autochthony’/‘allochthony’ dichotomies. Initially created to protect the most vulnerable group members, ethnic associations legitimise ethnic identities by officially representing their communities and communicating in this capacity with local authorities. They try to influence the distribution of spoils through political and lobbying activities, and end up enhancing tensions between communities in Katanga. It is in this perspective that one must see the potential creation of new organisations: to defend provincial interests they might support candidates originating from the new provinces for the legislative elections of 2016. In this context it is worth mentioning that ordinary members have the impression that with the reintroduction of a multi-party system, their associations became much more involved in political competition, using social interests of their community as a pretext. To put it differently, both moral ethnicity and political tribalism can be drivers of these associations’ behaviour. In view of the struggle for power, the central question is how to avoid political tribalism and ethnic violence prevailing over moral ethnicity. Katangan ethnic associations constitute a pyramidal three-tier structure, reflecting ethnic, provincial and national identity levels, and providing forums where they meet and reconcile with one another in case of inter-community disputes. It is an organisation where ethnic differences can be negotiated and ethnic communities can integrate, enabling the switch from ethnic exclusiveness to national inclusiveness, from zero-sum competition to positive-sum collaboration. Being part of a system that has the potential to promote integration and conciliation, makes ethnic associations more credible members of civil society, where they can contribute to a viable democracy together with local authorities. In its current manner of functioning, the system seems only effective at confining acute flare-ups of disagreement. It is rather weak when complex socio-economic and political interests are at stake: strategic alliances between associations can paralyse decision-making. Ethnic cleavages coincide with oppositions over modalities of decentralisation, or more fundamentally, over the territorial organisation of the DRC; however, seeking compromise and collaboration could be important steps toward conflict resolution. I suggest that the efficacy of the system would benefit from a structural preventive approach within a permanent framework of multilateral consultation between ethnic associations and authorities, which may serve as a model for other multi-ethnic societies, where autochthony discourses tend to dominate the political debate.

NOTES

1. A lack of ideological differences between political parties in many African countries left regional or ethnic identity as the main reference frame for the electorate (Van de Walle 2003: 304–5).
2. Data were collected between February 2011 and November 2015, and interviews were performed with the EIP chairman, members of all provincial organisations, and of ethnic associations representing communities from Katanga (Buluba-i-Bukata, Divar, Kulivwa, Lwanzo Lwa Mikuba, Bunvuano Bwa Batabwa, Sempya, ASHILAC, ASSOBAKAT), Bandundu (Eyor), East Kasai (ANSALU, ASO), Western Kasai (MUBIKAT), South Kivu (Obuguma) and North Kivu (Kalama, Kithunga) provinces. Twenty-eight ordinary members and 52 board members were interviewed.
3. The Belgian Congo's school system was in the hands of Catholic missions, which focused on primary education, neglecting secondary and higher education. *Evolués* were typically employed as low-level clerks in the colonial administration or as primary school teachers, positions without any career growth opportunities (Young 1965: 197–200).
4. In the 1950s, the colonial administration stimulated the creation of large regional organisations, composed of ethnic associations, which formed the basis for party formation (Verhaegen 1970: 394–5).
5. Congolese cities (headed by mayors) are subdivided into communes (headed by burgomasters) and neighbourhoods (*quartiers*).
6. UMHK was a subsidiary of the Belgian financial group Société Générale.
7. When the Europeans arrived in Central Africa the term 'Luba' referred to the pre-colonial Luba Empire. With the creation of Kasai province in 1933 Luba-Kasai became administratively separate from Luba-Katanga (Turner 1993: 596). Notwithstanding their cultural relationship, Tshokwe were traditionally hostile to Ruund, who dominated CONAKAT (Gérard-Libois 1966: 28).
8. In accordance with Mobutu's authenticity ideology aiming to introduce a new Zairian identity, the country's name was changed from 'Congo' to 'Zaire'.
9. Nguza Karl-I-Bond was prime minister of Zaire from 25.11.91 to 15.8.92, when he was replaced by Tshisekedi Wa Mulumba; Kyungu Wa Kumwanza was appointed governor of Katanga in 1991.
10. The Constitution of the DRC of 18.2.2006 prescribes a decentralisation of power and the installation of twenty-five provinces (and the capital Kinshasa) with substantial political and fiscal autonomy: former districts are converted into new provinces (Katanga province is split into Haut-Katanga, Lualaba, Haut-Lomami and Tanganika).
11. *Chefferies*, encompassing one homogeneous community, are headed by traditional chiefs; sectors are composed of several independent communities and are administered by public officials.
12. Citizens with one parent belonging to a Katangan ethnic group and the other to a community from another province preferred to adopt the Katangan identity because this was economically and politically more advantageous in Katanga.
13. COREBAC has accepted membership of individuals who are not originally from Bas-Congo but have lived there prior to their migration to Katanga.
14. Lubumbashi (former capital of Katanga and henceforward the capital of Haut-Katanga province), Kolwezi and Likasi are *villes*; administrative centres of *territoires* and former districts are called *cités* (semi-urban entities). Committees in Kinshasa lobby the central government to defend the interests of their remote communities in the province of origin. Moreover, Buluba-i-Bukata, the association of Luba-Katanga, has a special representative to the presidency (this position is held by Jean-Claude Masangu, former governor of the Central Bank of the DRC).
15. Chiefdoms, *groupements* and villages are ruled by traditional chiefs. The traditional authority is recognised in the Congolese constitution.
16. Both organisations occasionally act together under the name Grand Kasai.
17. FONKAT executive members asserted that they respect the constitutional break-up of Katanga, but will nevertheless continue their activities because all ethnic groups represented by FONKAT are present in Lubumbashi.
18. Laurent-Désiré Kabila overthrew Mobutu with the military support of Rwanda and Uganda. Kabila turned against the Rwandans because they became too influential in his government. The resulting devastating war was ended in 2003 with the Sun City peace agreement.
19. Sanga inhabit former Kolwezi district and Haut-Katanga. They created their own association Lwanzo, but feel related with other groups of Haut-Katanga who are united in Sempya.

20. Joseph Kabila, presidential candidate in 2006 and considered a Katangan because his father Laurent-Désiré Kabila was a Luba-Katanga, was supported by 'autochthonous' ethnic associations. He became president of the DRC after his father was murdered in 2001.

21. The *ministre près le Gouverneur* is the right hand of the governor in the provincial government who, among other things, maintains relationships with the provincial parliament, liaises between the governor and the ministries, and assists the ministers.

22. UNAFEC, member of the coalition Majorité Présidentielle that supported Kabila's candidacy, recruits mainly among Luba-Katanga, whereas UDPS still has many supporters among Kasaians.

23. Open letter to Governor Katumbi, Lubumbashi, 18.5.2010 (*Quiproquo* 8.6.2010), referring to the budget for the rehabilitation of hospitals, schools, bridges, government buildings and roads. The authors argued that Katumbi changed the budget after it was approved by the provincial parliament in order to disadvantage the northern districts.

24. Open letter to Governor Katumbi, Lubumbashi, 3.11.2010 (*Impact News* 25.1.2011).

25. Luba-Katanga disagreed with the decentralisation, fearing that 'their' Haut-Lomami and Tanganika provinces would be marginalised due to a lack of industrial development (Gobbers 2012: 274).

26. Lwanzo Lwa Mikuba, 'Resolutions of the first conference of traditional authorities in the region of Tenke-Fungurume', Lubumbashi, 17/18.3.2008.

27. In 2009 Lwanzo started a campaign to increase by 50% the number of local Sanga employees at Tenke-Fungurume Mining, one of the largest copper and cobalt producers in the DRC, through an ongoing dialogue with the company's management.

28. Lwanzo Lwa Mikuba, 'Internal report on the meeting of the security council and FONKAT on 7.6.2012 at the city hall of Kolwezi', 9.6.2012. Divar uses the denominations Ruund and Lunda interchangeably, referring to the historical Lunda empire, and pretends to represent the Lunda cultural space including the Tshotu communities, who, according to the Ruund tradition, originate from Kapanga *territoire* in Lualaba.

29. Lwanzo Lwa Mikuba, letter to the mayor, Kolwezi, 11.5.2012.

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