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# In memory of Patrice Lumumba, assassinated on 17 January 1961

- Features -

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**After a resounding victory in the first real elections in which the Congolese participated, Patrice Lumumba became Prime Minister of Congo from 24 June 1960 until his overthrow and imprisonment on 14 September of the same year by Colonel Joseph-Désiré Mobutu and his supporters. Mobutu then ruled the country, first in the shadow, then directly from 1965 until his overthrow in 1997.**

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[1] Colette Braeckman, « Congo La mort de Lumumba Ultime débat à la Chambre sur la responsabilité de la Belgique dans l'assassinat de Patrice Lumumba Au-delà des regrets, les excuses de la Belgique REPERES La vérité comme seule porte de sortie Van Lierde l'insoumis », 6 February 2002 <https://plus.lesoir.be/art/congo-la-mort-de-lumumba-noir-ultime-debat-a-la-chambre-t-20020206-Z0LGFG.html> (in French)

[2] Félix Roland Moumié (1925-1960), a leader of the anticolonialist and anti-imperialist struggle in Cameroon, was assassinated on orders from France in Geneva on 3 November 1960.

[3] Saïd Bouamama, *Figures de la révolution africaine*, La Découverte, 2014, 300 p.

[4] See the synthesis of Jean Van Lierde's intervention during a conference in Brussels in October 1995 in homage to Ernest Mandel <http://www.ernestmandel.org/new/sur-la-vie-et-l-oeuvre/article/dernier-hommage-a-ernest-mandel>

[5] Saïd Bouamama, *Figures de la révolution africaine*, La Découverte, 2014, p. 160-177.

[6] Philippe Decraene, "L'Afrique noire tout entière fait écho aux thèmes panafricains exaltés à Accra" in *Le Monde diplomatique*, February 1959 <https://www.monde-diplomatique.fr/1959/02/DECRAENE/22920>

[7] The Assassination Archives and Research Center, Interim Report: Alleged Assassination Plots Involving Foreign Leaders, III, A, Congo. [http://www.aarclibrary.org/publib/church/reports/ir/html/ChurchIR\\_0014a.htm](http://www.aarclibrary.org/publib/church/reports/ir/html/ChurchIR_0014a.htm) consulté le 15 janvier 2021

[8] Saïd Bouamama, *Figures de la révolution africaine*, La Découverte, 2014, p. 160-177.

[9] « Les aveux du meurtre de Patrice Lumumba », <https://www.thomassankara.net/les-aveux-du-meurtre-de-patrice-lumumba/>

[10] Eric Toussaint, *World Bank : A critical history*. Pluto, 2022, <https://www.cadtm.org/The-World-Bank-A-Critical-History>.

[11] The colonies for which the World Bank granted loans are, to Belgium the Belgian Congo, Rwanda and Burundi; to the UK, East Africa (including Kenya, Uganda and future Tanzania), Rhodesia (that became Zimbabwe and Zambia) as well as Nigeria, to which we must add British Guyana in South America; to France, Algeria, Gabon, French West Africa (Mauritania, Senegal, French Sudan that became Mali, Guinea-Conakry, Ivory Coast, Niger, Upper-Volta that became Burkina Faso, Dahomey that became Benin).

[12] KAPUR, Devesh, LEWIS, John P., WEBB, Richard. 1997. *The World Bank, Its First Half Century*, Volume 1, p. 685-686.

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[13] The fact that Belgium was the beneficiary of loans to the Belgian Congo can be deduced from a table published in the WB's 15th Annual Report for 1959-1960. IBRD (World Bank), Fifteenth Annual Report 1959-1960, Washington DC, p. 12.

[14] Article 92, see [http://polandpoland.com/treaty\\_versailles.html](http://polandpoland.com/treaty_versailles.html).

[15] SACK, Alexander Nahum, *Les Effets des Transformations des Etats sur leurs Dettes Publiques et Autres Obligations financières*, Recueil Sirey, Paris, 1927. p. 158.

[16] Source : *Treaty series*, no. 4, 1919, p. 26. Cited by Sack, p. 162.

[17] In 2013, I devoted a book to this figure: *The Life and Crimes of an Exemplary Man*, <https://cadtm.org/The-Life-and-Crimes-of-an-Exemplary-Man> Though anecdotal, the list of decorations awarded to Jacques De Groote is quite telling: he is *Grand Officier de l'Ordre de Léopold Ier* in Belgium, i.e. the second highest Belgian distinction; Mobutu decorated him with the *Palme d'or* in Zaire; he is also *Grand Officier de l'Ordre d'Orange-Nassau* (Luxembourg), he is bearer of the *Orden für Verdienste* in Austria and received the *Red Star* in Hungary.

[18] It is worth mentioning that at the height of his power, Mobutu had people call him "*Mobutu Sese Seko Kuku Ngbendu wa Za Banga*" (which means Mobutu the unstoppable warrior who goes from one victory to another).

[19] The Bank's historians wrote that in 1982 "*Lured by Mobutu's guile and promise of reform and by pressures from the United States, France, and Belgium, the bank embarked on an ambitious structural adjustment lending program to Zaire*" in Devesh Kapur, John P. Lewis, Richard Webb, *The World Bank, Its First Half Century, 1997 Volume 1: History*, p. 702.

[20] In 1978, the IMF sent Erwin Blumenthal to the Central Bank of Zaire to improve its operations. In July 1979, he resigned after receiving death threats from those close to Mobutu.

[21] Erwin Blumenthal, "*Zaire: Report on her Financial Credibility*", 7 April 1982, typescript, p.19.

[22] Mobutu even managed to intercept money before it actually reached the public coffers, as happened for instance with the \$5 million granted by Saudi Arabia in 1977 (Emmanuel Dungia, *Mobutu et l'argent du Zaire* (Mobutu and the money of Zaire), 1992, L'Harmattan, p.157).

[23] Steve Askin and Carole Collins, "External Collusion with Kleptocracy: Can Zaire Recapture its Stolen Wealth?" in *African Political Economy*, 1993, no. 57, p.77.

[24] L'ENTREPRENEUR. 1980. "The problem of Zaire's persistent external debt", n°11, December 1980, p. 44-47.

[25] The \$32 million corresponds to the debt that Belgium and the World Bank imposed on the Congo with the complicity of Mobutu's regime. As stated above, during the 1950s Belgium borrowed \$120 million from the World Bank to develop its colonial projects in the Belgian Congo. Belgium had only repaid part of this loan before the Congo gained its independence on 30 June 1960. The remaining amount (\$32 million) was passed on to the Congo when Mobutu established his dictatorship in 1965.

[26] Ibid, p. 347.

[27] NDIKUMANA, Leonce and BOYCE, James. 1997. *Congo's Odious Debt: External borrowing and Capital Flight*, Department of Economics, University of Massachusetts.

[28] Ibid, p.17.

[29] Ibid, p.18.

[30] FEB, 1986, p. 496-497.

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[31] The *Poupehan* group was a lobby made up of the main conservative political leaders in the Belgian Christian Social Party, who played a key role in the neoliberal shift. See [http://archives.lesoir.be/les-fantomes-de-poupehan-liberaux-et-fdf-veulent-enquet\\_t-19910917-Z04EPV.html](http://archives.lesoir.be/les-fantomes-de-poupehan-liberaux-et-fdf-veulent-enquet_t-19910917-Z04EPV.html)

[32] Alfons Verplaetse was the Governor of the National Bank of Belgium, and a member of the Flemish Christian Social Party.

[33] Wilfried Martens, the Christian Social Prime Minister who put in place neoliberal policies in alliance with the Liberal Party.

[34] Source of the two appendices: Éric Toussaint, "[\*Reply to the letter by Philippe, King of the Belgians, about Belgium's responsibility in the exploitation of the Congolese people.\*](#)