A City Constructed by '*des gens d'ailleurs*'. Urban Development and Migration Policies in Colonial Lubumbashi, 1910–1930

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RESÜMEE

Die Gründung der Stadt Lubumbashi (damals Elisabethville) kann als geopolitischer Akt der belgischen Regierung verstanden werden, um ihren Anspruch auf ein mineralreiches Gebiet zu sichern und den britischen Einfluss aus dem Süden zurückzudrängen. Doch die erste und bis zum Ende der 1920er Jahre einzige Eisenbahn, die Lubumbashi mit der Außenwelt verbunden hat, blieb weiterhin ein wichtiger Vektor für den Zustrom von Waren, Menschen, Ideen und Praktiken aus dem Süden.

Dieser Artikel kartiert die Siedlungsmuster der ‚*second rate whites*' (Griechen, Juden …) im europäischen Stadtzentrum auf Grundlage der Grundbucharchive und zeigt so, wie die ‚*gens d'ailleurs*' (Menschen von anderswo) auf Rassenkonzepten beruhende Trennungen von Bevölkerungsgruppen in Lubumbashi verwischt haben. Obwohl die Kolonialbehörden räumliche Strategien entwickelt hatten, um den Zustrom von Zuwanderern zu kontrollieren, um ihre Siedlungsgewohnheiten zu kanalisieren und die Interaktion zwischen segregierten Gruppen einzudämmen, trugen diese Mittelgruppen dazu bei, Lubumbashi als ‚weltoffene' Stadt auszuprägen.

A nationalist project or a cosmopolitan city?

Although the Belgian king Leopold II had put a claim on the Katanga region in 1884–1885 during the famous Berlin Conference,[1] the territory would only become officially part of the *État Indépendant du Congo* (É.I.C.) a few years later, in 1891, after a period of intense Belgian and British mining prospections, which had demonstrated the economic

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1   B. Fetter, The Creation of Elisabethville, 1910–1940, Stanford 1976, pp. 13-17.

potential of the region.[2] As noted by several authors, the choice of erecting the future city of Lubumbashi in the southern part of Katanga in 1910, only two years after the transfer of the E.I.C. to the Belgian government,[3] should be understood as a geopolitical strategy of the latter to control the British influences coming from Rhodesia (the current Zambia and Zimbabwe) and South Africa, in particular as a result of the construction of a railroad coming from these southern regions.[4] As this railroad became Katanga's first and main link to the outside world till the late 1920s, the influx of people, goods and ideas it engendered was both a crucial vector of the city's early development[5] and a threat to the very strategy of turning Lubumbashi into a 'Belgian' colonial city. Since its foundation, the city had indeed stronger ties via this railroad to cities like Bulawayo and Salisbury, and even further to Cape Town (South Africa) or Beira (Mozambique), than with Boma or Léopoldville (today Kinshasa), the successive capitals of the Belgian Congo. Already in the 1910s prominent figures of the Belgian colonial establishment emphasized the crucial importance of a 'national' railroad that would allow the transportation of mineral resources to the Atlantic coast via a trajectory completely falling within the boundaries of the colonial territory. However, this became only possible in the late 1920s with the realization of the track of the so-called *Chemin de fer du Bas-Congo au Katanga* (B.C.K). Yet, even then the railway line connecting Katanga with the port city of Lobito in Portuguese Angola, known as the Benguelian axis, offered a more plausible alternative in terms of efficiency.[6]

Situated in 1910 at the extremity of a railroad network covering Southern Africa, Lubumbashi thus witnessed a strong Anglophone influence. The first newspapers were bilingual (French / English) and English was a common language in everyday parlance well into the early 1920s.[7] The railway moreover facilitated important migration flows to the young and promising mining city resulting in a very heterogeneous population. Since its early days, English, Greek, Jewish and Italian communities were prominent components of *Lushois* society and at the end of the 1940s approximately 30% of the city's white

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2   For a synthesis of the period of the É.I.C., see: I. Ndaywel è Nziem, Histoire générale du Congo: de l'héritage ancien à la république démocratique, Brussels 1998. On the suppression of M'Siri and the seizure of Katanga, see among others R. Cornevin, Histoire du Zaïre des origines à nos jours, Brussels 1989, pp. 102 ff.

3   Up until 1908, the colonisation of Central Africa was an operation directed by the Belgian king and a small committee of industrials and military officials.

4   See among others: B. Fetter, The Creation of Elisabethville (note 1); B. De Meulder, Kuvuande Mbote. Een eeuw koloniale architectuur en stedenbouw in Kongo, Antwerp 2000, pp. 73-76.

5   S.E. Katzenellenbogen, Miner's frontier, transport and economic development, in: P. Duignan and L.H. Gann (eds.), Colonialism in Africa, 1870–1960: the economics of colonialism, Cambridge 1975.

6   Georges Moulaert already stressed the importance of building the 'national' track of the *chemin de fer du Bas-Congo* in 1913, see G. Moulaert, Problèmes coloniaux d'hier et d'aujourd'hui (pages oubliés). 38 années d'activité coloniale, Brussels 1939, pp. 65-66. See also C. Metcalfe, Railway Development of Africa, Present and Future, in: The geographical journal, 47 (January 1916) 1; R. Williams, The Cape to Cairo Railway, in: Journal of the Royal African Society, 20 (July 1921) 80.

7   R. Cornet, Terre Katangaise. Cinquantième anniversaire du Comité Spécial du Katanga, 1900–1950, s.l. 1950, pp. 181-182. For an analysis of colonial language in Katanga, see J. Fabian, Language and Colonial Power. The Appropriation of Swahili in the Former Belgian Congo 1880–1938, Berkeley 1986.

population were of non-Belgian origin.[8] Consequently, contemporary observers at times described Lubumbashi as a 'cosmopolitan' town.[9] Moreover, the heterogeneous nature of Lubumbashi's urban population was not limited to the white community. In order to respond to the lack of local labour, large enterprises had been implementing a recruitment policy resulting in major migration flows of African workers coerced to come initially from Rhodesia and South Africa and, from the 1920s onwards, also from different regions in Congo, Rwanda or as far as Senegal.[10]

As the prospering mining city was initially attracting flocks of white adventurers and treasure seekers, contemporary (Belgian) sources often described it as a 'Far West'.[11] In one of the first discussions on the topic of architecture in the Belgian Congo, published in *Tekhné*, a leading professional journal of the time, the frenzied nature of Lubumbashi's early development is clearly articulated:

> *In Congo, at lot is going to be built; there is in fact, already a feverish construction activity in the extreme south, in Katanga* […] *At this very moment, the development of Congolese cities is occurring, at least for the case of Katanga, in a way similar to South-African, Australian and Californian cities: very quickly and very… horribly!*[12]

The author of the article lamented not only the emergence of an urban landscape of questionable quality, but also the absence of Belgian architects and planners. The making and shaping of Lubumbashi, he noted, was an affair of '*des gens d'ailleurs*' ('people coming from elsewhere') who constructed '*à la diable*' ('in a devilish manner').[13] Indeed, up until the 1920s, Italians and Greeks dominated the city's building industry.[14] But the railroad not only created an incoming flow of people. As *Lushois* urban memory reminds us, building materials and construction expertise also were imported from the South.[15]

8   N.A. Van Malleghem, Livre IV. L'Urbanisation d'Élisabethville, in: Ministry of Colonies (ed.), Urbanisme au Congo, Brussels 1950 [s. p.].

9   When in the mid-1910s the Benedictine Fathers were discussing the construction of a cathedral in Lubumbashi, they conceived the project as a "monument that will raise admiration among this cosmopolitan population of blacks and whites". Amicus, Une cathédrale au Congo, in: Bulletin des Missions, V (1913–1914), 250-252. In 1931, at the occasion of the International Exhibition, Jean Sepulchre, editor-in-chief of the local publication *Essor du Congo* presented the city of Lubumbashi as a kind of "Babel" which despite its heterogeneous population was pervaded by a "hospitable harmony", Essor du Congo, Album edited on the occasion of the International Exposition of Elisabethville, May 1931, s. p.

10 J. Higginson, A working class in the making. Belgian colonial labor policy, private enterprise, and the African mineworker, 1907–1951, Wisconsin 1989; C. Perrings, Black mineworkers in Central Africa: industrial strategies and the evolution of an African proletariat in the Copperbelt, 1911–41, London 1979.

11 For information on the composition of the population of Lubumbashi, see the yearly editions of the *Bulletin Officiel* of the Ministry of Colonies, as well as J. Sohier, Quelques traits de la physionomie de la population européenne d'Elisabethville, Brussel 1953.

12 A. De Hertogh, Page coloniale. Pour commencer, in: Tekhné, 1 (1911) 1, 10-11. Unless otherwise noted, all translations are ours.

13 A. De Hertogh, Page coloniale (note 10), 11.

14 N. Esgain, La vie quotidienne à Elisabethville (1912–1932): émergence d'une culture urbaine (unpublished master dissertation), Université Catholique de Louvain 1997, pp. 25-27.

15 J. Lagae and S. Boonen, Un regard africain sur le paysage urbain d'une ville colonial belge. Architecture et urbanisme dans le 'Vocabulaire de ville de Elisabethville' d'André Yav, in: B. Jewsiewicki, D. Dibwe dia Mwembu and R. Giordano (eds.), Lubumbashi 1910–1920. Mémoire d'une ville industrielle, Paris 2010, pp. 107-124.

As a railroad city, Lubumbashi was part of a Southern African sphere of influence since its very foundation. The Belgian colonial government took a rather ambivalent position vis-à-vis the migration flows coming from the south. While the resulting cosmopolitan nature of the city's society was often seen by Belgian observers as a threat to its colonial project and the claim on the Katangese territory in particular, local authorities understood only too well that the influx of 'foreigners' was crucial for the city's development and the sustainability of its economy, as small trade and commerce was to a large extent an affair of Italians, Greeks and Jews. In that respect, the case of Lubumbashi forms a poignant illustration of what Frederick Cooper once described as the 'ambiguous structure' of empire in relation to networks and discourses, namely that the empire is

> *possibly too big, too hard to control, too ambiguous in its moral constitution to be immune from widespread mobilization* […]. *In the twentieth century, the empire tried to exclude some forms of cross-regional networking – pan-Arabism, for instance – while allowing others, such as Indian traders in East Africa.*[16]

People and goods from all over the world were present in the railway and mining town of Lubumbashi, and the big question was in how far they could be kept in check. In this paper, we discuss how on the one hand colonial authorities, both those of the *métropole* and those residing locally, tried to deal with migration flows attracted by economic opportunities and made possible by the rail connections. On the other hand, we reconstruct how these migrants or '*gens d'ailleurs*' were able to create a space of manoeuvre within the Belgian colonial city and mark their presence in the urban landscape. We argue that focussing on the making and shaping of Lubumbashi's built environment from the perspective of how urban migration was subject to forms of 'spatial governmentality' allows us to rewrite the narrative of a city that has so far been predominantly depicted as a Belgian colonial mining town.[17] The confrontation between official spatial policies of control and the opposing migrants' settlement strategies shows how global connectedness was locally put in practice by the '*gens d'ailleurs*'. Lubumbashi indeed cannot be understood as a neatly segregated city, even if its spatial configuration was clearly laid out according to the common practice of colonial urban planning to create a dual city, with separate quarters for colonizers and colonized.

Selecting migrants

Belgian colonial authorities generally did not aim for settler colonialism. The colonisation in the Belgian Congo was focused first and foremost at economic exploitation,

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16   F. Cooper, Networks, moral discourse, and history, in: T. Callaghy, R. Kassimir and R. Latham (eds.), Intervention & Transnationalism in Africa. Global-Local Networks of Power, Cambridge 2001, p. 38.

17   For examples of recent studies investigating issues of spatial governmentality in colonial cities, see S. Legg, Spaces of Colonialism: Delhi's Urban Governmentalities, Oxford 2007; K. Prashant, The Making of an Indian Metropolis. Colonial Governance and Public Culture in Bombay, 1890–1920, Ashgate 2007; L. Schler, The strangers of New Bell: immigration, public space and community in colonial Douala, Cameroon, 1914–1960, Pretoria 2008; G. Myers, Verandahs of Power. Colonialism and Space in Urban Africa, New York 2003.

with the appointment of Belgians via short-term contracts used as an instrument to discourage them to settle permanently in the colony.[18] However, in the first years of Lubumbashi's existence, as well as in the other parts of the Katanga region, the colonial government tried to create a stable Belgian urban population as a counterpart to the many non-Belgian European migrants arriving in the city.[19] A propaganda program was set up and financial help was given to potential candidate-colonists.[20] The approach was also reflected in local politics. In line with the example of the British South-African colonies, local administrators in Katanga were eager to have a completely independent administration, permitting them to communicate directly with the metropolitan authorities instead of having to pass via the general governor in Boma, the then administrative capital city of the Belgian Congo. Yet a real elective communal administration was never established in order to prevent white, non-Belgian residents from participating actively in local politics.[21] The efforts did not result in an immediate effect and the number of Belgians willing to settle permanently in the Colony only augmented slowly: in 1912, the Belgians only constituted 40 % of Lubumbashi's total European population and it would take until 1919 until a majority of 60 % was attained.

Parallel to strategies of promoting a Belgian settlement, migration flows were strictly controlled by the provincial Migration Service who introduced a socio-economic selection among Europeans willing to settle in the city. The Belgian colonial authorities were convinced that the establishment of a white 'middle class' had to be avoided; only well-educated colonials were accepted and from the 1920s onwards an explicit policy was implemented to hinder access to the colony for so-called 'poor Whites'. In the mid-1930s the then general governor Pierre Ryckmans still legitimized this policy in philanthropic terms, stating that 'the "poor whites", "*blancs pauvres*", are pariahs […]. Sending emigrants to Congo in order for them to reconstruct their lifes equals condemning them to the destiny of the natives. Those who criticize the Government not to commit to such a [migration] policy cannot have another excuse than their ignorance.'[22] Yet, this policy was in fact as much triggered by the social unrest that had shaken up the mining industry

18   Only in the early 1950s, the metropolitan authorities spoke of a '*politique de présence*' that did no longer exclude an important growth of the Belgian population in the colony, provided that this growth took place 'in pace with Congo's needs'. In 1951, the journal *Pourquoi Pas ?* published two interviews on this '*Politique de presence*' with the then minister of Colonies A. Dequae and his two predecessors R. Godding and P. Wigny. Cf. Pourquoi Pas? (1951), 3234-3235; 3480-3481 and 4036-4037. On immigration policies in the Belgian Congo during the interwar years, see also V. Foutry, Belgisch-Kongo tijdens het Interbellum: een immigratiebeleid gericht op sociale controle, in: Belgisch Tijdschrift voor Nieuwste Geschiedenis, 14 (1983) 3-4, pp. 461-448.

19   Rapport du Comité Spécial du Katanga. Exercice 1920, Brussels 1921, p. 41.

20   Travel to the Colony as well as lodging and provision for the fifteen days following the arrival in Katanga were offered for free by the colonial authorities. On the migration politics in the first years of the city's existence, see the work of Anatole de Bauw, director of the provincial *Service de l'Industrie et du Travail* and responsible for the creation of the *Service de Migration*: A. De Bauw, Le Katanga: notes sur le pays, ses ressources et l'avenir de la colonisation belge, Brussels 1920, p. 156.

21   See for instance : 34. Ajournement pour le Katanga de la création d'institutions communales proprement dites, in: Africa Archives Brussels (hereafter A.A.), RACBGG (910), 2ᵉ session 1920 (347). Procès-verbal de la 5ᵉ séance, 27 April 1920.

22   Petits colons, in: Allô! Congo! Chroniques radiophoniques par Pierre Ryckmans, Brussels [1934?].

in Rhodesia and South Africa a decade earlier. The migration legislation also implicitly contained a selection along racial lines. Access to the Colony was prevented to all persons unable to read or write in any European language.[23] Moreover, this clause could be reinforced by the first article of the same law stating that people could be classified as 'undesirable' because of their 'style of living'. As such, the legislation applied in Katanga targeted 'Arabs', 'Muslims' and 'Asians', as was the case with similar laws introduced in other regions of Belgium's Africa.[24] Throughout the colonial period, an increasingly strict control was also enforced on non-Belgian Europeans willing to enter the Belgian Colony. In order to assure an effective control of the passengers of the new railway lines between Katanga and the Atlantic Ocean, the 'Benguelian axis' coming from Lobito in Angola and the '*voie nationale*' of the B.C.K. coming from Matadi, responsibilities were given to train chefs. Also hotels had to keep a visitors list up to date.[25] However, controlling and channelling migration is not just a matter of legislation. Control of flows had to be negotiated on the ground. Therefore, the modalities of global mobility were a local affair, and, so we will argue, also a spatial one.

Spatializing urban segregation

In 1910, Émile Wangermée, vice governor of the Katanga province, and Halewijck, representative of the *Union Minière du Haut-Katanga (U.M.H.K.)*, designed the first urban plan for Lubumbashi's European quarter in collaboration with the Swiss engineer Itten and the architect Mortier.[26] The basis of the plan, a grid pattern of orthogonal *Avenues* dividing the city's 450 hectares in equal blocks of 250 by 120 meters, is said to have been based on city patterns applied in centres like Bulawayo, the city in Southern Rhodesia along the 1910 railway closest to Lubumbashi.[27] The grid testifies to the economic logic underlying the spatial organisation of the urban territory. Organizing the city according

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23   Décret réglant la police de l'immigration, August 8th, 1922, art. 2.
24   For the explicit anti-Islamic motivation of these criteria, see: G. Castryck, Moslims in Usumbura (1897–1962). Sociale geschiedenis van de islamitische gemeenschappen van Usumbura in de koloniale tijd, unpublished PhD dissertation, Ghent University 2006, p. 95.
25   These measures were defined in the ordinance of the general governor on September16th, 1925. A series of fiches filled in by hotel managers with information on the different hotel guests are held in the Africa Archives: cf. A.A., GG. 1.213 Fiches d'occupation successives habitations colonies blocs 28-41 Élisabethville (1951-58). Applications to enter the territory submitted by Belgian colonists were deliberately favoured over those from non-Belgian migrants. A.A., GG. 20.434 Police territoriale Élisabethville immigration et immatriculation; GG. 13.733 État-civil Élisabethville Service Population Blanche immigration; A.A., GG. 17.299 Police Élisabethville expulsions 1930/34 immigration et immatriculation 1943/45.
26   See the map 'Plan Parcellaire d'Élisabethville', C.S.K., scale 1/5.000, Élisabethville, November 22th, 1910, in: A.A., Cartes (295).
27   Émile Wangermée was familiar with these cities in Southern Africa and their spatial layout of which he spoke in a favourable way. See: É. Wangermée, Grands Lacs Africains et Katanga. Souvenirs de voyages, Brussels 1909; B. Fetter, The Creation of Elisabethville (note 1), p. 29. In his analysis of Lubumbashi's urbanisation in the 1910s, Bruno De Meulder mentions, among others, a 1913 quote of F. Vander Elst that underlines the relation with Bulawayo's plan '*en forme de grille*'. For an urban history on Bulawayo, see: T. Ranger, Bulawayo Burning. The Social History of a Southern African City, 1893–1960, Woodbridge 2010.

to lots enabled the *Comité Spécial du Katanga* (C.S.K.)[28] to valorise the 900 parcels in an efficient way. As Bruno De Meulder has already suggested, early urban planning practice in Lubumbashi should be considered first and foremost as a real estate operation.[29]

Only one year after Lubumbashi's foundation in 1910, an African quarter emerged next to the European '*ville*', from which it was separated by a zone of 170 meters wide.[30] A spatial policy was introduced in order to assure the segregation of the city along neat racial lines, with a prison being erected in this in-between space.[31] In spatial terms, however, a neat binary structure of the urban form only became explicit a few years later, with the implementation in the 1920s of a so-called '*zone neutre*' or '*cordon sanitaire*' of 500 meters wide, separating the European city from the newly built native town *commune Albert Ier*. In line with the discourse on colonial urban planning elsewhere,[32] this urban operation was argued for on the basis of concerns of sanitation and hygiene,[33] but it was also underscored by a growing anxiety among the city's European population for what it considered a risk of 'promiscuity' between the two urban communities.[34] This neat spatial segregation would significantly structure the development of the city's urban form in the following decades to the point that of all Congolese cities, Lubumbashi is one of the most telling cases to demonstrate the segregationist nature of Belgian colonial urban planning.

Colonial authorities thus vigorously attempted to keep the population mix in this bustling town segregated. However, Lubumbashi's spatial organisation cannot be reduced to a too simplistic binary scheme of a divided colonial city. While a strict control of the migration flows by the Migration Service was intended to ensure a social-economic selection within the European urban population, land legislation and the monopoly of the C.S.K. over the land market provided additional tools for implementing a social stratification within the urban grid as well. Even before the final urban plan for the city was finished, a juridical fundament for the land tenure system was established in the form of a sale and renting legislation that already informed negotiations when the first parcels in the city were bought or rented.[35] The strict requirement to erect a construc-

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28   The C.S.K.'s headquarters, the president and the high administration's offices, were situated in Brussels, Belgium. In Lubumbashi, the committee was represented by a general director, accompanied by an administration, which has progressively expanded during the colonial period.

29   B. De Meulder, Kuvuande Mbote (note 4), 77-78.

30   See the maps of the city's first African quarter: Cité indigène d'Élisabethville, C.S.K. scale 1/2.500, [1910s, update 1921], in: A.A., GG. 15.840 Hôpital des Noirs/Indigènes à Élisabethville. Adjudication et plans (1920-22); Élisabethville. Plan cadastral, scale 1/2.000, Élisabethville, 10 November 1914, in: A.A., Cartes X 5634.

31   F. Grévisse, Le centre extra-coutumier d'Élisabethville: quelques aspects de la politique indigène du Haut-Katanga industriel, Brussels 1951.

32   For a discussion of the practice of urban segregation on a worldwide scale in these years, see C. Nightingale, Segregation. A Global History of Divided Cities, Chicago 2012.

33   Contemporary sources, for instance, explain the zone's width in relation to the maximum flight radius of the mosquito transmitting malaria. R. Hins, L'Urbanisme au Katanga, in: Essor du Congo, (May 1931), s.p.

34   N. Esgain, Scènes de la vie quotidienne à Elisabethville dans les années vingt, in: J.-L. Vellut (ed.), Itinéraires croisés de la modernité. Congo belge (1920–1950), Tervuren/Paris 2000, 57-70.

35   Terres. Règlements, ventes et locations. Pièces de 23/1/01 au 8/6/11, Instructions pour la vente et la location des terres, in: Archives of the Royal Museum for Central Africa (Tervuren, Belgium) (hereafter R.M.C.A.), Funds of

tion in durable materials on the parcel within six months after the land transaction was meant to encourage a rapid development of the young mining city. By defining specific directions about the desired destination of each parcel, the C.S.K. furthermore introduced a functional zoning in Lubumbashi's quasi-uniform grid pattern. Moreover, each functional zone was to be differentiated by its formal appearance, which was determined by a particular building legislation. On the *place Royale*, all public buildings related to the colonial power were situated: the pavilion of major Wangermée, the court house, the headquarters of the *Banque du Congo belge*, and the *Cercle Albert et Élisabeth*, meeting place *par excellence* for the colonial elite.[36] The *place Royale* thus constituted an administrative and political node, situated on the symmetrical axis of the European town's grid, which itself was bordered to the east by the governor's palace and the cathedral.[37] A commercial zone, the streetscape of which was defined by one-storey buildings with arcades, was created next to the railway station. The remaining parts of the urban grid constituted the residential zone, characterized by parcels consisting of a one-family house surrounded by a large garden.

By fixing and permanently adapting the prices of building lots, and at times even artificially creating scarcity of lots for sale, the C.S.K. had the power to not only stimulate but also redirect the spatial development within the European quarter. In the early years following the city's foundation, for instance, the center of commercial activity had spontaneously developed along the *Avenue du Moero*, one of the most intensively used streets since it connected the railway station and the site of the U.M.H.K.factory. The C.S.K. soon intervened by directing the main commercial activity to the *Avenues de l'Étoile du Congo* and *Royale* in order to strengthen the status of the geometric centre of the urban grid. The *Avenue Royale* was the only street diagonally cutting through the uniform grid plan, linking the railway station to the *place Royale* where the colonial power was reflected in the construction of representative buildings. By supporting the construction of large commercial buildings and hotels, and by strategically locating the post office on the *Avenue Royale*, this street was transformed into one of the city's most prestigious commercial and animated axes.[38]

the C.S.K. (hereafter C.S.K.), inv. 3, n°579, dossier 563-1. The legislation was revised in 1920 and 1949, cf. Terres. Rapports pour l'année 1910, Rapport sur la marche des opérations du C.S.K. depuis le 11 septembre 1910, 3 [General director C.S.K.], in: R.M.C.A., Funds C.S.K., inv. 12, n° 232, Terres. Rapports pour l'année 1910, 1911, 1912.

36   The initial court house, erected on the lot occupied nowadays by the town hall, has been replaced between 1928 and 1931 by the actual building on the opposite lot. The construction of the town hall was only finished after 1960.

37   We have described the *Avenue du Katanga*, later also known as the *Avenue de Tabora,* elsewhere as the city's 'axis of power'. See J. Lagae, S. Boonen et. al., Des pierres qui (nous) parlent… Une histoire visuelle de la ville de Lubumbashi, in: S. Njami (ed.), Catalogue Rencontres Picha – 2ème Biennale de la Photographie et d'Art Vidéo, Lubumbashi 2010, Paris 2012, pp. 21-56.

38   The reports of the C.S.K. testify of this evolution. See for instance: Rapport du Comité Spécial du Katanga. Exercice 1920, Brussels 1921, p. 46.

Locating the '*gens de couleur*'

If we thus can divide Lubumbashi's European town in a representative, a residential and a commercial zone, the monthly reports of the general director of the C.S.K. to his president in Brussels, however, contain multiple references to the existence of a fourth 'distinct and clearly determined' zone which is not described in functional but rather in racial terms: 'Adjacent to the native quarter, we find the quarter of the coloured people, mostly traders of goods for natives.'[39] In Belgian colonial legislation, the term '*gens de couleur*' was commonly used to denote Italian, Greek and Portuguese retail traders who conducted business with both the city's African and European communities, but targeted especially an African clientele. Because of their status of small traders, their close commercial contacts with the city's African population and their willingness to learn and adopt local languages, practices and customs, colonial administration sometimes referred to them in internal communication as 'second rate whites'.[40] The African population regarded these traders as holding a different, more intermediary position than Belgian colonizers did.[41] So-called '*Indous*', i.e. migrants coming from British India, and '*arabisés*' were also counted among the '*gens de couleur*'. Colonial authorities often used the denomination '*asiatiques*' as a synonym, regardless of the particular origin and background of those described by this label. This particular colonial lexicon, then, demonstrates that the attitude of the Belgian colonial authorities vis-à-vis these migrant communities was not unlike that of French colonizers confronted with a Lebanese diaspora in West-Africa, members of which were commonly described as "interlopers of empire".[42] As such, these people were as much vectors of global connectedness in Lubumbashi as the U.M.H.K. was, since they facilitated interaction between people and exchange of goods from across the world.

'Second rate whites' were intermediaries between the black and white communities not only in social, but also in spatial terms. Despite its mainly commercial character, the zone for '*gens de couleur*' was not counted as part of the European town's commercial zone. Indeed, one of the rare existing maps of Lubumbashi's first African quarter demonstrates the existence of a specific quarter for them situated in the 170 meters wide zone separating the African and European quarter in the first ten years of the city's existence.[43] When racial segregation was reinforced in the 1920s by the creation of a new, more explicit '*zone neutre*', the existing quarter for '*gens de couleur*' was demolished and replaced by a number of particular zones located throughout the city. The extreme southern part of the

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39   Avant-projet de rapport général, in: R.M.C.A., Funds C.S.K., inv. 3, n° 548, Rapports généraux, rapports contentieux, rapports généraux publiés en Belgique. 546-54 : Rapports 1913–1923.

40   M. Lwamba Bilonda, Histoire de l'onomastique d'avenues et de places publiques de la ville de Lubumbashi (de 1910 à nos jours), Lubumbashi 2001, p. 28.

41   See the introduction of Antoine Lumenganeso in G. Antippas, Pionniers méconnus du Congo Belge, Brussels 2008.

42   Andrew Arsan, Interlopers of Empire. The Lebanese Diaspora in Colonial French West Africa, London 2013.

43   Cité indigène d'Élisabethville, Comité Spécial du Katanga, scale 1/2.500, [1910s, update 1921], in: A.A., GG. 15.840 Hôpital des Noirs/Indigènes à Élisabethville. Adjudication et plans (1920-22).

European quarter's commercial zone was delimited as a zone for 'coloured' detail retailers that, according to the C.S.K.'s annual reports, was to be separated from the 'official' commercial zone by the *Avenue du Moero*.

Several 1920s land deeds relating to the 'coloured' and 'white' commercial quarters demonstrate that land attribution was indeed first and foremost done along racial lines, as a special clause was included in order to control the border between both areas; it stipulated that a special authorization of the colonial administration was necessary to allow for a land transfer between two individuals one of whom was a 'coloured person'.[44] Three other so-called zones for '*gens de couleur*' were introduced in Lubumbashi's urban structure, each of them clearly separated from the European quarter. The first urban plans and the reports of the C.S.K. on the construction of the African quarter *Albert Ier* indicate that a zone for '*Hindous*' was situated next to parcels attributed to '*commerçants indigènes*' and '*évolués*' in areas touching the road that linked the African neighbourhood to the European town. *Lushois* urban memory informs us about two other zones for 'second rate whites', the quarters *Bakoa* and *de la route Munama*.[45] The quarter *Bakoa*, created in 1925, was a triangular zone situated relatively close to the eastern border of the European quarter, but separated from it by the industrial quarter and the railway line. The quarter's name bears a particular reference to non-Belgian communities, in particular the Indo-Pakistani population who, according to oral history, would have habited this quarter. Similarly, the quarter *de la route Munama*, situated along the extension of the street linking the European and the native quarter but separated from the latter by the railway line going towards Sakania and Southern Africa, is said to have been inhabited by mainly Greek and Jewish people.

While specific forms of trade, such as the selling of fish, were deliberately expelled from the city centre for pragmatic reasons,[46] there seems to be a more consistent pattern. On the basis of fragments of information drawn from different sources, one can indeed start to discern buffer zones inhabited mainly by '*gens de couleur*' located in between the European and African neighbourhoods, which add a layer to the spatial segregation in Lubumbashi's urban form, as they testify both of a colonial attempt to introduce a social stratification within the European community and of a policy of enforcing racial segregation through spatial distribution.[47] While the *Avenues de l'Étoile* and *Royale* offered more qualitative and luxurious products responding to the demands of the urban European

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44 Several land deeds contain the following passage: 'The terrain to which this registration certificate relates is sold under the strict condition that it will not be passed on to a member of the coloured community without prior consent of a representative of the *Comité Spécial du Katanga* or of one of his delegates'.

45 We were informed on this by members of the 'Mémoires de Lubumbashi'-research group at the University of Lubumbashi, in particular prof. Michel Lwamba Bilonda, prof. Donatien Dibwe Dia Mwembu and Serge Songa Songa.

46 In several reports of Lubumbashi's *Comité Urbain* we can find applications of so-called '*Hindous*' requiring permission to open trade houses and warehouses for selling fish in or near the Bakoa quarter.

47 Archival material does not allow to affirm firmly that these areas were actually planned by the local authorities as zones for 'second white rates', yet some fragmentary files, fieldwork observations and oral accounts provide convincing elements that these were indeed trade zones particularly occupied by Greeks, Italians and others.

population, the stores on the *Avenues Moero* and *du Sankuru* sold products destined to the city's African population, to the African domestic personnel living in the European quarter as well as to the inhabitants of the native quarter. The '*gens de couleur*''s commercial zone thus attracted the African population, while at the same time limiting the need – and opportunities – for Africans to circulate in the other parts of the European city.

The same local dynamics, however, can also be read in the opposite way. Not only the attempted control and containment from the side of the colonial authorities shaped the urban space, but also the agency of the '*gens the couleur*' to facilitate global connectedness, both in the form of their own migration and networks, in the form of the goods traded in their small shops, and in the form of intercultural contact with African people and languages.

As we discuss in more detail elsewhere,[48] the reality on the ground did not comply with the binary spatial strategies of colonial governmentality as prescribed in the *métropole*. Local authorities were, for instance, forced to be quite creative to provide Belgian colonists with an opportunity to settle in a context geared by strict guidelines. Reports of the C.S.K. demonstrate how Belgian colonists upon arrival in Congo were strongly privileged in their access to the real estate market.[49] More than once, however, the C.S.K. saw itself confronted with speculative transactions from Belgian residents who sought to take direct advantage of the opportunities they were granted.[50] Thereupon, workers' houses were constructed and rented at a very low price. Interestingly enough, the committee no longer provided such solutions on the best situated parcels in town, but for economic reasons rather opted for less favourable lots.[51] As a result Belgian settlers started to reside predominantly at the margins of the grid, rather than in its centre.

"Second rate whites" occupying the city center

At the same time that the streetscapes at the margins of the European town were developed, Lubumbashi's city centre was taking shape through the construction of a number of buildings that defined the new urban image of a colonial city as it was being presented in visual propaganda of the time under the label '*le Katanga ultra moderne*': the post office, the palace of justice, a cinema, and several hotels. What the official discourse more often than not veiled was that the city's centre became gradually occupied by non-Belgian migrants, large parts of which fell within the category of 'second rate whites'. The

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48   See our forthcoming PhD dissertation to be defended at Ghent University at the end of 2015, S. Boonen, Fixer, franchir et reconsidérer les limites. Gouvernance et développement urbain à Élisabethville coloniale (RDC).
49   Rapports sur la marche des opérations pendant le mois d'avril 1911, Élisabethville, 30 April 1911, 2, in: R.M.C.A., Funds C.S.K., inv. 12 n° 232.
50   Rapport circonstancie sur la marche des opérations concernant la location et la vente des terrains à Élisabethville. Mois de décembre 1910, 6-7, in: ibidem; letter of M. Scheyvaerts to the minister of Colonies, n° 12668, 19 July 1918, in: R.M.C.A., Funds C.S.K., n° 314 Société Immobilière du Katanga.
51   Rapport circonstancie sur les opérations du Service des terres pendant le mois d'août 1911, 4, in: R.M.C.A., Funds C.S.K., inv. 12 n° 232.

Greek community forms a telling case to discuss the rather ambivalent attitude of local authorities vis-à-vis this phenomenon.

Most of the Greeks that settled in Lubumbashi in the early days had worked on the construction of the railroad and succeeded to build up a sufficient solid community in the city that could take in new family members and relatives coming over from the regions of origin. Throughout the colonial era, the Greeks remained one of the city's largest non-Belgian European communities.[52] *Lushois* urban memory suggests that Greeks were confined to the so-called zone for '*gens de couleur*', to the extent that the zone has been called the '*zone grecque*' by several authors.[53] Reports of the C.S.K. further inform us on a initial mistrust towards the Greek population on behalf of the local authorities. Already in the year of the city's foundation, the general director of C.S.K. pronounced his concerns about the *immatriculation* of Greek migrants, which in his view would lead to the development of an instable urban population unable to fulfil the obligations that were being enforced on owners and renters:

> … *We have here a bunch of Greeks, Egyptians, and so forth, who were engaged to help construct the railway. They have been able to save enough money to rent a plot and build a house of adobe to establish a retail store, a shop where you can buy flour, for instance, or a bar. When the time frame to comply with the building ordinance [requiring to build in durable materials] will have come to an end, these individuals no doubt will abandon their businesses to go to Rhodesia or Southern Africa without us having any means to prevent them. We will then be obliged to demolish their shacks at our expense. We also have to consider the extension of the railway towards Kambove. All these individuals are contractors who change course according to shifting circumstances and regarding the registration and immigration services as they are currently organized, it will become very difficult for us to require them to fulfil their obligations as tenants.*[54]

Reports on land transfers inform us that transactions with certain Greeks considered 'little recommendable' were often labeled as 'speculative manoeuvers' and hence rejected, a decision that the director general described as 'favorable in view of an appropriate occupation of the city'. Interestingly enough, the documents reveal that there was a remarkable willingness to help financially other non-Belgian migrants as well as Belgians

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52   Only the British and Italian migrants outnumbered the Greek community. With its 124 members in 1923, the Greek community constituted 5,7 % of the European population (compared to 61,3 % Belgians, 13,5 % Italians and 13,5 % British), corresponding to 14,6 % of the non-Belgian European population ; after the economic crisis, in 1934, there were 102 Greeks in the city, i.e. 4,5 % of the city's European population (compared to 70,8 % Belgians, 15,2 % Italians and 6,1 % British), corresponding to 12,8 % of the non-Belgian European population; in 1951, there were 364 Greeks residing in the city, i.e. 4,3 % of the European population (compared to 77,1 % Belgians, 9,4 % Italians and 4,3 % British), corresponding to 18,8 % of the non-Belgian European population.

53   See, for instance, J.-C. Bruneau, Lubumbashi, capital du cuivre. Ville et citadins au Zaïre méridional , unpublished PhD dissertation, Bordeaux 1990, 376.

54   Rapport sur la marche des opérations concernant la location et la vente. December 1910 (note 33).

who, despite of being in the same financial situation as the Greeks, were considered 'honourable'.[55]

Nevertheless, the power of local authorities remained limited in practice. An analysis of the land deeds of Greek properties in Lubumbashi during the period 1910-1930 demonstrate that a large proportion of the Greek properties were situated outside the so-called zones for 'second rate whites'. Land deeds covering the European quarter reveal that in the first ten years of the city's existence, ten Greek stores were erected outside of the first zone for '*gens de couleur*'. After the introduction in the 1920s of a more neat spatial separation between the European and African quarters, there still existed a dispersed Greek occupancy within the former, even if several Greek properties were also situated in the newly designated 'coloured' buffer zone in the extreme south of the European quarter.

Despite its efforts, the C.S.K. thus failed in implementing a strict control of access to land. 'Coloured persons' with means at their disposal could present themselves at public auctions to acquire a parcel on a localization of their choice, and the C.S.K was unable to decline an offer on explicit racial criteria. Moreover, the C.S.K. was eager to make exceptions to the common guidelines, as for instance in the case of those businesses which were potentially promising for the urban economy and society as a whole. This explains the presence of some constructions built by the Greek community in the 'official' commercial zone. Greeks, for instance, ran several hotels that became crucial components of Lushois urban culture: the 'Hôtel Makris', which became the meeting place of Lubumbashi's Greek community, the 'Hôtel Central' and the 'Hôtel de Bruxelles', situated on the prestigious *Avenue de l'Étoile*.[56] The 'Théâtre Parthénon', situated along the *Avenue de l'Étoile*, near to the *Place de la Poste* was established in 1920 by a Greek citizen, Bombas.[57] It became one of the most frequented places in town.[58] Providing a diverse program appealing to a European clientele, the theatre constituted a crucial cultural and social venue for *Lushois* urban life during the interwar years. As one contemporary observer noted during a visit to the city in 1923, every evening its façade in Greek style was illuminated 'as those of the most beautiful movie theaters in Brussels'. Together with the Greek Orthodox Church that was built in 1956, the 'Théâtre Parthénon' formed a tangible reminder of the importance of Greeks in Lubumbashi's colonial society.

If the origin of the Greek presence in Lubumbashi should be traced to the construction of the railroad coming from the south, the acquisition of land by members of this com-

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55   C.S.K.'s local representative, Service des terres. Rapport sur la marche des opérations pendant le mois février 1911, 2, in: ibid.

56   In this way, the Greek community reinforced the important role it had already played in the hotel business since the city's creation. Indeed, the Greek Stratis G. Bombas established in 1910 one of the city's first hotels, 'Au jardin du Katanga', and transformed it in 1914 in the 'Hôtel Aristocratique'.

57   The exact location of the 'Théâtre Parthénon' has been found through our research in the funds of the Land Registration Service. See the land deed XIIf 77 of the parcel with communal number 37i on name of the *Banque Commerciale du Congo*, October 17th, 1919, signed by Dufour, in: Land Registration funds of the Katanga province, volume XIIf, folio 77, A.A.

58   G. Antippas, Pionniers méconnus du Congo Belge, Brussels 2008. The original building doesn't exist anymore. Nowadays, the parcel is occupied by the Banque Congolaise.

munity clearly demonstrates their long lasting impact on the making and shaping of the city, and their crucial role in sustaining the urban economy via small trade. One could make a similar argument for the Italian community, which from the 1920s onwards became a crucial actor in the construction industry. Lubumbashi also experienced a strong Jewish presence since the early days of the city's existence, yet the Jews presented a pattern of migration that is somewhat more complex as it shifted considerably over time, bringing in people of different origins, nationalities and social status over the years.

Lubumbashi, a land of promise?

The core of the Jewish community in Lubumbashi was composed of Ashkenazi originating mainly from the Russian empire and having passed through South-Africa and Rhodesia. After the establishment of the *Union Minière* in 1907, they crossed the Belgian-British border in order to settle near the mining sites.[59] Despite the Ashkenazi's quantitative superiority, a growing number of Sephardic Jews, coming mainly from the Island of Rhodes,[60] started to settle in Lubumbashi from 1911 onwards. Many had already lived in South Africa or Rhodesia for quite some time before entering Congo by rail.

When the C.S.K.'s local representative communicated his concerns to the committee's general director in Brussels regarding the difficulties Belgians met in their effort of settling permanently in the colony, he pointed out the difference with the two Jewish communities who both seemed to have succeeded in making their life in Katanga, even if they had a very different social status in *Lushois* urban society:[61] At one end, he made notice of the 'people who were accustomed to South-African life', who had an 'audacity' and a 'light-heartedness' which the Belgian candidate-settlers in his view lacked. He was thereby referring to Sephardic Jews (but he also mentioned in this respect Italians and Portuguese) who were attracted by the young promising mining city, and usually arriving with few or no means, and most often even lacking the necessary funds to return home in case of failure. Similar to the case of the Greeks, migration and settlement of the Sephardic community was as such largely made possible by private networks (family, relatives…) in which mutual aid (financial and social) and determination were main factors for success. Nevertheless, they launched themselves in the establishment of small businesses, put up with meagre funding or via credits obtained via relatives. At the other end of the spectrum stood those migrants, who 'have funds, and many of them have business in Rhodesia or South Africa, which makes things still easier for them.'[62] The

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59   Other important Jewish communities settled in Bulawayo (1894), Salisbury (1895) and Gwelo (1901). On the Jewish communities in Rhodesia, see: H. MacMillan and F. Shapiro, Zion in Africa. The Jews of Zambia, Londres/New York 1999.
60   At the time, the Island of Rhodes was a colony of Italy.
61   Terres. Rapport pour l'année 1910, 5, in: R.M.C.A., Funds C.S.K., inv. 12 n° 232.
62   Rapport sur les opérations du Service des terres pendant le mois d'août 1911 (note 49), p. 7.

Ashkenazi indeed very often possessed a certain capital, had good connections or were in service of large, mainly British, enterprises assuring the necessary financial support for their settlement in the city. Very often, they were able to establish large commercial businesses on the important commercial axes in the city centre.

A mapping of all the land purchases by the two Jewish communities spanning the period 1910–1930 reveals how from the very beginning these migrants occupied the most favourable and promising parcels in Lubumbashi. Only a limited number of properties were situated in the zones for '*gens de couleur*', while most were to be found across the whole commercial zone and even in the residential zone of the European quarter. The different social statuses of the two Jewish communities are also clearly reflected in the settlement patterns. The focal point of the purchases by Sephardi was clearly situated more in the southern parts of the urban grid, while the parcels belonging to the Ashkenazi could be found along the prestigious commercial axis of the *Avenue de l'Étoile du Congo* and around the *Place de la Poste* and *the Place Royale*. The importance of the presence of the Jewish community was furthermore marked by the construction in 1929 of a synagogue on a prominent site in the European city centre, on a square at the end of the *Avenue Tabora* and situated nearby the railway station. Designed by one of the leading colonial architects of the time, the building still stands today as an important reminder of the role of the Ashkenazis in *Lushois* urban society.

In this respect, it is somewhat ironic that the synagogue was built exactly at the time that Askhenazi presence in Lubumbashi would diminish significantly as a result of the 1929 worldwide economic crisis that hit the industrial province of Katanga hard. While in the beginning of the 1920s, the number of Ashkenazi purchases of parcels was growing steadily, no purchase was registered after 1929. As a result of the crisis, many wealthy Europeans (including Ashkenazi) left Lubumbashi, and the European population rate dropped from 4.170 persons in 1931 to 2.874 in 1935.[63] Not having the necessary funds to leave the country, however, many of the non-Belgian European communities (for example the Greeks or the Sephardic Jews) did not have another possibility than to stay and try, with the creation and help of local associations, to overcome the crisis.[64] If Lubumbashi became in the early 1930s a 'ghost city'[65] it nevertheless retained a certain 'cosmopolitan' feel.

63   See also: B. Fetter, The creation of Elisabethville (note 1); M. Bourla Errera, Moïse Levy, un Rabbin au Congo (1937–1991), Brussels 2000; J. Sohier, Quelques traits (note 9).

64   Following the example of Rhodesia's Greek community in 1923, the *Union des Hellènes du Congo Belge* was constituted under the presidency of Jean Tatalias, director of the Katanga Congo Motors. This organisation focused in particular on supporting members suffering from health conditions. In 1928, a Greek consulate was founded. In 1942-43, the association changed its name into the *Union Hellénique Orthodoxe d'Élisabethville*. Only in 1947, it was recognized by Belgium by Royal Decree. See: G. Antippas, Pionniers méconnus (note 56), p. 77.

65   J. Stengers, Combien le Congo a-t-il coûté la Belgique ?, Brussels 1957.

Lubumbashi as a "portal of globalisation"

A visit to the Jewish cemetery in Lubumbashi today provides a poignant reminder that the common narrative depicting the city first and foremost as an urban environment completely dominated by the mining industry needs at least some nuance. Of course, the Union Minière du Haut Katanga (later renamed Gécamines) played a crucial role in *Lushios* everyday life and it is thus no surprise that the notion of *Kazi* or paid labour occupies such a prominent place in local urban memory,[66] but as we have demonstrated in this contribution the city's landscape also very clearly testifies of the 'cosmopolitan' nature of its urban society. Despite the Belgian colonial policy of segregation, the '*gens d'ailleurs*' fulfilled a mediating role that facilitated exchange of goods and interaction between people from around the world. Rather than considering Lubumbashi as a Belgian colonial city, it makes more sense to recognize a 'portal of globalisation' in the cracks of the Belgian colonial attempts to socially and spatially control the town. Paraphrasing the characterization of 'portals of globalization', we can see at work how colonial authorities tried 'to channel and therefore control the effects of global connectedness' and how the presence in town of globally connected people challenged this attempted colonial order.[67]

This invites us to broaden the spectrum of agents that were crucial in making and shaping Lubumbashi's urban landscape. Its urban culture was the product of various spheres of influence, some coming from the metropole while others originated in the immediate vicinity, in nearby regions and colonies, in Southern Europe, India and beyond. The mobility and interaction between these spheres, both locally and over long distances, has in the end been at least as decisive as the Belgian colonial attempts to inhibit and curtail these exchanges, and contributed as much to the global connectedness of Lubumbashi as the *Union Minière* or the railway as such.

By presenting Lubumbashi as a city constructed by '*des gens d'ailleurs*', and discussing how Belgian colonial authorities responded to the flows of migrants whose presence was considered unsettling yet necessary to sustain the local urban economy, we comply with what Jean-Luc Vellut already noted years ago, in his critical review of Isidore Ndaywel's 1998 magnum opus *Histoire générale du Congo*, namely that we cannot write Congo's colonial history without taking into account its transnational and trans-local dimensions.[68]

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66 See in this respect the work of the Congolese historian Donatien Dibwe Dia Mwembu: Bana Shaba abandonnés par leur père : structures de l'autorité et histoire sociale de la famille ouvrière au Katanga 1910-1997, Paris 2001 ; Idem, Le travail, hier et aujourd'hui: mémoires de Lubumbashi, Paris 2004.

67 M. Middell and K. Naumann, Global history and the spatial turn: from the impact of area studies to the study of critical junctures of globalization, in: Journal of Global Studies, 5 (2010) 1, p. 162.

68 J.-L. Vellut, "Prestige et pauvreté de l'histoire nationale. A propos d'une histoire générale du Congo", in: Revue belge de philologie et d'histoire, 77 (1999), pp. 480-517.

Ill. 1.: Map of Lubumbashi/Elisabethville, situation 1920s, with an indication of the commercial zone and zones reserved for 'gens de couleur'. Drawing by Sam Lanckriet, Ghent University, 2015.
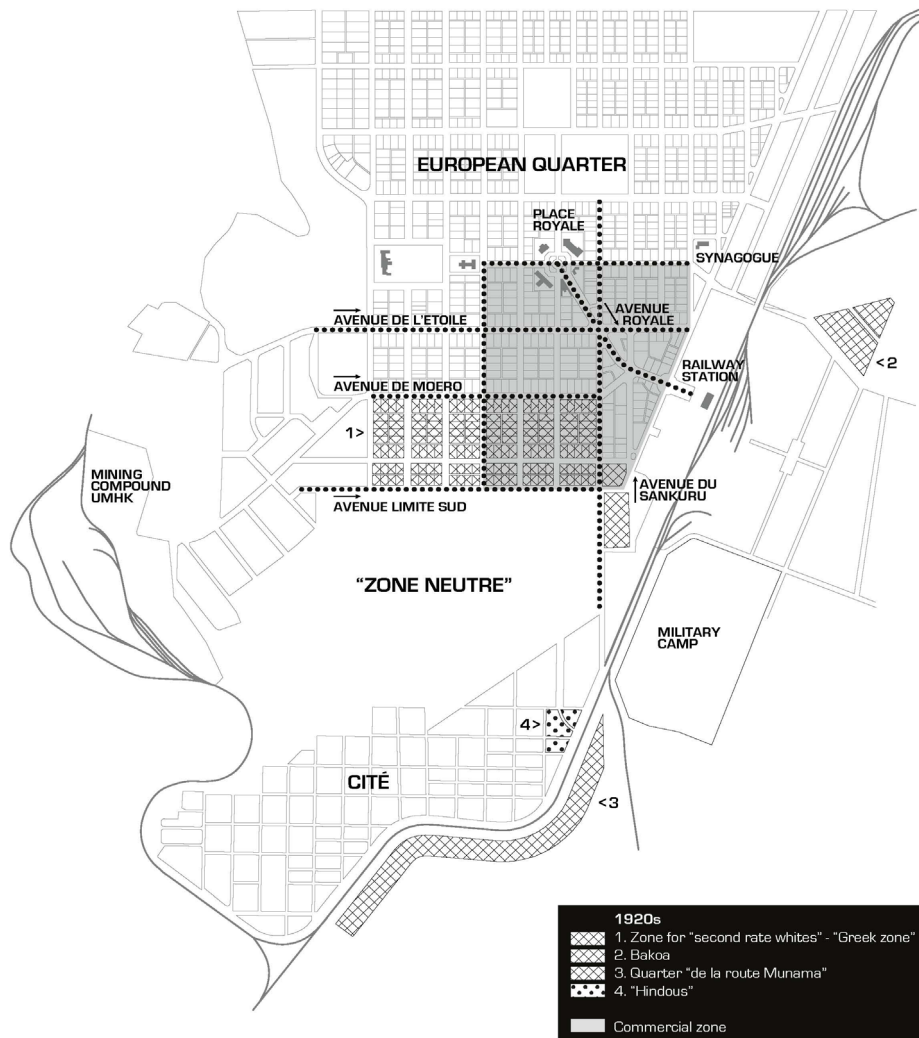
Ill. 2.: Mapping of properties of Greeks, Sepharades & Ashkenaze in Lubumbashi/
Elisabethville, situation 1920s. Drawing by Sam Lanckriet, Ghent University, 2015.

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