

IDENTIFYING LUMUMBA'S 'INDEPENDENCE SPEECH'. AN ARCHIVAL ANALYSIS OF TYPESCRIPT AB2191

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Even in a century brimming with iconic speeches, few have had as dramatic and lasting an impact as the words spoken by Patrice Lumumba, Prime Minister of the *République du Congo*, on the morning of 30 June 1960. Lumumba's thirteen-minute address became a constitutive element of his canonization as pan-African hero or, for colonial nostalgists, as grave digger of the Belgian Congo. In 2004, the Study- and Documentation Centre for War and Contemporary Society (CegeSoma), today part of the Belgian State Archives, came into possession of a curious archival document: an original, annotated typescript of the speech, said to be no less than the personal copy of the first Congolese prime minister. This contribution reconstructs the archival history and context of typescript AB2191 through rigorous source criticism, including a comparison with familiar and previously unknown versions of the text. The central question is whether AB2191 is the copy recited by Lumumba.

I. Introduction

Whether Lumumba's intervention is appraised as a postcolonial "key text", "birth certificate" of the Congolese republic, "lèse-majesté" or one of his "ten errors", underlining its significance for the independence process, historiography and collective memory has become almost cliché.¹ The renowned speech is 65 years old but very much (kept) alive and kicking.

The typescript which lies at the heart of this article, AB2191, however, has led a far more sedate existence over the past two decades.² Its acquisition did not prompt any further inquiries by CegeSoma. And although the document was described in the institution's online catalogue and freely available for consultation, researchers do not seem to have noticed it either. How can this double blind spot be explained?

Despite having widened its field of study from the late 1990s onwards and even integrating the (de) colonisation of the Belgian Congo, CegeSoma, as a research centre, has focused predominantly on the period around the Second World War.³ The idiosyncrasies of its collection management undoubtedly played a role as well.⁴

As for the lack of interest displayed by researchers, there is probably more at play than a mere heuristic mismatch. For notwithstanding the hegemonic position of today's post- and/or decolonial paradigm and the continuing resonance of Lumumba's words, a double historiographical paradox manifests itself. First, despite a so-called 'Congomania' appearing from the early 2010s⁵ (in part catalysed by the polemic regarding the responsibility for Lumumba's assassination) and even the emergence of the "global phenomenon" Lumumba as an object of study⁶, established bibliographies do not mention a single study exclusively covering the speech of 30 June 1960.⁷ The consensus on the (at the very least symbolic) importance of Lumumba's intervention contrasts sharply with the handful of published works addressing it in detail. The best documented and most grounded synthesis of the speech's genesis is still to be found in Jean-Claude Willame's monograph *Patrice Lumumba: la crise congolaise revisitée*, published 35 years ago.⁸ Mutamba Makombo's 2013 article, incorporating Kashamura's posthumous memoirs, should be mentioned as well. However, both works were necessarily based on government publications, press, published accounts and interviews. The paucity of secondary literature on the speech itself is counterbalanced by numerous contributions ana-

1. DAVID VAN REYBROUCK, *Congo. Een geschiedenis*, Amsterdam, 2011, 290; LUDO DE WITTE, "De speech die Congo zijn waardigheid teruggaf", *De Wereld Morgen*, 30 June 2022, < <https://www.dewereldmorgen.be/artikel/2022/06/30/de-speech-die-congo-zijn-waardigheid-teruggaf/> >, accessed 10 April 2025; JEAN-MARIE MUTAMBA MAKOMBO, "Les discours du 30 juin 1960 au Congo-Kinshasa: mythes et réalités", *Congo-Afrique*, 52/476, 2013, 367.

2. I am profoundly grateful to my colleagues Michael Auwers, Widukind De Ridder, Lilian Eyletters, Inès Glogowski, Ornella Rovetta, Reinout Vander Hulst and Nico Wouters for their valuable commentary and indispensable aid, and to Matthew Haultain-Gall for proofreading the manuscript. Many thanks as well to the Hemeleers family, the RMCA, the ULB Archives and Liberas for providing essential documents and to Guy Vanthemsche for his comments and critical reading of a first draft. Unless otherwise specified, all translations in this article are those of the author. Asterisks refer to biographical notes in Appendix III.

3. SARAH HEYNSSENS, *De kinderen van Save: een geschiedenis tussen Afrika en België*, Antwerpen, 2017 left the biggest impact by far. CegeSoma's collections also relate almost exclusively to the Second World War, barring exceptions such as the (partial) archives of Jean Van Lierde and André Cauvin.

4. On the history of the collection, see GERTJAN DESMET, *Inventaris van de verzameling 'Dagboeken en manuscripten' van het CegeSoma. Aanwinsten 1969-2018*, Brussel, 2024, < https://agatha.arch.be/data/ead/BE-A0547_717188_807796 >, accessed 10 April 2025.

5. IDESBALD GODDEERIS & SINDANI E. KIANGU, "Congomania in Academia. Recent Historical Research on the Belgian Colonial Past", *BMGN – Low Countries Historical Review*, 126, 4 (2011), 54-74.

6. ÉLISABETH DIKIZEKO & KARINE RAMONDY, "Global Lumumba. Une figure internationale et africaine pour penser l'histoire globale", *Revue d'Histoire contemporaine de l'Afrique*, 5, 2023, 1-16.

7. FLORENCE LORIAUX, FRANÇOISE MORIMONT & JEAN-LUC VELLUT (dir.), *Bibliographie historique du Zaïre à l'époque coloniale (1880-1960): travaux publiés en 1960-1996*, Louvain-la-Neuve, 1996 and VINCENT GENIN, *Bibliographie historique de la RD Congo, du Rwanda et du Burundi sous le régime colonial (travaux de 1997 à 2024)*, Bruxelles, 2025 (in press).

8. JEAN-CLAUDE WILLAME, *Patrice Lumumba: la crise congolaise revisitée*, Paris, 1990, 93-118.

lysing, for instance, the reception, memory and representation of Lumumba and his political legacy.⁹ Contrary to the attention paid to the recent restitution of the Congolese prime minister's human remains, a similar interest in the tangible traces of his most famous political feat is totally absent.¹⁰ Historians do not even appear to question whether Lumumba's own text has been preserved, despite its obvious historical and intrinsic value.¹¹

A second apparent contradiction lies in the observation that Lumumba's words – this 'postcolonial' intervention *par excellence* – have not been accurately quoted anywhere. Incredibly for such an important text, the author has yet to encounter a perfect transcription.¹² Here as well, more seems to be going on than simply devaluation-in-reproduction.¹³ Admittedly, mitigating circumstances can be invoked; the contemporary publications on which historiography usually relies (typically *Congo 1960*) do not perfectly render the speech either. Nevertheless, it is remarkable that even fairly recent contributions in our age of unlimited 'mechanical repro-

duction' do not fall back on the original source. Scholars appear content to cite the same handful of publications¹⁴ even though sound recordings of the ceremony can be found in the archives of the former Belgian public broadcaster, and newsreel footage is conserved by press agencies such as Reuters.¹⁵ It seems that since its contemporaneous dissemination in the media, (semi-)governmental publications and compilations¹⁶, the 30 June speech has become a fact, assumed as known and processed. Once crystallised into this basic historiographical unit and building block of collective memory, it is a small step to an ossified existence as 'cultural heritage'.

The aim of this article is therefore, in a sense, *reculer pour mieux sauter*. What follows is an analysis of typescript AB2191 – one specific, unique documentary instance of Lumumba's speech – as a concrete archival record embedded in a concrete context.¹⁷ The underlying methodology is consequently that of archival science, the discipline whose *raison d'être* is the holistic analysis of records throughout their entire 'life cycle': from conception to produc-

9. Cf. e.g. KAREN BOUWER, *Gender and Decolonization in the Congo. The Legacy of Patrice Lumumba*, New York, 2010 or MATTHIAS DE GROOF (ed.), *Lumumba in the Arts*, Leuven, 2020.

10. Cf. e.g. YASMINA ZIAN, MATTHIAS DE GROOF & FRANCIS MAPANZE MANGOLE, "L'odyssée de Lumumba. Les enjeux autour du rapatriement de sa dépouille", *Revue d'Histoire contemporaine de l'Afrique*, 5, 2023, 18-38 or the documentary film "Lumumba. Le retour d'un héros", Quentin Noirfalisse, Benoît Feyt & Dieudo Hamadi, 2023.

11. See *Intrinsic value*, DAT, < <https://dictionary.archivists.org/entry/intrinsic-value.html> >, accessed 10 April 2025.

12. The transcriptions in JEAN VAN LIERDE (dir.), *La pensée politique de Patrice Lumumba*, Bruxelles, 1963, 197-201 and JULES GÉRARD-LIBOIS & BENOÎT VERHAEGEN, *Congo 1960*, dl. 1, Bruxelles, 1960, 323-325, while not perfect, appear to be the most accurate.

13. WALTER BENJAMIN, *Het kunstwerk in het tijdperk van zijn technische reproduceerbaarheid en andere essays*, Nijmegen, 1996, 11-14.

14. Representative, for instance, is the version quoted in KAREL VAN NIEUWENHUYSE & IDESBALD GODDEERIS, "The Representation of Congolese Prime Minister Patrice Lumumba and his Speech on 30 June 1960 (Congolese Independence Day) - Food for Controversy", in UTA FENSKE, DANIEL GROTH, KLAUS-MICHAEL GUSE & BÄRBEL P. KUHN (ed.), *Colonialism and Decolonization in National Historical Cultures and Memory Politics in Europe. Modules for History Lessons*, Frankfurt am Main, 2015, 147-157. This contribution, intended as a tool for history teachers, cites as its source an anthology (viz. EMMANUEL GERARD & KAREL VAN NIEUWENHUYSE (red.), *Scripta Politica. Politieke geschiedenis van België in documenten (1918-2012)*, Leuven/Den Haag, 2013, 255-257) which does not rely on a first-hand transcription of the sound recording either; rather, it reproduces in turn the imperfect version published in JULES GÉRARD-LIBOIS & BENOÎT VERHAEGEN, op cit., 323-325.

15. Cf. e.g. the digital copy of the sound recording "Toespraak Patrice Lumumba over onafhankelijkheid Belgisch Congo" (VRT, Televisie-archieef, media ID GW_2173_3). The author was not successful in tracking down unedited film footage of the complete speech. Inquiries with the researchers for the documentaries *Soundtrack to a Coup d'Etat* (Johan Grimmonprez, 2024) and *Mobutu's Game* (Guillaume Graux, 2025) revealed that it is in fact unknown if such footage still exists and if so, where it is preserved.

16. On the Belgian side, cf. e.g. MINISTÈRE DES AFFAIRES ÉTRANGÈRES ET DU COMMERCE EXTÉRIEUR. DIRECTION DES RELATIONS CULTURELLES ET DE L'INFORMATION (dir.), *Textes et Documents. 123. L'indépendance congolaise*, Brussel, 1960; COMMISSION DE COORDINATION (dir.), *Propos de M. Patrice Lumumba. Premier Ministre de la République du Congo*, Bruxelles, 1960; WALTER GANSHOF VAN DER MEERSCH, *Congo mai-juin 1960. Rapport du ministre chargé des affaires générales en Afrique*, Bruxelles, 1960; WALTER GANSHOF VAN DER MEERSCH, *Fin de la Souveraineté Belge au Congo. Documents et Réflexions*, Bruxelles/La Haye, 1963; JEAN VAN LIERDE (dir.), *La pensée politique* and "Document 29. Discours de M. P. Lumumba, premier ministre et ministre de la défense nationale de la République du Congo, à la cérémonie à Léopoldville de l'Indépendance le 30 juin 1960", *Chronique de politique étrangère*, 13/4-6, 1960, 635-636.

17. See A.J.M. DEN TEULING, *Archiefterminologie voor Nederland en Vlaanderen*, Den Haag, 2007, lemma 8 and *Context*, DAT, < <https://dictionary.archivists.org/entry/context.html> >, accessed 10 April 2025. It follows that not every document becomes a record.

tion, selection, disposition, preservation, arrangement, description and (re)use.

The present contribution asserts that AB2191 is, with a probability bordering on certainty, Lumumba's personal copy of his famous speech. A discussion of the acquisition history of this record is followed by an institutional sketch of the service of the *Gouvernement général* that must have been its records creator.¹⁸ This central hypothesis is then substantiated through in-depth external and internal source criticism of typescript AB2191, formulated along four pillars: (1) a reconstruction of the process of records creation; (2) an analysis of its physical appearance; (3) a comparative discussion of its contents and (4) a confrontation with a photocopy supposedly discovered in 2015.

While its aspects are inevitably touched upon, the focus of this article is not on the political manoeuvring leading up to 30 June 1960; nor is an intellectual genealogy, ideological critique or comparative exegesis of Lumumba's speech envisaged here. Such exercises require their own methodological approaches.¹⁹

II. History of the record and its creator

Acquisition

AB2191 was noticed by the author in September 2022 while inventorying the 'Diaries and Man-

uscripts Collection', which contains an autobiography of a certain Jean Rigot*. Accompanying this document was a photocopied typescript of Lumumba's speech.²⁰ Located further down in the collection, under the previous reference AB2191, was the original: Rigot had probably given it to CegeSoma in the summer of 2004.²¹ He stated having received AB2191 from Yvette Maertens, widow of a certain Piet Lenain*. Maertens had entrusted the typescript to Rigot before her death in 2004.²²

Based on the information communicated by Rigot, typescript AB2191 was described in CegeSoma's online catalogue as follows:

*Discours prononcé par M. Lumumba, Premier Ministre de la République du Congo, lors des cérémonies de la proclamation de l'indépendance du Congo le 30 juin 1960: discours (principalement 1960)/par Patrice Emery Lumumba; annoté par le secrétaire et conseiller de P. Lumumba: Pierre Lenain. - Léopoldville.*²³

The contextual claims regarding this document – that Lenain (1) was Lumumba's secretary and adviser, (2) annotated the typescript, and (3) appropriated the document left by Lumumba after the speech – should be treated extremely cautiously.²⁴ In terms of AB2191's provenance, Jean Rigot was not a self-evident source. First, he experienced the independence celebrations via radio broadcasts; his specifications therefore rely on second- or even third-hand testimony (given possibly decades after-

18. It is crucial to understand that the *records creator* of a document is not, in itself, synonymous with its *author*.

19. For some examples of rhetorical and ideological analysis cf. ELIE PHAMBU NGOMA-BINDA, "La pensée politique de Lumumba. L'autre face du discours révolutionnaire", in PIERRE HALEN & JÁNOS RIESZ (dir.), *Patrice Lumumba entre Dieu et Diable. Un héros africain dans ses images*, Paris, 1997, 335-349 and LUC FIERLAFYN, *Le discours nationaliste au Congo belge durant la période 1955-1960*, Bruxelles, 1990.

20. JEAN RIGOT, "Pîlou (Nom de code). Souvenirs égocentriques (ou Rigot-centriques diront certains)", 2002 (CegeSoma, *Verzameling 'Dagboeken en manuscripten'. Aanwinsten 1969-2018* (ref. 547 02750 AB), 1965).

21. The original typescript has been transferred to AGR2. A digital copy can be found in CegeSoma, *Verzameling 'Dagboeken en manuscripten'. Aanwinsten 1969-2018* (ref. 547 02750 AB), 2036.

22. Print of an e-mail by Jean Rigot to archivist Dirk Martin, 10 June 2005 (CegeSoma, Centraal Dossier, 02750 AB).

23. Record no. 126145, *Pallas*-catalogue backend, accessed 10 April 2025. The keyword "lumumba, patrice (1925-1961)" was linked to the description. The element 'Provenance' noted "Veuve Pierre Lenain via M. Rigot".

24. "Oui, j'ai connu la fille du peintre Médard Maerten [sic], Madame Yvette Lenain, veuve de Monsieur Pierre Lenain qui a été le secrétaire et conseiller de P. Lumumba. C'est elle qui m'avait confié le texte du discours que P. Lumumba a lu le 30 juin 1960, annoté de la main de Pierre Lenain. Après la lecture, Lumumba abandonna son papier qui fut repris par Lenain." Print of an e-mail by Jean Rigot to archivist Dirk Martin, 10 June 2005 (CegeSoma, Centraal Dossier, 02750 AB).

wards).²⁵ It is not even established whether Rigot had known Lenain at all. Maertens, on the other hand, was present in Léopoldville on 30 June 1960 as she had joined her husband and their three children in the Belgian Congo.²⁶ Second, Lenain's position was stated incorrectly: he was not a secretary, let alone an adviser to the Congolese prime minister. Finally, film footage contradicts the claim that Lumumba left his text behind.²⁷

A first step in reconstructing the custodial history²⁸ of AB2191 is to outline the context in which Lenain was able to acquire this typescript. The most likely scenario is that he obtained it *ex officio* – meaning his official (and not personal) capacity is key. Lenain was far from just any random Belgian colonist, who happened to be in the right place at the right time. On 30 June 1960, he was exactly where a deputy commissioner-general of the *Commissariat général à l'Information* (CGI) of the *Gouvernement général* was expected to be: in the *Palais de la Nation* during the independence ceremony. As we will see, the CGI oversaw the dissemination of exactly these types of communications. For this very reason, Lenain's superior had received a preliminary version of the speech before the ceremony and got a hold of Lumumba's own copy afterwards. It is possible that Lenain acquired AB2191 in a completely unrelated context; however, this would require additional presuppositions for which there is no real justification.

The Information Service of the *Gouvernement général*

The *Commissariat général à l'Information* (*Commissariaat-Generaal voor Voorlichting*) of 1959-1960 was the last incarnation of the information service of the *Gouvernement général*.²⁹ Hardly any literature exists on this service and its metropolitan counterpart, the Ministry of Colonies' *Bureau 'Information-Press'*. Works on Belgian colonial propaganda only superficially describe the organisational evolution, legal authority and concrete activities of the (semi-)public entities involved.³⁰ In order to correctly understand this institutional context, however, it is essential to distinguish between the CGI and its predecessor(s) – organs of the colonial administration – on the one hand, and (1) the *Bureau 'Information-Press'* in Brussels, (2) competent parastatal institutions³¹ and (3) private and (semi-)public press agencies active in the Belgian Congo, on the other. Even the parliamentary enquiry commission set up after the January 1959 riots failed to do so.³²

The importance of the information service of the *Gouvernement général* should not be underestimated. First, as part of the executive branch, it was responsible for legitimising the colonial project on the ground. The service functioned as a gatekeeper, but above all it engaged in the production and distribution of mass media, including

25. JEAN RIGOT, op. cit., 97.

26. Arch. Pers. M., 100191.

27. Cf. e.g. *Belgian king proclaims Congo independence in Leopoldville* (record ID 571623), Reuters Archive Licensing website, < <https://reuters.screenocean.com/record/571623> > and *Congo: Leopoldville: Belgian king proclaims independence* (record ID 923568), Reuters Archive Licensing website, < <https://reuters.screenocean.com/record/923568> >, accessed 10 April 2025.

28. See *Custodial history*, DAT, < <https://dictionary.archivists.org/entry/custodial-history.html> >, accessed 10 April 2025.

29. This institutional outline is predominantly based on GRETA PAUVELS-BOON, *L'origine, l'évolution et le fonctionnement de la radiodiffusion au Zaïre de 1937 à 1960*, Tervuren, 1979 (an edition of her 1975 doctoral thesis). At the time of writing, the CGI records have not yet been identified, let alone processed; complete series of service memos or circular letters from the *Gouvernement général* are not available either. In other words, crucial sources for a comprehensive history of the service are still lacking.

30. Cf. ANNE CORNET & FLORENCE GILLET, *Congo-Belgique, 1955-1965: entre propagande et réalité*, Bruxelles, 2010 and MATTHEW G. STANARD, *Selling the Congo. A history of European pro-empire propaganda and the making of Belgian imperialism*, Lincoln, 2011. For an older example, see FRANCIS RAMIREZ & CHRISTIAN ROLOT, *Histoire du cinéma colonial au Zaïre au Rwanda et au Burundi*, Tervuren, 1985.

31. The *Centre d'information et de documentation du Congo belge* (1950-1955), better known by its abbreviation CID. Its successor was the *Office de l'Information et des Relations Publiques pour le Congo Belge et le Rwanda-Urundi* (1955-1960), known as Inforcongo.

32. An erratum had to be added to the final report, correcting all references to Inforcongo. Chamber of Representatives, 37 (1958-1961), document 100/3, erratum and Parliamentary Annals, Chamber of Representatives, session of 7 July 1959, document 87, 20.

radio and film for the Congolese. Furthermore, it must have constituted the first link in the propagandistic supply chain: the photographic and cinematographic production of the information service in Léopoldville was sent to the *Bureau 'Information-Press'* of the Ministry of Colonies and the CID, where it was tailored to Belgian and foreign end-users' tastes and distributed following a certain division of labour. The administration in Brussels, for instance, attended to press relations; the CID reached various other 'market segments' with its *photothèque coloniale* (consisting of Léopoldville's photographic production and the extensive collection of the former *Office colonial*) and films.³³

Second, the institutional territorialism and divergent political visions regarding Congo also shaped the domain of 'information'. Postwar colonial propaganda for Belgian, foreign and 'native' consumption was rarely efficient. The information service of the *Gouvernement général* not only had to meet the objective needs of the colony (legitimation, pacification and reproduction). Subjective factors also came into play; for instance, colonists demanded their 'own' radio broadcasts, leading Belgian circles in the colony opposed politicisation from the metropole (a typical symptom being the '*parachutage*' of top officials at the expense of local talent) and colonial opinion advocated a dynamic information service unrestrained by bureaucracy. Representative in this respect was the commotion surrounding the 1957 appointment of the Francophone liberal and Walloon autonomist Roland-Georges Detry at the helm of the information service in Léopoldville, who had

been PR-director at Inforcongo and press secretary of minister Buisseret.³⁴

Finally, although not surprisingly given the virtual absence of mid-ranking Congolese civil servants, the continuity-in-discontinuity after 30 June is also of note. Both the Minister of Information and Cultural Affairs Anicet Kashamura*, his successor Jean Bolikango* and state secretary Antoine-Roger Bolamba* had history with the CGI.³⁵ In May 1960, European and African officials at the CGI were tasked with planning the reorganisation of the information services of the future Congolese republic.³⁶ Some staff joined the cabinets of Congolese politicians from late June 1960, such as Henri Ancelot* and Sylvia Gabbai* (Lumumba) and Daniel Gaspar* (Kashamura). And, in 1962, the Congolese government requested certain CGI veterans, including Gaspar and Gabbai, to return as technical advisers.

The institutional history of the information service of the *Gouvernement général* can be divided into four eras. It was created in 1940 within the cabinet of the Governor-General (*Service de l'Information*, 1940-1941; *Service de l'Information et de la Radiodiffusion*, 1941-1942; *Service de l'Information et de la Propagande*, 1942-1947). From 1947 it formed the 2nd *Section* ('Information') of the *Secrétariat général*, before becoming the 3rd *Direction* ('Information') of the 2nd *Direction générale* in 1954. In 1959, the department was transformed into an autonomous *commissariat général*.

The creation of this *Commissariat général à l'Information* should be seen in the light of the insti-

33. Report *Activités dans le domaine de l'information congolaise et des relations culturelles entre le Congo belge, la Belgique et les pays étrangers*, 13 March 1951 (AGR2, Ministerie van Koloniën en rechtsopvolgers, Moederlands bestuur, Dienst Information-Press (INFO) (ref. 545 870), 92-13a). In 1959 'Brussels' countered the (misplaced) criticism of the parliamentary enquiry commission by noting Inforcongo "*est chargé de l'information en Belgique et à l'étranger; il n'a rien à voir au Congo.*" "*Maldonne*", *Le Soir*, 4 April 1959, 1.

34. Cf. GRETA PAUWELS-BOON, op. cit., 55-59 as well as Arch. Pers. K., 40330 and Arch. Pers. M., 14418. For biographical information on Detry, cf. e.g. M.C., "Un nouveau directeur à l'information du gouvernement général", *La voix du Congolais*, 133, 1957, 250 and *Detry Roland-Georges*, online *Encyclopédie du Mouvement wallon*, < <https://www.wallonie-en-ligne.net/Encyclopedie/Biographies/Notices/Detry-RG.htm> >, accessed 23 January 2025.

35. Within the *Collège exécutif général*, Kashamura was responsible for 'information'. From May 1960 he also was *commissaire de l'information*. GRETA PAUWELS-BOON, op. cit., 41 and 59. Hemeleers referred to Bolamba as "*un de mes adjoints*". Summary of an interview with Hemeleers, 1988 (Arch. JVL, 330).

36. Incoming letter from Daniel Gaspar, with CV, 10 January 1963 (Arch. Pers. M., 18020).

tutional fallout following the January 1959 riots. The parliamentary enquiry commission explicitly identified "shortcomings in terms of information" as one of the political causes. The information service, encased in a bureaucratic structure, was blamed for a staggering absence of "counter-propaganda". Its inaction had given free rein to rumours and foreign propaganda.³⁷ Minister Van Hemelrijck acknowledged the "total lack of coordination" between Inforcongo in Brussels and the administration in Léopoldville, and decided to implement thorough reforms.³⁸ Before the commission of enquiry even reported its findings, Detry was prematurely recalled to Brussels in March 1959.³⁹ In early July 1959, Van Hemelrijck detached the *Direction Information* from the 2nd *Direction générale*, in hopes of "extracting [the service] from administrative routine". The new commissariat was attached directly to the Governor-General and liaised with him through a government secretary.⁴⁰ It was headed by Régis Hemeleers*, a lawyer with a progressive-Christian Democrat background who had policy experience as chief of cabinet at the Ministry of the Interior and a past in PR at UNESCO and SABENA. Hemeleers was initially backed by two deputies: Piet Lenain and Jean Bolikango.⁴¹ Lenain, a former journalist at *Het Laatste Nieuws*, had impeccable liberal credentials. Bolikango, the second *commissaire général adjoint à l'Information*, was notably tasked with maintaining contact with his former employer Inforcongo.⁴²

The decoupling of the *Direction Information* from the 2nd *Direction générale* did not explicitly affect its legal authority, which had been last defined in November 1957. Crucial for this article is the role of its 1st *Section (Presse-Ciné-Photo)*. The 1st Bureau of this section (*Presse-Rédaction-Édition*) was responsible, among other things, for "editing and distributing communiqués and articles for the Congolese, Belgian and foreign press" and "designing and carrying out mock-ups and editing of texts for propaganda and documentation publications". The 2nd Bureau (*Relations publiques*) notably handled "relations with press agencies and journalists".⁴³

The CGI also had to undergo the institutional consequences of the decolonisation process. From 8 March 1960 it was *de jure* no longer subordinate to the *Gouvernement général* but rather the *Collège exécutif général*. This body, consisting of the Governor-General and six Congolese representatives, had been created to exercise central executive power pending the formation of a fully-fledged Congolese government. At the time of the independence ceremony the CGI was under the authority of the Congolese government.⁴⁴ By then Hemeleers had already felt "robbed" of his service as a result of the arrival of the Belgian delegation in Léopoldville. The *commissaire général à l'Information* operated in isolation, without instructions or any genuine involvement; he claimed to not even have received the programme of the celebrations.⁴⁵

37. Chamber of Representatives, 37 (1958-1961), document 100/3, 31.

38. Parliamentary Annals, Chamber of Representatives, session of 7 July 1959, document 87, 21.

39. Arch. Pers. M., 14418, Arch. Pers. K., 40330.

40. Parliamentary Annals, Chamber of Representatives, session of 7 July 1959, document 87, 20 and circular letter 92/21943 of 10 July 1959 (Arch. Pers. K., 41206).

41. "La presse quotidienne au Congo", *Courrier hebdomadaire du CRISP*, 26, 1959/2, 2-12.

42. Parliamentary Annals, Chamber of Representatives, session of 7 July 1959, document 87, 21 and "La presse quotidienne au Congo", 2.

43. Circular letter 92/21943 of 10 July 1959 (Arch. Pers. K., 41206), ordinance 91/349 of 2 November 1957 (BA, 14 December 1957, 2286-2375) and erratum to ordinance 91/349 (BA, 28 December 1957, 2502).

44. *Loi relative aux collèges exécutifs permanents au Congo* of 8 March 1960 (MB, 12 March 1960, 1735-1736) and art. 256 of the *Loi fondamentale relative aux structures du Congo* of 19 May 1960 (MB, 27-28 May 1960, 3988-4012). In its commentary on the *projet de loi*, the competent committee had pointed out that 30 June was to be taken literally. Up to and including 29 June, Belgium held sovereignty over its colony. From midnight, however, executive power would be wielded by the Congolese government. Chamber of Representatives, 37 (1958-1961), document 489/3, 33. Cf. also WALTER GANSHOF VAN DER MEERSCH, *Fin de la Souveraineté Belge*, 334. As a result of this legal reality, the records created by the CGI from 30 June 1960 are, in our opinion, to be considered public law archives of the Republic of Congo.

45. Summary of an interview with Hemeleers, 1988 (Arch. JVL, 330).

Hemeleers, Lenain and co. only worked for a very short time as civil servants of the Republic of Congo. On 6 July 1960, Hemeleers was formally notified of the dissolution of the CGI. In its place came the *Ministère de l'Information et des Affaires culturelles*, headed by minister Kashamura and state secretary Bolamba.⁴⁶

III. Analysis

Background

The events of interest to this article took place in Léopoldville on Thursday morning 30 June 1960, on the first day of the festivities in celebration of Congolese independence. The programme commenced with a Catholic thanksgiving mass (*Te Deum*) in the *Notre-Dame du Congo* cathedral (9 am-9:30 am).⁴⁷ King Baudouin was then expected at the official residence of Governor-General Cornelis to welcome foreign heads of state and guests of honour (10 am-10:55 am). The ceremony where independence was formally ratified by the Belgian and Congolese governments began in the *salle de séances* of the *Palais de la Nation* at 11 am. Originally, three quarters of an hour had been scheduled for this (11 am-11:45 am). The programme consisted of speeches by the Belgian sovereign and the Congolese head of state, President Joseph Kasa-Vubu. This schedule was thrown into disarray when the prime minister was also given the floor. The image of Lumumba seated on the left side of the podium and amending his text is well-known.

Footage of the Congolese prime minister at the stand shows that his speech was at least folded in two and that Lumumba left the stage with his

text in hand. The signing of the act of independence – in a decidedly frosty atmosphere – concluded the ceremony (11:55 am). Afterwards, both heads of state were scheduled to receive foreign guests and ambassadors in the adjoining salon. Baudouin and the Belgian government however threatened to leave Congo immediately. Discussions followed and thanks to the mediation of the Ghanaian ambassador a solution was found around 1 pm. In the presence of Eyskens, Belgian Minister of Foreign Affairs Pierre Wigny and Fredericq De Ridder, diplomatic adviser to Cornelis, drafted a toast to be delivered by Lumumba during the luncheon (originally scheduled for 12:30 am). The Congolese prime minister accepted, although he made some adjustments to the text. This second speech has since been known as the '*toast réparatoire*' taking some of the sting out of the morning's incident.⁴⁸

From this context, as well as from film and sound recordings of the ceremony, it can be deduced that a document should meet at least three conditions in order to *possibly* qualify as Lumumba's personal copy of his speech. Obviously, the document should date from 1960. Second, it should show at least one fold. Third, it should include the revisions made by Lumumba during the ceremony, in his handwriting.⁴⁹ A fourth condition can be formulated based on the records creation history of the various versions outlined below. Content-wise, it is expected that of all the versions predating the speech, Lumumba's copy should align most closely with the actual words spoken. Lumumba's own text may exhibit other unique features, but these cannot be determined with certainty based on the context as *it can be reconstructed today*. The central question is whether AB2191 meets the above criteria.

46. Incoming letter from state secretary Bolamba, 6 July 1960 (Hemeleers family papers).

47. Incidentally, a programme in French, Lingala and Kikongo also mentions a Protestant service in the temple in Avenue Van Gele, at 8 am (Arch. BV, 529). Cf. also the annotated programme in Arch. AEDS, 11.4.7.1.

48. Brochure and notes on the programme of 29-30 June 1960 (Arch. AEDS, 11.4.7.1), transcripts of and notes on the '*toast réparatoire*' (Arch. AEDS, 11.4.7.7); WALTER GANSHOF VAN DER MEERSCH, *Fin de la Souveraineté Belge*, 341-342; GASTON EYSKENS & JOZEF SMITS (red.), op. cit., 574-576.

49. Cf. also the testimonies of the two men seated to the left and right of Lumumba: Paul Kronacker, chairman of the Belgian Chamber of Representatives (PAUL KRONACKER, *Souvenirs de paix et de guerre*, Paris, 1973, 205) and Belgian prime minister Gaston Eyskens (GASTON EYSKENS & JOZEF SMITS (red.), *Gaston Eyskens: de Memoires*, Tiel, 1994, 575).

Records creation process

The CGI occupies a central position in the records creation and edition process of the various versions. The service is especially pivotal for reconstructing the context of AB2191, in light of (1) its mission to disseminate official communiqués and (2) the fact that its deputy commissioner-general, Piet Lenain, held onto this document for decades. As a first pillar, it is argued that the CGI is simultaneously the records creator of Lumumba's copy and of AB2191.

After 30 June 1960, contemporaries and eyewitnesses have, for different purposes and with varying degrees of rigour, attempted to reconstruct the timeline of that morning. Scholars such as Willame and Mutamba Makombo have since brought the essential but kaleidoscopic pieces of the puzzle together.⁵⁰ This overarching perspective in turn allows us to focus, in detail, on the elements pertaining to the records creation process of Lumumba's own copy while filling in some of the blank spots.

The archives of three key Belgian witnesses serve as additional primary sources. In the absence of the CGI records or any archives (or writings) by Lenain, we must rely on documents created (or drafted) by his superior, Régis Hemeleers, *commissaire général à l'Information*. His papers notably contain a version of an oft-cited key doc-

ument: his response to anonymous allegations published in *La Libre Belgique* on 21 July 1961. Hemeleers's right of reply, recounting the events in detail, was printed six days later.⁵¹ Obviously a critical approach is warranted. Hemeleers, at the time deputy *chef de cabinet* of the Interior Minister, was defending himself against quasi-overt accusations of negligence and even collusion with the fledgling Congolese government. However, he stuck to his 1961 version of the facts until his death.⁵² A second essential source is the case file on the 30 June speech compiled by Walter Ganshof van der Meersch in his capacity as Minister without portfolio charged with General Affairs in Africa.⁵³ Lastly, a number of documents from the archives of August-Edmond De Schryver, Minister of the Belgian Congo and Ruanda-Urundi (3 September 1959-29 June 1960) and African Affairs (29 June-3 September 1960), are also of interest.⁵⁴

In the week since his government took office (23 June) and a head of state was elected (24 June), a number of incidents left Prime Minister Lumumba with the impression of being manoeuvred into a second-rate position. In particular, he was extremely offended by the fact that he, as head of government, had not been granted prior access to the speeches of the Belgian monarch and President Kasa-Vubu (who, for his part, had received Baudouin's address), and this lay at the heart of his decision to take the floor on 30 June. Indeed, according to the *Loi fondamentale*, the provisional

50. Unless stated otherwise, this section is based on: "Un point d'histoire. Le fameux discours de Lumumba. La version de l'ancien commissaire général à l'Information au Congo", *La Libre Belgique*, 27 July 1961, 5; THOMAS KANZA, *Conflict in the Congo: the rise and fall of Lumumba*, Harmondsworth, 1972, 145-164; JEAN-CLAUDE WILLAME, op. cit., 94-118; JULES GÉRARD-LIBOIS & BENOÎT VERHAEGEN, op. cit., 318-330; WALTER GANSHOF VAN DER MEERSCH, *Fin de la Souveraineté Belge*, 331-342 and LOUIS-FRANÇOIS VANDERSTRAETEN, *De la force publique à l'Armée nationale congolaise: histoire d'une mutinerie. Juillet 1960*, Bruxelles, 1985, 131-135 and 510-511, as well as on the carbon copy of the note *Le fameux discours de Lumumba*, [between 21 and 27 July 1961] (Hemeleers family papers).

51. "Un point d'histoire. Le fameux discours de Lumumba. Des faits controversés", *La Libre Belgique*, 21 July 1961, 5 and "Un point d'histoire. Le fameux discours de Lumumba. La version de l'ancien commissaire général à l'Information au Congo", *La Libre Belgique*, 27 July 1961, 5.

52. Hemeleers's account in an interview three months before his death is consistent with his declaration 27 years prior. Summary of an interview with Hemeleers, 1988 (Arch. JVL, 330).

53. Arch. WGVD, 1079. The findings of his inquiry were published in 1960: WALTER GANSHOF VAN DER MEERSCH, *Congo mai-juin 1960*, 244-249. An updated version, incorporating Hemeleers's rebuttal in *La Libre Belgique*, appeared in 1963: WALTER GANSHOF VAN DER MEERSCH, *Fin de la Souveraineté Belge*, 334-342. Only this latter publication will be referred to below.

54. No pertinent records created by Raymond Scheyven, Minister without portfolio charged with Economic and Financial Affairs of the Belgian Congo and Ruanda-Urundi (17 November 1959 - 23 June 1960) and with Economic and Financial Affairs in Africa (23 June - 3 September 1960), were found.

constitution modelling the Congolese republic on a Belgian template, the actions of the head of state had to be backed by the government at all times.

On 28 June, Lumumba was able to read both texts, likely thanks to Jean Van Lierde*, one of his Belgian supporters. Between 1985 and 2006 Van Lierde provided at least three slightly different accounts, but what they have in common is that the two speeches arrived at Lumumba's office courtesy of the CGI – either directly or via Van Lierde (and possibly following a chance encounter with Hemeleers).⁵⁵ Additionally, Van Lierde claimed to have drawn Lumumba's attention to the unacceptable substance of both addresses, urging him to respond. Van Lierde writes that Lumumba was initially hesitant about such a unilateral change to the protocol, although he did not need much convincing in the end. For decades Van Lierde reportedly remained silent – even towards his colleagues at the *Centre de recherche et d'information socio-politiques* – on his (self-proclaimed) role as 'instigator' of the speech, "*à la mémoire et au courage de Patrice*".⁵⁶

The Belgians were aware of Lumumba's annoyance and had several opportunities to de-escalate the situation, even late into the evening of 29 June.

The prime minister could have been briefed, even informally, on the content of the two speeches. This did not happen. Lumumba did not wish to be politically sidelined any longer and, after consulting the lawyer Emile Jabon* and judge Jozef Grootaert* (among others), resolved to also give a speech the following morning. The prime minister was supported in his intention by the Guinean delegation, which recognised parallels with its own recent history.⁵⁷

There has been much speculation on who wielded the pen that drafted the initial, embryonic manuscript of the speech. The colonial apparatus assumed the influence of Lumumba's Belgian entourage. Historiography also eagerly invokes the figure of the European *conseiller*, yet without contextualising these individuals and, consequently, failing to critically evaluate them.⁵⁸ However, the position of a political ally and friend like Van Lierde differs fundamentally from that of, for instance, colonial civil servants placed at the disposal of Congolese cabinets. The actual influence of European 'advisers' on Lumumba remains an open question.⁵⁹

Pierre Duvivier*, Jozef Grootaert, Jean Van Lierde, Maryse Hockers* and Jacques Nyns* have denied

55. Compare Van Lierde's statements in 1985 (photocopy of the text for a talk held in June 1985 (Arch. BV, 496) and text of a lecture in October 1985, edited as JEAN VAN LIERDE, *La Non-Violence, semence de liberté pour les peuples opprimés*, Charleroi, 1987, 5-6), 1993 (copy of outgoing letter to Henry Rosy, 28 February 1993 (Arch. JVL, 66)), 1998 (JEAN VAN LIERDE, XAVIER ZEEBROEK & PIERRE ARCQ, *Un insoumis*, Bruxelles, Labor, 1998, 32), 2001 (Chamber of Representatives, 50 (1999-2003), document 312/7, 684) and 2006 ("Jean Van Lierde, de assistent van Patrice Lumumba", *Indymedia*, 25 September 2006, < <http://www.indymedia.be/index.html%3Fq=node%252F4192.html> >, accessed 10 April 2025). A critical stance is appropriate, even if these versions are not necessarily in contradiction. Self-preservation may explain Hemeleers's silence on the incident. However, Van Lierde is equally silent in letters to his wife (on 28 and 29 June, and 1 July) despite elaborating on the atmosphere during the ceremony – even noting that "*aussitôt les attachés de cabinet et personnalités me soupçonnerent d'avoir poussé Patrice à cette provocation*" (Arch. JVL, 14). Van Lierde is a fascinating case not merely because of his political activities. Following an accident in 1982 after which he struggled with amnesia, his personal papers served as a source for (re)constructing his own past (GERD DE COSTER & DIRK MARTIN, *Inventarissen 31. Kongo-archief Jean Van Lierde*, Brussel, 2002, 11-18). His subsequent partitioning of those records in 'thematic' ensembles, transferred to a dozen archival institutions, attests to a desire for control over his political image and legacy.

56. JEAN VAN LIERDE, XAVIER ZEEBROEK & PIERRE ARCQ, op. cit., 33. In 2006 Van Lierde even stated verbatim: "I gave instructions to Lumumba". "Jean Van Lierde, de assistent van Patrice Lumumba".

57. Indeed, two years earlier, Guinean president Touré had humiliated de Gaulle in Conakry by refusing his proposal for a 'partnership' with the former coloniser.

58. Incidentally, they are not to be confused with the individuals serving in a formal advisory capacity during the roundtable conferences. Cf. JACQUES BRASSINNE, "Les conseillers à la Table ronde belgo-congolaise", *Courrier hebdomadaire du CRISP*, 1263-1264, 1989/38, 1-62.

59. Even more so given Hockers's and Van Lierde's sceptical declarations on Lumumba's (presumed) receptivity to 'advice'. Chamber of Representatives, 50 (1999-2003), document 312/7, 684 and 690.

authorship of the address.⁶⁰ Daniel Gaspar*, Kashamura's later adviser, was not even present in Congo in June 1960.⁶¹ Lumumba's press secretary Henri Ancelot was also named as a Belgian 'suspect'.⁶² Andrée Blouin* had been expelled since 11-12 June.⁶³ However, in his posthumously published memoirs, Kashamura – who in 1966 had named Duvivier as a “red herring” – claimed that a first draft was prepared by the Guinean diplomats Diallo Telli* and Tounkara* and thoroughly reworked by Lumumba, Kashamura and Félix-Roland Moumié*.⁶⁴ The question of the ‘true’ author of Lumumba's speech is, in the final analysis, of illusory importance. Given the circumstances, it could have been nothing other than the product of a process of collective reflection, editing and revision.

The reconstruction of the events on the morning of 30 June suffers from the deceptive certainty with which witnesses described the facts, sometimes down to the minute. An initial manuscript

(coded [A]) was ready early morning, before the start of the *Te Deum* scheduled at 9 am.⁶⁵ It had possibly already been drafted during the course of 29 June, before the prime minister had made a final decision. Thomas Kanza* recounted that Lumumba had telephoned “early in the morning” asking him to come over. Kanza's chronology cannot be correct because he makes no mention of the *Te Deum*.⁶⁶ However, the hour and a half between the scheduled end of the thanksgiving service (around 9:30 am) and the start of the independence ceremony (11 am) is pivotal for understanding the process of records creation.

At about 10 am, Lumumba had returned to his private residence on Boulevard Albert I^{er}. René Boland*, his orderly officer, was instructed to announce that the prime minister would also give a speech – in other words, Lumumba did not intend a ‘surprise attack’. In the meantime, around 10:15 am, he reviewed the text with his press secretary

60. Hockers, Van Lierde and Nyns did so formally, in their testimonies to the ‘Lumumba commission’. Cf. JULES GÉRARD-LIBOIS & BENOÎT VERHAEGEN, op. cit., 330; JEAN-MARIE MUTAMBA MAKOMBO, “Les discours”, 367; summary of an interview with Grootaert, 1988 (Arch. JVL, 330); Chamber of Representatives, 50 (1999-2003), document 312/7, 684, 690 and 699.

61. Arch. Pers. M., 18020; Arch. Pers. K., 44885. Willame (op. cit., 104) however, citing two journalists as sources, names Gaspar as a possible author.

62. Ancelot is explicitly named as (co)author in Ganshof van der Meersch's preliminary report (carbon copy of a report on the inquiry by Ganshof van der Meersch, 1 July 1960, Arch. WGVD, 1079), although his name does not appear in *Congo mai-juin 1960* and *Fin de la Souveraineté Belge*. Wigny, too, mentions Ancelot as one of the names circulating at the time. Typescript “*Mémoires du Congo*”, [ca. 1971], 91 (Arch. PW, 2).

63. The epilogue to Blouin's reissued autobiography states that she had been the author of the speech (ANDRÉE BLOUIN, *My Country, Africa: Autobiography of the Black Pasionaria*, London/New York, 2024, 279-280). The sole source for this claim is a statement by Victor Nendaka; the source reference is vague but likely points to his testimony before the ‘Lumumba Commission’ in 2001. Abstraction made of Nendaka's reliability as a source on this particular matter, Blouin was not in Léopoldville at the crucial moment. She had been expelled more than two weeks before Lumumba even decided to take the floor, only to return around 8 July. To make Nendaka's story credible, a series of additional, implausible assumptions are required. Moreover, the scenario directly contradicts the testimonies of Lumumba's associates, adversaries and bystanders.

64. JEAN-MARIE MUTAMBA MAKOMBO, “Les discours”, 376-377. In 2020 Mutamba Makombo directly cites Kashamura's then unpublished memoirs in which it is stated that he, Lumumba and Moumié were also assisted by minister Joseph Mbuyi and state secretary Jacques Lumbala. JEAN-MARIE MUTAMBA MAKOMBO, “Comment est né le Discours du 30 juin?”, *La Prospérité (Kinshasa)*, 21 June 2020 (digital publication on *allAfrica*, < <https://fr.allafrica.com/stories/202006220463.html> >, accessed 10 April 2025). In the published version of Kashamura's memoirs, the reference to Mbuyi and Lumbala appears to have been omitted. The author has not been able to consult this work in its entirety but is extremely grateful to Jean-Marie Mutamba Makombo for providing the relevant page. Cf. ANICET KASHAMURA, *Les routes de ma vie: souvenirs et réflexions*, Kinshasa, 2021, 160.

65. The notes of captain Boland do not literally mention a manuscript but speak of “l'original” and “les épreuves”. Vanderstraeten interprets this to mean a manuscript and subsequent typed-out ‘proofs’. LOUIS-FRANÇOIS VANDERSTRAETEN, op. cit., 132 and 510. Duvivier stated having seen “le texte griffonné de la main de Lumumba”. JULES GÉRARD-LIBOIS & BENOÎT VERHAEGEN, op. cit., 330.

66. THOMAS KANZA, op. cit., 152. In 2000, Kanza specified that he was at Lumumba's private residence at 8:30 am. “Mémoires noires d'une indépendance. Le 30 juin, le Congo est indépendant, la fête et l'orage”, 2000, RTBF-streamingdienst Auvio, < <https://auvio.rtbf.be/media/congo-1960-les-memoires-noires-memoires-noires-d-une-independance-4-2646772> >, accessed 10 April 2025. The timeline constitutes the most convincing evidence. If Kanza's account is accurate, he would have spent more than two hours and a half revising (8:30 am - 11 am); however he himself emphasises the time constraints, and the eventual edits were fairly minimal. The chronology outlined by others, in which Kanza and Mandi had well under an hour (ca. 10:30 am - 11 am), is more plausible.

Ancelet. Half an hour later, an unidentified European female secretary (perhaps Hockers?) brought the manuscript [A] and a typewritten version (coded [A]) to a Congolese and Belgian entourage for deliberation.⁶⁷ In Lumumba's salon the hastily summoned Thomas Kanza found Joseph Kasongo (President of the Chamber of Representatives), two Belgians and three unnamed Congolese (including André Mandi* and another state secretary).⁶⁸ Kanza was asked to soften the most "explosive" paragraphs. Kanza and Mandi quickly poured over the text; they briefed Lumumba, who was changing in his bedroom, and "begged" him to skip the harshest sections.⁶⁹ Captain Boland had to interrupt this editorial meeting; the time had come to depart for the Congolese prime minister's official residence, where the rest of his government was awaiting him before making their way to the *Palais de la Nation*. Kanza recounted that Mandi and himself even made modifications during the car ride to Lumumba's official residence. Upon their arrival they briefly clarified the revisions, which Lumumba deemed satisfactory. He promised to improvise on the podium where necessary.

After the *Te Deum*, *commissaire général à l'Information* Hemeleers returned to his office in Avenue Van Gele. Around 10 am he was visited there by a dozen journalists asking for Lumumba's text. It is likely that the news had not yet reached the surprised Hemeleers. Based on the programme, he had assumed that only the Belgian monarch and Congolese president would speak. The journalists, in turn, were startled; apparently, the press already knew that the prime minister would also take the floor. Hemeleers telephoned Lumumba's private residence, where the change in programme was confirmed "without the slightest

embarrassment".⁷⁰ The head of the CGI insisted that the third speech be delivered to him urgently so that it could be disseminated in time. Eventually, Lumumba himself came on the phone, asking Hemeleers to meet him at the entrance of parliament just before the start of the ceremony to receive the text. Lumumba, however, cautioned him not to circulate that particular version as changes would still follow. Hemeleers subsequently discussed the matter with his deputy Lenain, based at the *Palais de la Nation* with other CGI staff. They decided to immediately deliver Lumumba's text upon receipt to Lenain, who could then simultaneously update that preliminary version from his seat at the press stand. However, things would turn out differently.

At about the same time the journalists converged on Hemeleers's office, Marcel Zwaenepoel, press secretary in De Schryver's cabinet, made his way to the office of Governor-General Cornelis, where the Belgian king was receiving foreign diplomats and guests of honour. Zwaenepoel came to get a copy of Baudouin's address. After consulting with René Léfèbure, the royal *chef de cabinet*, Zwaenepoel phoned Lenain, his contact at the CGI, around 10:20 am to arrange for the reproduction and dissemination of the king's speech. Lenain signalled that speed was of the essence: the CGI already had Kasa-Vubu's and Lumumba's texts in its possession. The king, who was still reviewing his address, was notified and around 10:35 am Zwaenepoel was instructed to fetch a copy of Lumumba's text. However, further contact with the CGI revealed that Lumumba's speech had been confused with Kasa-Vubu's, of which stencil copies had already been distributed. Hemeleers confirmed by telephone to Zwaenepoel around

67. Kanza explicitly stated having corrected a typewritten document. "Mémoires noires d'une indépendance. Le 30 juin, le Congo est indépendant, la fête et l'orage", 2000, RTBF-streaming platform Auvio, < <https://auvio.rtb.be/media/congo-1960-les-memoires-noires-memoires-noires-d-une-independance-4-2646772> >, accessed 10 April 2025.

68. Possibly, therefore, Mandi, Mbuyi and Lumbala. JEAN-MARIE MUTAMBA MAKOMBO, "Comment est né le Discours du 30 juin?".

69. THOMAS KANZA, op. cit., 152-154. According to Kanza, an "obviously upset" Kasongo urged him to "tone down" the text. If this account is true, it proves that Kasongo – contrary to what Ganshof van der Meersch writes – was aware of the content of the address after all. Cf. WALTER GANSHOF VAN DER MEERSCH, *Fin de la Souveraineté Belge*, 335.

70. "Un point d'histoire. Le fameux discours de Lumumba. La version de l'ancien commissaire général à l'Information au Congo", *La Libre Belgique*, 27 July 1961, 5. Hemeleers however claimed in 1988, undoubtedly in error, "je savais bien que tout le gouvernement savait que[e] [Lumumba] parlerait". Summary of an interview with Hemeleers, 1988 (Arch. JVL, 330).

10:43 am "that there was no Lumumba speech and therefore no text".⁷¹

It is questionable how great Baudouin's surprise really was when Lumumba was given the floor. Indeed, by the start of the proceedings, the monarch had already received three indications that the prime minister would speak. According to Kashamura, Baudouin had already been informed about the prime minister's intentions the day before (and was "shocked"); there had been the misunderstanding between Zwaenepoel and the CGI, and around 11 am Minister Wigny had briefed the king on the revised number of speeches.⁷² Kasa-Vubu, for his part, knew shortly before the session that his rival would also address the audience.

The first typescript [A] only briefly existed as a separate version, namely from the time it was taken out of the typewriter until the edits by Lumumba's entourage. Kanza does not mention it, but these revisions, which turned [A] into a new version (coded [B]), must logically have been made on at least two copies. As agreed, one was submitted to the CGI (coded [B1]). Lumumba held on to a second copy (coded [B2]). The prime minister would further annotate this document during the ceremony; these handwritten changes again transformed the text into another version (coded [D]). Incidentally, not a single source mentions that [B1] was returned to Lumumba or his staff after reception by the CGI (and, for example, after being copied or photocopied by this service).

No reliable information exists on the physical appearance of [B1] and [B2] (and consequently [D]). One must in any case be the typescript annotated by Kanza and Mandi.⁷³ There was not enough time to retype a clean version of the annotated, proofread typescript in Lumumba's official residence just before 11 am. Furthermore, there was no intention to do so. After all, the CGI had already been informed that the version it would receive was provisional. Lumumba, therefore, probably read an annotated ribbon copy, carbon copy or photocopy.

Just before the start of the ceremony, scheduled at 11 am, Hemeleers was waiting for Lumumba at the entrance of parliament as agreed. The prime minister handed him a document and repeated his directive not to disseminate the text yet.⁷⁴ Hemeleers asked Lumumba - allegedly to get an idea of how far-reaching any changes would be - whether the address had already been submitted to the monarch and the Belgian prime minister. Lumumba replied that this was not yet the case.

Hemeleers, then, received Lumumba's text only minutes before the start of the ceremony.⁷⁵ He ran to the CGI offices in the *Palais de la Nation* looking for Lenain, but his deputy was already sitting in the press stand, unreachable as the ceremony was due to start any minute. Hemeleers passed the speech [B1] along with Lumumba's instructions to his (unidentified) Congolese secretary.⁷⁶ The CGI had a protocol for texts that required

71. Report by Zwaenepoel, 4 July 1960 (Arch. AEDS, 11.4.7.6.). Hemeleers makes no mention of his contact with Zwaenepoel in his testimonial for *La Libre Belgique*.

72. ANICET KASHAMURA, *De Lumumba aux colonels*, Paris, 1966, 76. "I slip behind the presidential podium and announce to the King, who is taking his seat, the number and order of the speeches." Typescript "*Mémoires du Congo*", [ca. 1971], 86 (Arch. PW, 2).

73. Bolland's description that "[à] 10h45, une secrétaire européenne arrive avec l'original et les épreuves" possibly implies multiple copies of the typewritten 'proof', although it cannot be deduced with certainty from the context. LOUIS-FRANÇOIS VANDERSTRAETEN, op. cit., 510.

74. In 1988, Hemeleers stated having already received the text from Lumumba's hands at the entrance of the *Palais de la Nation* at 10 am, but chronologically this cannot be correct. Summary of an interview with Hemeleers, 1988 (Arch. JVL, 330). Zwaenepoel's report claims the CGI had received Lumumba's address from a "[madame] Gerbay", a former CGI staff member and, at that moment, press secretary in the Prime Minister's cabinet. This can only be Sylvia Gabbai.

75. Ganshof van der Meersch's notes corroborate Hemeleers's timeline. A certain Debaive had confirmed that the CGI had only received Lumumba's text only shortly after the start of the ceremony, from its head Hemeleers in other words. Handwritten notes, [1960] (Arch. WGVDM, 1079). This must be Marc Debaive, a civil servant detached to the CGI (Arch. Pers. K., 39595).

76. According to Hemeleers, this first version had been typed out by the (unnamed) son-in-law of Senate Chairman Joseph Iléo. It is unclear whether he was referring to [B] or stencil master [C'] here. Summary of an interview with Hemeleers, 1988 (Arch. JVL, 330).

urgent distribution but for which revisions were still expected. The secretary would tap out a stencil master, have it proofread, and make a first print run of the text but without stapling the pages together. This ensured that, if any changes were indeed made, some pages could be recycled and circulation would not be needlessly delayed.⁷⁷ The stencil copy of [B1] is coded [C]. It is the version referred to by contemporaries as the *'texte primitif'* or *'texte stencilé'*.⁷⁸ The (unlocated) stencil master used to create [C] is coded [C'].

Despite Lumumba's and Hemeleers's explicit embargo to distribute this preliminary edition [C], several journalists seem to have already obtained copies during the ceremony.⁷⁹ Perhaps they had stopped by the offices of the CGI. Hemeleers, for example, mentioned that Jo Gérard, journalist for *Europe Magazine*, had noticed Lumumba's text on his desk.⁸⁰ After the ceremony, stencil copy [C] – a print of a preliminary version, differing from the words just pronounced by Lumumba – was distributed.⁸¹ Ancelot, press secretary to the

prime minister, protested immediately and vehemently.⁸² Hemeleers had to acknowledge his service's mistake and had the remaining copies of [C] destroyed.⁸³ He then started searching for [D], the version featuring the final modifications. The *commissaire général à l'Information* experienced "extraordinary difficulties" getting a hold of Lumumba's text. The prime minister did not remember to whom he had passed his copy. As it turned out, Kashamura, Minister of Information and Cultural Affairs, had it in his pocket.⁸⁴ Hemeleers and Ganshof van der Meersch do not explicitly write that [D], the document containing Lumumba's last-minute notes, came into the CGI's possession, but their accounts all but confirm it. The CGI then issued a first variant of the pronounced text (coded [E'] for the stencil master, [E] for the stencil copies).⁸⁵ A second version was subsequently circulated as CGI press release no. 237 (coded [F'] for the stencil master, [F] for the stencil copies).⁸⁶

A new stencilled version was produced in an edition of 1500 copies in the afternoon on behalf

77. Hemeleers later claimed that he had instructed not to print the stencil copies yet. Summary of an interview with Hemeleers, 1988 (Arch. JVL, 330).

78. Cf. e.g. JEAN VAN LIERDE (dir.), *La pensée politique*, 197-201, JULES GÉRARD-LIBOIS & BENOÎT VERHAEGEN, op. cit., 323, WALTER GANSHOF VAN DER MEERSCH, *Fin de la Souveraineté Belge*, 337 as well as stencil copy of the speech labelled "texte primitif", 30 June 1960 (Arch. WGVDM, 1079).

79. Some claimed to have received a copy of Lumumba's speech as early as 10:15 am. However, this was a preliminary version of Kasa-Vubu's speech, of which a modified version was distributed afterwards. "Un point d'histoire. Le fameux discours de Lumumba. La version de l'ancien commissaire général à l'Information au Congo", *La Libre Belgique*, 27 July 1961, 5; WALTER GANSHOF VAN DER MEERSCH, *Fin de la Souveraineté Belge*, 337.

80. Summary of an interview with Hemeleers, 1988 (Arch. JVL, 330).

81. A passage in Ganshof van der Meersch's preliminary report (included in *Congo mai-juin 1960*, 245) seems to suggest that attempts were made by Lumumba's cabinet to retract the provisional text and wait for a final version: "Un membre du Cabinet de M. Lumumba ayant annoncé que des modifications aillent être apportées au texte, attendit dans les services de l'Information du Gouvernement Général que ce texte lui fut remis. Comme il ne l'était pas, il se rendit à la séance du Parlement. Pendant ce temps, un fonctionnaire subalterne recevait le texte annoncé et fit d'initiative polygraphier celui-ci, alors que la séance n'était pas achevée." Carbon copy of a report on the inquiry by Ganshof van der Meersch, 1 July 1960 (Arch. WGVDM, 1079). This junior civil servant may have been Hemeleers's secretary who had not yet received the text at the time of the incident.

82. Ganshof van der Meersch explicitly identified Ancelot, although the final published report does not mention his name. Carbon copy of a report on the inquiry by Ganshof van der Meersch, 1 July 1960 (Arch. WGVDM, 1079).

83. Copies of [C] can still be found in the papers of Ganshof van der Meersch (Arch. WGVDM, 1079) and August-Edmond De Schryver (Arch. AEDS, 11.4.7.7.). Van Lierde (*La pensée politique*, 197-201) and Gérard-Libois and Verhaegen (op. cit., 322-325) quote from [C] to highlight the differences with the delivered address.

84. WALTER GANSHOF VAN DER MEERSCH, *Congo mai-juin 1960*, 245 and "Un point d'histoire. Le fameux discours de Lumumba. La version de l'ancien commissaire général à l'Information au Congo", *La Libre Belgique*, 27 July 1961, 5.

85. A copy is located in the records of Ganshof van der Meersch, bearing the remark: "1ère édition de la seconde version c.a.d. du discours réellement prononcé. Une 1e édition avait été polycopiée en vitesse dès que le texte fut remis. Un second tirage eut lieu à la demande du Cabinet de Lumumba (1500)" (Arch. WGVDM, 1079).

86. Stencil copy of the speech with header of the CGI *Service de Presse* (Arch. WGVDM, 1079). The speeches of King Baudouin and President Kasa-Vubu were distributed as communiqué nos. 236 and 238 respectively.

of the Congolese government at the request of Lumumba's cabinet (coded [G'] for the stencil master, [G] for the stencil copy).⁸⁷ Was it considered politically expedient to ensure a more extensive circulation than the usual target audience of CGI-press releases? Certainly, this second print constituted an additional affront from the Belgians' point of view. An unjustified reaction, at first glance; the ceremony had been broadcast live by radio and the CGI had already disseminated the three speeches in the form of press releases. However, the issue was not so much the content but the timing of this edition (after the so-called '*toast réparatoire*'), and, consequently, the intent. What was an obligatory concession for Lumumba – the Belgian reaction had surprised him⁸⁸ – the Belgians regarded as a way if not to close the incident, then at least to be compensated for it. Version [G] was, to Ganshof van der Meersch, proof of the prime minister's bad faith. For Hemeleers, it was the cue to reconsider his own position.

The first cornerstone of the present analysis shows that the CGI is in all probability the records creator of the text delivered by Lumumba: the paper trail of [D] ends at the service of the *commissaire général à l'Information*. The CGI required [D] to fulfil its duties; Hemeleers retrieved the text from the Congolese Minister of Information for that very reason. The service at least examined [D] and likely utilised it as a source for subsequent 'definitive' editions. Moreover, the acquisition history of AB2191 originates with Piet Lenain, one of the CGI's deputy commissioners-general. Presuming that Lenain acquired AB2191 *ex officio* does not require any causal gymnastics. On the contrary, it is more than justified to speak of an unbroken chain of custody.⁸⁹ By consequence, AB2191 may correspond to [D].

Physical and intellectual form

AB2191 (cf. Appendix I) covers five pages recto in imperial foolscap folio (344 x 216 mm), a traditional European paper size. Rust marks in the upper left corner of the first page indicate that it was held together for years (presumably decades) by a metal paperclip. The same location also shows staple perforations, though it cannot be ascertained when the pages were stapled together.

The pages show two obvious fold lines, one horizontal and one vertical. The bottom right corner of the first page features a stamp bearing the logo of SOMA-CEGES (predecessor of the CegeSoma, 1997-2015), in which the documents' former 'place mark' (AB2191) is noted in blue ballpoint pen.

The record does not bear any registration marks. The pages are uniformly white, with no pre-printed lines. The paper must have been of good quality; there is virtually no discernible acidification, foxing⁹⁰ or other deterioration of chemical or biological origin. The pages show no tears, significant creases or other damage of mechanical nature. The paper contains a watermark: the coat of arms of the Belgian Congo, employed by the Ministry of Colonies.

The text was made by a typewriter whose make, model and typeface are not known. The impressions produced by the keystrokes are clearly perceptible on the reverse side of the pages. Consequently, AB2191 is an original typescript; indeed, the only known original typescript of the speech. From a simple observation of the base, it can be deduced that AB2191 is not a copy nor a reproduction⁹¹: not a carbon copy⁹², contemporary or recent photocopy, nor a print-out of a digital

87. Stencil copy of the speech labelled "*texte prononcé diffusé à 1500 ex.*", [30 June 1960] (Arch. WGVDM, 1079). Another copy can be found in the *Expansion belge d'Outremer*-collection (AGRI, Collection Expansion belge d'Outre-Mer (ref. 510 168), 85) of the State Archives' erstwhile Contemporary Archives Department. EMIEL VANDEWOUDE, *Liste de documents divers relatifs à l'expansion belge d'Outre-Mer, 1825-1961*, [Bruxelles], s.d., < https://agatha.arch.be/data/ead/BE-A0510_000044_002897 >, accessed 10 April 2025.

88. Cf. notably LOUIS-FRANÇOIS VANDERSTRAETEN, op. cit., 133 and JULES GÉRARD-LIBOIS & BENOÎT VERHAEGEN, op. cit., 325.

89. See *Chain of custody*, DAT, < <https://dictionary.archivists.org/entry/chain-of-custody.html> >, accessed 10 April 2025.

90. See *Foxing*, DAT, < <https://dictionary.archivists.org/entry/foxing.html> >, accessed 10 April 2025.

91. See A.J.M. DEN TEULING, op. cit., lemma 51 and 161a.

92. See A.J.M. DEN TEULING, op. cit., explanatory note to lemma 55.

Code	Description	Remarks
[A']	Manuscript of a first draft	Completed by 9 am. Unique document. Not located.
[A]	Initial typescript	Submitted between ca. 10 am and 11 am to Congolese and Belgian advisers. One original and an unknown number of carbon copies or photocopies for this 'editorial board'. No longer exists as such; edits transformed it into [B].
[B]	Edited version of [A]	Copy of [A], revised by Lumumba and his advisers between 10 am and 11 am, and ultimately validated by the prime minister. Drafted in at least two copies: one transmitted to the CGI ([B1]), one kept by Lumumba ([B2]). Not located.
[C']	Stencil master for edition [C]	Produced by the CGI based on [B1]. Unique document. Not located.
[C]	Stencil copies of the first, preliminary version	Produced by the CGI ('texte primitif', 'texte stencilé'). Unknown print circulation based on [C']. Destroyed by the CGI after the ceremony; copies present, among others, in the archives of De Schryver and Ganshof van der Meersch.
[D]	Lumumba's personal, recited copy	Copy [B2], further annotated by Lumumba during the ceremony. The last iteration of the speech to exist on paper. Unique document. Not located. This article argues that AB2191 corresponds to [D].
[D']	Pronounced speech	Read off of [D] but including real-time improvisations. Is not a document as such. Sound and audiovisual recordings exist.
[E']	Stencil master for edition [E]	Produced by the CGI based on [C], [D] and/or a recording of [D']. Unique document. Not located.
[E]	Stencil copies of the 'definitive version', issued in haste after the ceremony	Produced by the CGI. Unknown print circulation based on [E']. Copy present in the archives of Ganshof van der Meersch.
[F']	Stencil master for edition [F]	Produced by the CGI based on [C], [D] and/or a recording of [D']. Unique document. Not located.
[F]	Stencil copies of the 'definitive version', issued as CGI-press release no. 237	Produced by the CGI. Unknown print circulation based on [F']. Copy present in the archives of Ganshof van der Meersch.
[G']	Stencil master for edition [G]	Produced after the 'toast réparatoire' at the request of the Congolese government (Lumumba cabinet). Unique document. Not located.
[G]	Stencil copies of the 'definitive version', issued by the Congolese government	Disseminated after the 'toast réparatoire' at the request of the Congolese government (Lumumba cabinet). Print circulation of 1500 copies based on [G']. Copies present notably in the archives of Ganshof van der Meersch and the collection 'Expansion belge d'Outre-Mer'.

Fig. 1 Summary of the identified versions of the June 30 speech.

reproduction. Since such versions are covered in this article, it is important to note that AB2191 is not a stencilled 'edition' either. Stencil copies (and similar duplicates) multiplied by mechanical means have a rougher, more porous paper type as a base, and keystrokes are not perceptible on the reverse side. Finally, AB2191 does not exhibit the material characteristics of a stencil master used to create stencil copies. Such masters were produced directly from the typewriter (via stencil mode), have a distinct, ink-absorbing paper type as a base, and would have been completely ink-stained after use. From its physical appearance it is undeniable that AB2191 is a 'ribbon copy' of which the integrity is intact.⁹³

The acquisition history, records creation process, paper size, water mark and fold lines are already strong indicators of AB2191's authenticity.⁹⁴ The redactional features of the typescript (the annotations of the various editors above all) provide an additional layer of evidence. Excluding the typist, at least four distinct interventions can be distinguished, inferring from the different ink colours. First, by far the majority of annotations were made in green ink, likely from a marker or fountain pen. They notably changed the tone of the printed text in certain places, mainly on pages 2 and 5 (fig. 2 and 5/1a, 3a, 4a, 6a, 7a, 11a, 12a). Second, page numbers were added in red ballpoint pen (fig. 5/1a). Third, six minor modifications, rather corrective and stylistic in nature, were made in magenta ink, presumably from a marker or fountain pen (fig. 5/5a, 8a, 9a, 10a).⁹⁵ Finally, the phrase "*Sire, Excellences, Mesdames et Messieurs*" was added in blue ballpoint pen (fig. 5/2a). After the first full paragraph on page 3, following the phrase "*nous vous le disons, tout cela est désormais fini*", a hook-shaped mark was made, presumably in the same ballpoint pen (fig.

5/7a); a second, hard-to-identify mark was added midway through page 4.

The presence on AB2191 of multiple interventions from different 'hands' is consistent with the editorial history of the speech, although the number of persons who effectively made annotations cannot be ascertained. On the actual appearance of Lumumba's copy [D] - an annotated original or copy (photocopy or carbon copy) of a typescript or manuscript - the sources are silent, as outlined above.

Logically, annotations in the same ink colour do not *ipso facto* indicate the same editor or moment of revision. For example, the additions in green ink were made in two separate phases, in two clearly distinguishable handwritings, one of which is indisputably that of Patrice Lumumba himself. A message in the *Livre d'Or* of the General Confederation of Liberal Trade Unions of Belgium is proof. Indeed, Lumumba, during his study tour of Belgium with fifteen other Congolese in April-May 1956, had visited the liberal trade union in Brussels on 19 May and, on that occasion, left a word of thanks for the friendly reception.⁹⁶ Lumumba's handwriting matches some of the modifications on pages 1, 2 and 5 of AB2191 (fig. 2).

Lumumba's handwriting on AB2191 is clearly distinguishable from that of the other editor annotating in green ink. The prime minister, for example, wrote the loops and lines of certain letters at an angle (fig. 3).

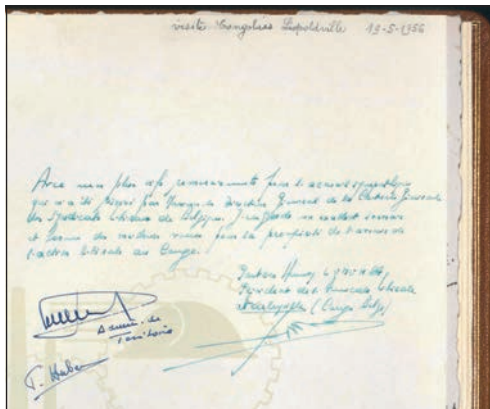
The above figure implies that the title and adverbial "*au nom du gouvernement congolais*" were added by the prime minister himself on AB2191 (fig. 2/1-2). This happened before the ceremony, since both amendments are already present on [C] (fig. 5/1a-1b, 3a-3b). Content-wise, as will be

93. Cf. A.J.M. DEN TEULING, op. cit., explanatory note to lemma 50.

94. See *Authenticity*, DAT, < <https://dictionary.archivists.org/entry/authenticity.html> >, accessed 10 April 2025.

95. Two minor corrections on the first page are not visible in fig. 5, namely the addition of the circumflex in "*connaître*" and the hyphen in "*petit-fils*".

96. SÉBASTIEN BAUDART, "De blauwe jaren van Patrice Lumumba", *Liberas Stories*, < https://www.liberasstories.eu/nl/magazine/uitgelicht/de_blauwe_jaren_van_patrice_lumumba/986 >, accessed 10 April 2025. The message (cf. fig. 2) is found in ACLVB/CGSLB Guldenboek/Livre d'Or (Liberas, Archief Algemene Centrale der Liberale Vakbonden van België (ACLVB), Z/1).



1	AB2191	discours prononcé par M. P. Lumumba Premier Ministre de la République du Congo, lors des cérémonies de la proclamation de l'indé- pendance du Congo le 30 juin 1960. <i>Sine</i>
2	AB2191	je vous salue au nom du gouvernement congolais.
3	AB2191	tant de nos frères, ou les cachots où furent brutalement jetés ceux qui avaient échappé aux balles des soldats <i>ou</i> ont <i>avaient échappé aux balles des soldats</i> ont les colonias- listes avaient fait l'outil de leur domination? <i>de justice, d'oppression et d'exploitation?</i>
4	AB2191	je vous demande à tous de ne pas réclamer du jour au lendemain des augmentations de salaire inconsidérées avant que je n'ai eu le temps de mettre sur pied le plan d'ensemble par lequel je vais assurer la prospérité de la nation;
5	AB2191	pays. La libération totale et complète de tout le peuple <i>La indépendance du Congo marque un pas décisif vers après avoir été, pendant des siècles, l'oppression.</i> Voilà, mes frères de race, mes frères de lutte, mes compatriotes,
6	AB2191	Voilà, mes frères de race, mes frères <i>Voilà, mes frères de race, mes frères</i>
7	AB2191	de ce pays. Si un jour les citoyens congolais ont le droit de participer <i>Si un jour les citoyens congolais ont le droit de participer</i> à la vie de leur pays, ils doivent être en mesure de contribuer <i>à la vie de leur pays, ils doivent être en mesure de contribuer</i>
8	AB2191	hommage aux combattants de la liberté de la nation Vive l'indépendance de la République du Congo <i>Vive l'indépendance de la République du Congo</i>

Fig. 2 Lumumba's message of 1956 and his modifications to AB2191.

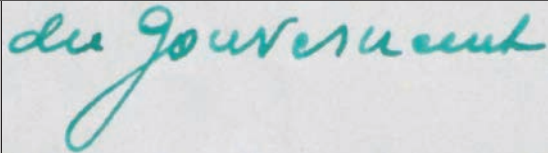
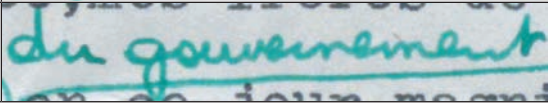
1	Lumumba	
2	Unknown editor	

Fig. 3 Handwriting of Lumumba and an unknown editor in AB2191.

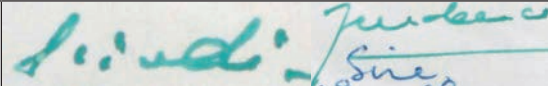
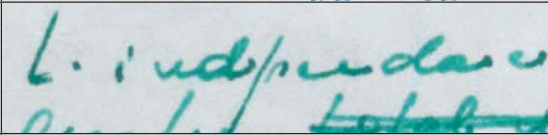
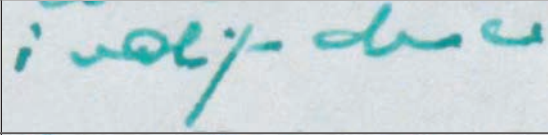
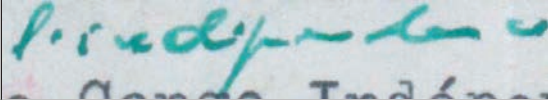
1	Title	
2	Page 5	
3	Page 5	
4	Page 5	

Fig. 4 'Indépendance' in Lumumba's handwriting in AB2191.⁹⁷

shown, the annotations on pages 2 and 5 were made during the proceedings (i.e. after [C] and before Lumumba's actual address). Their smaller and less elegant appearance is consistent with a last-minute redaction by Lumumba, who had the text on his knees (fig. 4/2-4). Incidentally, the prime minister is said to have made his annotations in green pen.⁹⁸

Finally, the paragraphs are left-aligned, with a wide margin on the left and a very limited or virtually no margin on the right. The first line is indented throughout (salutation excluded). The interlines and white spaces between paragraphs are quite generous. Critically, AB2191 is the only version of the speech to span five pages instead of three ([C], [F], [G]) or four ([E]). Capital letters are applied to proper names (e.g. "*République du Congo*") or to emphasise certain expressions carrying an affective charge (e.g. "*Combattants de la Liberté Nationale*", "*à un Noir on disait « tu »*"). The page layout of the record appears consistent with its function: a speech to be recited. This is also its intellectual form.⁹⁹

The analysis of the material characteristics of AB2191 constitutes the second pillar supporting the thesis that this document may be Lumumba's own copy [D]. The physical appearance, form and handwritten annotations prove that AB2191 is an authentic, integral record. It contains revisions in Lumumba's handwriting. AB2191 is the only known original typescript of the address – not a manuscript ([A]), stencil master ([C], [E], [F], [G]) nor another edition in the form of a stencil copy ([C], [E], [F], [G]). AB2191 therefore fulfils the first, second and, partially, the third condition formulated above ('Background').

Based purely on material properties, only [B1] or [D] remain as potential matches for AB2191. However, as previously discussed and as will be shown below, AB2191 contains sections inserted after the creation of [C] (and consequently [B1]).

Comparative content analysis

Content-wise, no two iterations of the speech are identical. Typing out, correcting, copying, printing and transcribing the text resulted in variations (typos, typographical deviations, differently interpreted words) which, much like DNA-replication, can serve as 'genetic markers' to distinguish versions from each other. For instance, only the '*texte primitif*' [C] contains the typos "*magnifiques*" and "*décmation*", while "*la justice sociale*" only appears on [F].

The third pillar on which the argument presented in this article rests, focuses on a detailed comparison between AB2191 and the other versions of the speech (fig. 1.). The reconstruction of the records creation of the different versions already suggests that, content-wise, [D] must be overall the closest match to the actual speech pronounced. It will be demonstrated that, based on this element as well, AB2191 is most likely the final text [D] carried by Lumumba. For this to be the case, the document should at least contain the passages modified during the addresses of Baudouin and Kasa-Vubu.

First, a comparison between AB2191 and the '*texte primitif*' [C] is required. As has been established, [C] was issued from [B], the version revised by the prime minister's entourage. It is therefore worthwhile considering whether AB2191 is copy [B1], which was given to Hemeleers by Lumumba just before the ceremony. It is *a priori* possible that AB2191 is at the root of stencil master [C] and, therefore, edition [C]. Perhaps Lenain kept the document afterwards; this would be at least one explanation of how the deputy commissioner-general of the CGI was able to obtain this annotated typescript. Such a hypothesis, however, requires that AB2191 be substantively identical to [C]. And yet, this is not the case.

Both the typed substrate of AB2191 and certain handwritten modifications precede the '*texte prim-*

97. In the title, the word is divided over two lines (fig. 4/1).

98. GUSTAAF DURANT, *Minister van Staat Gaston Eyskens. Een biografie*, Zele, 1983, 150.

99. See A.J.M. DEN TEULING, op. cit., lemma 58.

1a	AB2191	<i>Discours prononcé par M. P. Lumumba Premier Ministre de la République du Congo, lors de la cérémonie de la Proclamation de l'indé- pendance du Congo le 30 juin 1960.</i>
1b	[C]	DISCOURS PRONONCES PAR Monsieur LUMUMBA PREMIER MINISTRE DE LA REPUBLIQUE DU CONGO, LORS DES CEREMONIES DE LA PROCLAMATION DE L'INDEPENDANCE DU CONGO LE 30 JUIN 1960.-
2a	AB2191	<i>Sire Excellences, Mesdames et Messieurs.</i>
2b	[C]	Sire, Excellences, Mesdames, Messieurs,
3a	AB2191	je vous salue <i>au nom du gouvernement congolais.</i>
3b	[C]	je vous salue au nom du gouvernement congolais,
4a	AB2191	<i>nos</i> à mes côtés,
4b	[C]	à nos côtés,
5a	AB2191	<i>de ce</i> au trente
5b	[C]	de ce trente
6a	AB2191	<i>mais en avons profondément souffert.</i> : Tout cela, mes frères, tout cela jamais nous ne l'oublierons.
6b	[C]	Tout cela, mes frères nous en avons profondément souffert.-
7a	AB2191	Mais tout cela aussi, not que le vote de vos représentants élus xxx a agréé pour diriger notre cher pays, not , Lumumba qui souffert dans son corps et dans son coeur de l'oppression colonialiste, se vous le dit, tout cela est désormais fini.
7b	[C]	Mais tout cela aussi, nous que la vote de vos représentants élus agréées pour diriger notre cher pays, nous qui avons souffert dans notre corps et dans notre coeur de l'oppression colonialiste, nous vous le disons, tout cela est désormais fini.-
8a	AB2191	<i>vous</i> -je demande à tous les Congolais de ne reculer
8b	[C]	- je vous demande à tous de ne reculer
9a	AB2191	établis <i>dans</i> sur
9b	[C]	établis dans
10a	AB2191	notre <i>pays</i> territoire
10b	[C]	notre pays
11a	AB2191	<i>au nom du gouvernement</i> j'ai voulu, vous dire, en ce jour magnifique
11b	[C]	j'ai voulu vous dire au nom du gouvernement en ce jour magnifi-
12a	AB2191	<i>notre</i> Le gouvernement Lumumba , fort-national-populaire,
12b	[C]	Notre gouvernement fort-national-populaire,

Fig. 5 Examples of revisions in AB2191, integrated in [C].¹⁰⁰

itif' [C] chronologically. Several differences are undoubtedly the result of the hasty publication process. Variations such as "ce fut notre sort", "le droit le plus fort", "la vote de vos représentants élus agréees" instead of "ce que fut notre sort", "le droit du plus fort", "le vote de vos représentants élus a agréés" are indeed minor. Unlike AB2191, [C] bears no page numbers but does include a date and location on the first page.

Essential, however, is the observation that only *certain* changes – all of the revisions in blue and magenta ink, but only some in green ink – already feature in the 'texte primitif' [C]. The primal manifestations of those subsequently revised sections are present only on AB2191 (fig. 5 for examples).

The handwritten corrections on AB2191 explain the illogical question marks on pages 1-2 of [C]: the editor(s) blunted the initial rhetorical questions into more sober statements. The typist of [C], however, did not omit all question marks (fig. 6).

Since the majority of the changes were already included in [C], they must predate the delivery of version [B1], revised by Kanza and co., to the CGI. The modifications made to AB2191 in blue, magenta and (some) in green ink, are entirely consistent with the fine-tuning of the speech as requested by the prime minister. For example, the sentence "Tout cela, mes frères, tout cela jamais nous ne l'oublierons", which might have been perceived as vindictive, was significantly toned down (fig. 5/6a). A reference to the bullets of the *Force Publique* was discarded (fig. 2/3). Sections in which Lumumba himself was emphasised ("lutté [...] à mes côtés", "moi, Lumumba, qui ai souffert", "Le gouvernement Lumumba", ...) were given a more unifying charge through minor deletions and a switch to the first person plural ("lutté [...] à nos côtés", "nous qui avons souffert", "Notre gouvernement", ...).

Most of the corrections in Lumumba's handwriting (fig. 2/3-8), however, do not appear in the 'texte

primitif' [C]. Logically, these revisions must therefore postdate the creation of stencil master [C'] and reproduction of stencil copies [C]. Along with the difference in handwriting (fig. 3) this constitutes a second proof that the modifications in green ink were made by at least two distinct editors.

Two remarkable deleted sections (fig. 2/5 and 7) illustrate that Lumumba attempted to strike a tonal balance until the very last moment. The adjectives "totale et complète" were struck out immediately after addition; the line was pronounced as "la libération de tout le continent africain". Would a 'total and complete' decolonisation have sounded too ominous to a European audience? Conversely, the omission of "dans quelques années" in the pronounced "en vue de créer une économie nationale prospère qui consacra notre indépendance économique" follows the same logic as the deletion of the paragraph in which Lumumba advised against "augmentations de salaire inconsidérées" (fig. 2/4). Perhaps he wanted to fully harness the momentum and defuse any potential demoralising interpretations: deferring economic autonomy to an undetermined future would by no means have benefitted Lumumba's rhetorical effect nor his position as Congo's first prime minister.

It is still theoretically possible that AB2191 is version [B1] which, for the purpose of a definitive edition of the speech, was supplemented with further annotations after the ceremony. Rigot, for example, claimed that AB2191 had been annotated by Lenain. The last-minute modifications could have been transcribed by the CGI from a sound recording or even copied from Lumumba's own papers [D]. This hypothesis, however, has three all but disqualifying inconsistencies. First, it does not explain why such a transcription would at all require the inclusion of the two crossed out and never delivered passages. Furthermore if AB2191 – a near-perfect match content-wise (cf. *infra*) – is just an expanded [B1], then this raises the question as to why it was not used as the source for a

100. Stencil copy of the speech labelled "texte primitif", 30 June 1960 (Arch. WGVDM, 1079). In [C], the words "notre pays" (fig. 5/10b) and "magnifique" (fig. 5/11b) are divided over two lines.

1a	AB2191	<i>Nous avons connu</i> qui oubliera que nos terres furent spoliées au nom de textes prétendument légaux qui ne faisaient que reconnaître le droit du plus fort ?
1b	[C]	Nous avons connu que nos terres furent spoliées au nom de textes prétendument légaux qui ne faisaient que reconnaître le droit le plus fort ?
2a	AB2191	<i>Nous avons connus</i> qui oubliera que la loi n'était jamais la même selon qu'il s'agissait d'un Blanc ou d'un Noir ? : accommodante pour les uns, cruelle et inhumaine pour les autres ?
2b	[C]	Nous avons connu que la loi n'était jamais la même selon qu'il s'agissait d'un Blanc ou d'un Noir ; accommodante pour les uns, cruelle et inhumaine pour les autres.

Fig. 6 Examples of rhetorical questions in AB2191, becoming statements in [C].

	AB2191	[D']
1	[...] qui fut de larmes, de feu et sang [...]	[...] qui fut de larmes, de feu et de sang [...]
2	[...] pire que la mort même.	[...] pire que la mort elle-même .
3	[...] qu'un Noir n'était admis ni dans les cinémas, ni dans les restaurants [...]	[...] qu'un Noir n'était admis dans les cinémas, ni dans les restaurants [...]
4	[...] nous vous le disons, tout cela est désormais fini.	[...] nous vous le disons, tout haut , tout cela est désormais fini.
5	Ensemble, mes frères, nous allons commencer une nouvelle lutte [...]	Ensemble, mes frères, mes sœurs , nous allons commencer une nouvelle lutte [...]
6	Dans ce domaine, la Belgique même qui, comprenant enfin le sens de l'histoire, n'a plus essayé [...]	Dans ce domaine, la Belgique qui, comprenant enfin le sens de l'histoire, n'a pas essayé [...]
7	Ainsi, tant à l'intérieur qu'à l'extérieur, le Congo nouveau que mon gouvernement va créer [...]	Ainsi, tant à l'intérieur qu'à l'extérieur, le Congo nouveau, notre chère République , que mon gouvernement va créer [...]
8	Voilà, Excellences, Mesdames, Messieurs, mes frères de race, mes frères de lutte, mes compatriotes [...]	Voilà, Sire , Excellences, Mesdames, Messieurs, chers compatriotes, mes frères de race, mes frères de lutte [...]
9	[...] en vue de la création d'une économie nationale qui consacrera [...]	[...] en vue de créer une économie nationale prospère qui consacrera [...]

Fig. 7 Differences between AB2191 and the pronounced speech.

final published version. Indeed, as will be demonstrated below, the 'definitive' publications of the speech ([E], [F] and [G]) are not perfect transcriptions and differ from AB2191. Third, and above all, such a scenario cannot explain why the sections modified after the publication of [C] are in Lumumba's handwriting. Consequently, it can be concluded that AB2191 cannot be equated with [B1], whether or not it was supplemented by the actually pronounced changes. Moreover, AB2191, annotations included, must postdate the creation of [C] and predate Lumumba's actual speech [D'].

The next step is to consider whether AB2191 could then be version [D, the text held by Lumumba on the stage. AB2191 undisputably contains the very latest modifications. A comparative analysis with [D'] clearly shows that the typescript is strikingly close in content to the speech as it was delivered.¹⁰¹ The divergences between AB2191 and [D'] are indeed minuscule (fig. 7).

The position of AB2191 – after [C] but before [D'] – and the observation that these are largely *additions* indicate that while talking Lumumba made minor improvisations. The changes are mainly stylistic, such as the insertion of additional affective stresses (vb. “*tout haut*”, “*notre chère République*”). More interestingly, a reference to Belgian wariness towards *Indépendance* was rhetorically softened (“*n’a plus essayé*” vs. “*n’a pas essayé*”). By foregrounding the Congolese-as-countryman, the modifications of the closing remarks made the speech sound less militantly anti-colonial and more traditionally nationalistic (fig. 7/8). The remaining differences between AB2191 and [D'] are microscopic (cf. “*de feu et sang*” vs. “*de feu et de sang*”).

For the record, Lumumba made one minor slip-up: “*Nous allons établir ensemble la justice sociale et assurer que **chaque-chacon** reçoive [...]*”.

Since 1960, the consensus has been that Lumumba opened his speech with “*Congolais et Congolaises*”.¹⁰² The typewritten foundation of AB2191 did not yet contain the protocollary salutation “*Sire, Excellences, Mesdames [et] Messieurs*”. Those words were added in blue ballpoint pen before the ceremony (fig. 5/2a), likely by Lumumba's advisers. Indeed, the introductory “*Sire, Excellences, Mesdames [et] Messieurs, Congolais et Congolaises, combattants de l'indépendance aujourd'hui victorieux*” features on the “*texte primitif*” [C], meaning that the text had been delivered as such to the CGI. In the conventional account, a determined Lumumba deliberately skipped this (inserted) formula, because, above all else, he wished to address the Congolese people. Audio recordings and film footage, however, prove the contrary. Baudouin and Kasa-Vubu had delivered their speech into a microphone set up just in front of their seats, on the right side of the stage. However, when Lumumba rose from his seat on the opposite side, he mounted the central podium – thereby upstaging both heads of state literally as well. Consequently, an (unidentified) attendant had to hurriedly connect the necessary microphone cables. The attentive listener can hear the unamplified “*Excellences, Mesdames, Messieurs*”, picked up presumably by the INR-microphones.¹⁰³ The classical narrative in which Lumumba's actual address was sharper than planned should therefore be rejected. Here, too, the original text had been moderated. The last paragraph of the speech also contradicts the standard account. During the speeches of Baudouin and

101. Pure typos in AB2191 such as “*aujourd'hui*” or “*les les fusillades*” are not counted among the differences in content here. Cf. Appendix II for a complete first-hand transcription made from a digital copy of the sound recording “*Toespraak Patrice Lumumba over onafhankelijkheid Belgisch Congo*” (VRT, Televisie-archief, media ID GW_2173_3).

102. Cf. numerous authoritative testimonies (WALTER GANSHOF VAN DER MEERSCH, *Fin de la Souveraineté Belge*, 332; JULES GÉRARD-LIBOIS & BENOÎT VERHAEGEN, op. cit., 323), memoirs (THOMAS KANZA, op. cit., 161), source editions (JEAN VAN LIERDE, *La pensée politique*, 197) and secondary literature (JEAN-MARIE MUTAMBA MAKOMBO, “*Les discours*”, 370). In some instances, it is explicitly stated that Lumumba did not wish to address the Belgian king and dignitaries present - cf. WALTER GANSHOF VAN DER MEERSCH, *Fin de la Souveraineté Belge*, 332 and JEAN-CLAUDE WILLAME, op. cit., 110.

103. Digital copy of the sound recording “*Toespraak Patrice Lumumba over onafhankelijkheid Belgisch Congo*” (VRT, Televisie-archief, media ID GW_2173_3). The ensuing stumbling can be clearly heard in this sound recording. Incidentally, the attendant can be seen at work in *Soundtrack to a Coup d'État*. The recording does not allow to establish with absolute certainty whether Lumumba also said “*Sire*”.

Kasa-Vubu, Lumumba manually inserted “*Excellences, Mesdames, Messieurs*” in the lines until then addressed exclusively to his *frères de lutte* and compatriots (fig. 2/6). At the pulpit, he even added “*Sire*” (fig. 7/8).¹⁰⁴ Moreover, the conventional scenario completely disregards the fact that later, edited versions, including the one decreed by Lumumba’s cabinet ([G]), open with the full protocolary salutation. In other words, the prime minister undeniably and formally addressed the dignitaries present (King Baudouin probably excepted), but, likely due to technical reasons, his salutation was barely audible for those present and it was certainly not properly recorded.

It follows that the prime minister’s intervention was the result of three stages of final editing, namely (1) the comments from his entourage before the ceremony; (2) his own revisions during the speeches of Baudouin and Kasa-Vubu; and (3) real-time improvisations. In the process, the original typewritten text was mostly toned down.¹⁰⁵ Lumumba added the final, iconic pan-Africanist phrases himself; they are totally absent from the preliminary version [C], which is remarkable, given the Guinean influence. Why the sudden rhetorical shift at the end? Did the prime minister wish to elevate specific, Congolese grievances to a universal, ‘pan-African’ plane (thus avoiding an anti-Belgian interpretation of his words)?

In short, AB2191 is exceptionally close to the actual delivered speech. Variations between AB2191 and [D'] are remarkably minimal; the divergences suggest real-time improvisations, rather than fundamental adjustments.

The post-facto ‘issued’ versions [E], [F] and [G] are of secondary importance. Materially, AB2191 is neither a stencil copy nor a stencil master. A cross-examination with AB2191 in terms of content seems *a priori* of little use, because a definitive edition could have relied on audio recordings of the speech, third-party transcriptions, or possibly even Lumumba’s own copy [D]. Nevertheless, these editions do not fully correspond to the actually pronounced words.

In appearance, [E], [F] and [G] are distinct from one another and they must consequently have been issued from separate stencil masters. [F], for example, bears the header of the series of CGI-press releases.¹⁰⁶ Only [F] and [G] feature page numbers. Interestingly, [E] shows clear signs of urgency. First, of all known versions, only [E] consists of four pages. Pages 3-4 are only half-filled: perhaps for the sake of efficiency, the text appears to have been divided between two typists who each made a stencil master for their assigned sections, consequently resulting in two separate pages. This could explain the divergence between the pages: page 3 seems to have been drafted by a slightly less experienced typist, and the personal pronoun “*je*” at the beginning of a sentence does not bear a capital letter, unlike page 4.¹⁰⁷ Second, the first page of [E] is identical to that of [C], up to and including typographical imperfections (fig. 8), whereas pages 2-4 were retyped, thus requiring a new stencil master.¹⁰⁸ This proves that the standard procedure described by Hemeleers was followed: the stencil master [C] was reused to quickly print the first page of [E].

104. This had already been pointed out in WALTER GANSHOF VAN DER MEERSCH, *Fin de la Souveraineté Belge*, 337 and JULES GÉRARD-LIBOIS & BENOÎT VERHAEGEN, *op. cit.*, 324.

105. A memo in Ganshof van der Meersch’s case file states “[...] the initial version of Mr. Lumumba’s speech was much harsher than the one he actually delivered.” The author believes that the speech should be seen “within the context of an electoral campaign”, that Lumumba forfeited any “demagogic gains” of his first address by delivering the ‘*toast réparatoire*’, and that stirring up the issue any further would only be grist for the Prime Minister’s mill. The note, marked secret, bears the reference “CAB./6/Hauzeur”. It was possibly written by Alfred Hauzeur, attaché in Ganshof van der Meersch’s cabinet in Léopoldville. In his published report (cf. *Congo mai-juin 1960*, 245 and *Fin de la Souveraineté Belge*, 336), Ganshof van der Meersch himself only mentions that Lumumba’s pronounced words “diverged” from the preliminary version.

106. The header bears mention of the *Service de Presse* of the CGI. This is probably the *Bureau Presse-Rédaction-Édition* cf. ordinance 91/349 of 2 November 1957 (BA, 14 December 1957, 2286-2375).

107. Cf. “*je vous demande à tous*” and “*je demande à la minorité*”. Stencil copy of the speech labelled “*1^{ère} édition de la seconde version c.a.d. du discours réellement prononcé*”, 30 June 1960 (Arch. WGVDM, 1079).

108. Stencil copy of the speech labelled “*1^{ère} édition de la seconde version c.a.d. du discours réellement prononcé*”, 30 June 1960 (Arch. WGVDM, 1079).

1a	[C]	l'humiliant esclavage
1b	[E]	l'humiliant esclavage

Fig. 8 Identical typo in [C] and [E].

Considering [E], [F] and [G] are the product of distinct stencil masters, it is unsurprising that they exhibit their own typographical idiosyncrasies and typos ('mutations'). Nevertheless, the three editions share striking similarities. First, apart from several shared typos they also reproduce identical misspellings. For example, they feature "*discours prononcés*", "*petits fils*" and "*harrassant*" instead of "*discours prononcé*", "*petits-fils*" and "*harassant*". These errors must have arisen during the creation of stencil master [C]. They occur in the '*texte primitif*' [C], but not in the typewritten substrate of AB2191 which, as shown, must precede [C]. This is an additional indication that [E], [F] and [G] were based on [C]. Moreover, the 'published' versions feature variations that do not appear on [C] and must therefore date from after the ceremony. For example, in [E], [F] and [G] the pronounced phrase "*la Belgique qui, comprenant enfin le sens de l'histoire*" is incorrectly rendered as "*la Belgique même qui, comprend enfin le sens de l'histoire*".

Apart from typos, misspellings or grammatical errors, the editions postdating the ceremony are identical in content, except for one detail.¹⁰⁹ [E], [F] and [G] do however exhibit some variations content-wise from the actual speech [D'], which is somewhat surprising given that they aspired (or at least claimed) to be faithful reproductions. Three differences stand out the most. First, the incorrectly transcribed "*se soumettre au régime d'une justice, d'oppression et d'exploitation*". Lumumba spoke of a "*régime d'injustice, d'oppression et d'exploitation*", and the section had been added a such in AB2191 (fig. 2/3).¹¹⁰ Second, the subclause "*dont les colonialistes avaient fait l'outil de leur domination?*". It already appears

in the '*texte primitif*' [C] but was not pronounced. Indeed, the words had been crossed out in AB2191 (fig. 2/3). Finally, the modification of the sentence delivered by Lumumba as "*J'invite tous les citoyens congolais, homme, femmes et enfants, de se mettre résolument au travail en vue de créer une économie nationale prospère qui consacra notre indépendance économique*".

[E], [F] and [G] contain none of the minor, improvised changes (fig. 7). For example, they do not feature the phrase "[...] *le Congo nouveau, notre chère République, que mon gouvernement va créer [...]*". The editions created and disseminated after the ceremony are therefore not an exact reproduction of Lumumba's address. Why is there such a difference between the published versions and the pronounced speech? Why did the CGI not create a meticulous transcription from an audio recording? The text could have been touched up in light of a 'definitive' edition, although this does not explain the misspellings and typos. A more probable hypothesis is that [C] was cross-referenced with Lumumba's copy [D] (recovered from minister Kashamura) and/or a sound recording. As demonstrated, the stencil copies [E] were produced partially from stencil master [C]; descendancy from [C] could additionally explain the atavistic (because unpronounced) section referring to "*les colonialistes*". This comparison was likely undertaken in haste and may therefore have focused on Lumumba's most noticeable modifications.

Lastly, some contemporary sources provide a transcription allegedly based on audio recordings (albeit without specifying which administration, broadcaster or press agency produced them).¹¹¹

109. The words "*vous dire*" are missing in [E] and [G], in the pronounced sentence "*Voilà, Sire, Excellences, Mesdames, Messieurs, chers compatriotes, mes frères de race, mes frères de lutte, ce que j'ai voulu, vous dire au nom du gouvernement en ce jour magnifique de notre indépendance complète et souveraine*". It is noteworthy that in AB2191 exactly these two words, due to the shape of the horizontal curly bracket used to insert "*au nom du gouvernement*", superficially appear to be surrounded by two parentheses (fig. 5/11a).

110. As far as can be determined, Salazar is the only scholar to have noticed this crooked transcription. Unfortunately, he himself produces a fragmentary and garbled transcription, based on an RTBF-sound clip used in a *Radio France Internationale* programme. PHILIPPE-JOSEPH SALAZAR, "Patrice Lumumba: The Congo independence speech", in *African Yearbook of Rhetoric*, 2/3, 2011, 41-43.

111. "*Le discours est reproduit textuellement, d'après un enregistrement sonore effectué sur place*". WALTER GANSHOF VAN DER MEERSCH, *Congo mai-juin 1960*, 242. "*D'après une bande enregistrée sur place le 30 6*". JULES GÉRARD-LIBOIS & BENOÎT VERHAEGEN, op. cit., 322. In any case, the INR reported live, cf. digital copy of the sound recording "Toespraak Patrice Lumumba over onafhankelijkheid Belgisch Congo" (VRT, Televisie-archief, media ID GW_2173_3).

However, a critical stance is still warranted. It is trivial to observe, for instance, that *Congo mai-juin 1960* and *Congo 1960* – still commonly used today as primary sources for Lumumba's address – display (very) small differences, even though they reproduce the speech almost perfectly. Here too, the misconstrued phrase “*au régime d'une justice [,] d'oppression et d'exploitation*” appears.¹¹² Another example is an annotated transcription in De Schryver's archives, ostensibly based on a sound recording as well, in which the last inserted paragraph concludes as “[...] *en vue de mener une vie nationale propre qui conservera notre indépendance économique*”.¹¹³

From this third pillar it can be concluded that, out of all known permutations (preliminary versions as well as, surprisingly, the editions issued soon after the fact), AB2191 corresponds the best, not only comparatively but also in absolute terms, to the address delivered by Lumumba. The typescript contains the revisions made during the ceremony by the prime minister. AB2191, therefore, meets the third and fourth conditions listed above ('Background').

The Comité Intérieur Congolais-version

In 2015, Ludo De Witte, author of *De moord op Lumumba* (1999), drew attention to a particular version of the speech:

Today, more than half a century later, the paper version of Lumumba's speech is surfacing for the first time. It is the final version of the speech, taken to the podium by the Congolese

prime minister: the text drafted and typed out the night before, including the handwritten additions and corrections made in the hours before and also during the ceremony. The document was hiding in the archives of Finoutremer, the former *Compagnie du Katanga*, once a crown jewel of the *Société Générale*.¹¹⁴

Any analysis of AB2191 must consider this document (which will be referred to as the “CIC-version”), upheld as Lumumba's personal copy for nearly a decade. Archivists' scholasticism this is not. The speeches of Baudouin and Lumumba have become literal textbook examples on (de) colonization in Belgian secondary history education. Today, at least one ubiquitous manual presents the CIC-version as Lumumba's copy.¹¹⁵ Consequently, a critique of De Witte's claims is more than warranted.

De Witte had retrieved the document from one of the three archival fonds of the *Compagnie du Congo pour le commerce et l'industrie* (CCCI) - *Compagnie du Katanga* ('Finoutremer').¹¹⁶ He does not offer an explanation as to *why* exactly the archives contain this particular version of Lumumba's speech, but only invokes the *Société Générale* and its Katangese “crown jewel”. A precise understanding of the archival context is, however, essential to interpret the CIC-version. Like most archives of holding companies, large corporations, banks etc., ‘*Finoutremer. 1ste neerlegging*’ is a conglomerate of records of absorbed competitors, sister and subsidiary companies, and, in this case, even professional associations, sponsored periodicals and the *Cercle Privé du Royal Automobile Club de Belgique*. The fourth section of the archives (titled

112. JULES GÉRARD-LIBOIS & BENOÎT VERHAEGEN, op. cit., 323 and WALTER GANSHOF VAN DER MEERSCH, *Congo mai-juin 1960*, 243.

113. Transcription of the speech, 1960 (Arch. AEDS, 11.4.7.6.).

114. LUDO DE WITTE, “De speech die Boudewijn op zijn plaats zette”, *De Standaard*, 27 juni 2015. Cf. also LUDO DE WITTE, “De speech die Congo zijn waardigheid teruggaf” and “Lees de onuitgegeven speech van Lumumba: explosie van Congolese vreugde, kaakslag voor België”, *Knack*, 30 June 2015, < <https://www.knack.be/nieuws/lees-de-onuitgegeven-speech-van-lumumba-explosie-van-congolese-vreugde-kaakslag-voor-belgie/> >, accessed 10 April 2025.

115. *Janus*. 6. *D&A-finaliteit*, Brugge, die Keure, 2024, 135.

116. The fonds in question is ‘Finoutremer. 1^{ste} neerlegging’ conserved in AGR2. Incidentally, these records are freely available for consultation and, moreover, have been accessible via a thorough finding aid since 2006: RENÉ BRION & JEAN-LOUIS MOREAU, *Inventaire des archives des groupes Compagnie du Congo pour le Commerce et l'Industrie et Compagnie du Katanga (alias 'Finoutremer')(1887-1984)*, [Bruxelles], [2006]; cf. < https://agatha.arch.be/data/ead/BE-A0545_006633_006537_FRE >, accessed 10 April 2025.

"Fonds divers") contains records of the *Comité Intérieur Congolais* (CIC) and, more specifically, of its secretary Lucien de Béco, who was also *directeur* and *administrateur délégué* of the CCCI.¹¹⁷ Among these records are three subject files labelled "*Informations diverses*". The CIC-version of Lumumba's speech is located in the second file.¹¹⁸

It was the CIC secretariat that filed the document with 'miscellaneous' incoming and minutes of outgoing records associated with the process of Congolese independence. Among the items found in the same folder are letters, telegrams, notes, speeches, reports and press clippings, as well as manifestoes (authentic or otherwise) of Congolese political parties and even copies of forged Lumumba letters.¹¹⁹ The document filed just before the CIC-version, sent the same day, is a copy of a purported leaflet of Lumumba's MNC faction.¹²⁰ A photocopy of an anonymous draft memo on fiscality is located immediately after the speech. No records in the folder refer to the CIC-version. Not even an accompanying letter or note is attached to it. Moreover, the minutes of the meetings of the CIC contain no trace of the document.¹²¹ The CIC-version was most likely sent to secretary de Béco purely for information purposes, between 30 June and 27 July 1960 at the latest.

De Witte errs in claiming to have been the first to unearth a paper copy. The exact same document

had featured in an exhibition created by the State Archives in 2007-2008.¹²² Furthermore, as has already been demonstrated, several editions of the speech (including those for press dissemination) existed and, not surprisingly, such documents are present, for example, in the papers of Belgian ministers and top officials. An annotated typescript, however, is by definition exceptional. Focusing on the content and political context of the speech, De Witte fails to mention that the CIC-version is a contemporary photocopy.¹²³ Solely by virtue of this simple observation it can be ruled out that this could be Lumumba's personal copy [D]: the prime minister manually revised his text up to the last minute, but the CIC-version contains only annotations in their photocopied and not original form.

The base of this photocopy is a paper type produced by the Belgian company Gevaert, as indicated by the logos on the reverse side. Given the period, it must be a copy based on the principle of diffusion transfer reversal, and, in this particular case, the Gevacopy process. Interestingly in this context, by 1960 the Gevacopy range covered virtually all use cases: one to two positives could be made from one negative with the standard negative and positive papers; the Multi-papers allowed up to ten positives from one negative; and the Gevacopy offset system was developed for larger print runs.¹²⁴ It is therefore unsurprising that the photocopy in '*Finoutremer 1^{ste} neerlegging*' is not

117. RENÉ BRION & JEAN-LOUIS MOREAU, op. cit., XLV. The records of the CIC-secretariat cover nos. 2046-2103. The complete description of nos. 2099-2101 is "*Informations diverses*": *dossiers concernant l'indépendance du Congo avec notamment de la correspondance reçue par E. Van der Straeten (président de la C.C.C.I.)*." On the CIC, cf. GUY VANTHEMSCHE, "Comment la Société Générale gérait-elle son "empire économique" au Congo belge? L'action du Comité Intérieur Colonial pendant les années 1930", in SERGE JAUMAIN & KENNETH BERTRAMS (dir.), *Patrons, gens d'affaire et banquiers. Hommages à Ginette Kurgan-van Hentenryk*, Bruxelles, 2004, 251-268.

118. Photocopy of an annotated typescript of the speech, [June-July 1960] (Arch. Fin., 2100).

119. Cf. for example a letter from Lumumba to Jean-Pierre Finant, vice president of the *Province Orientale*, bearing the subject "*Mesures d'application de la première phase de la dictature*" and salutation "*VIVE L'UNION SOVIETIQUE. VIVE KROUTCHEV*" (Arch. Fin., 2100). Several items from the subject folders in question are cited in ANNE-SOPHIE GIJS, "Une ascension politique teintée de rouge. Autorités, Sûreté de l'État et grandes Sociétés face au "danger Lumumba" avant l'indépendance du Congo (1956-1960)", *Belgisch Tijdschrift voor Nieuwste Geschiedenis*, 42/1, 2012, 11-58.

120. "*Parchemin que tout anjutsu (mukusu) doit avoir et connaître par coeur. Devise M.N.C. – Lumumba*" (Arch. Fin., 2100).

121. Minutes of the meetings, 1960-1961 (Arch. Fin., 2058-2059) and indices to the items discussed (Arch. Fin., 2064).

122. Described as item no.54 in the exhibition catalogue: *Tentoonstelling. n.v. Congo s.a. Beelden van Belgische ondernemingen in Congo*, Brussel, 2008, 22-23.

123. Where, in 2015, the *De Standaard* article contains the word "*kopie*", *De Wereld Morgen* does not. In 2022, the *Knack* article claims it is "The original typewritten and manually corrected text".

124. Documentation, internal newsletters and promotional materials concerning DTR and Gevacopy (FOMU, Historisch Archief AGFA Gevaert, D801-3, D830-B, D830-D, D830-E, D830-F, D832 and D835).

unique: the SIBEKA-archives, for example, contain an identical copy.¹²⁵

The CIC-version is complete and, like AB2191, covers five pages. However, it exhibits no horizontal or vertical fold lines. The uniformly jagged edge appearing at the bottom of almost every page is striking.¹²⁶ The light brown paper tone and apparent signs of water damage are typical of the Gevacopy process.¹²⁷ Comparing the CIC-version with AB2191 side-by-side, it is clear that this 'rapid-copying' was not executed flawlessly. The margin on the right side of the pages has largely been cut off; on pages 1, 2 and 4, the last characters of certain words are even missing. The CIC-version was probably made with separate exposure and developing machines, first exposing the stack of pages one by one to create five sheets of negatives and then developing them. This explains why the bottom of page 3 can be seen on the bottom of page 4. The creasing of pages 3 and 4 also suggest at least some carelessness in the copying process.¹²⁸

The next logical step is to examine the form and content of the *original document*, of which the CIC-version is a photocopy. The typed substrate is identical to that of AB2191: it includes the same typographical errors and corrections, character spacing as well as imperfections caused by the wear and tear of the typewriter or ink ribbon (fig. 9).

In principle, such details are reproducible (though that would require a supernaturally accurate typist). It does, however, raise the question as to what scenario would require a perfect copy of AB2191 in the first place. After all, the content and not the typography of the document was essential to contemporaries. The manner in which the letter

arms and ink ribbon have set the characters of "Ensemble" on paper, forms irrefutable proof that AB2191's typewritten substrate and the CIC-version are identical (fig. 9/8a-8b). This imprint is *de facto* unique. The original must then logically be either an annotated carbon copy or an annotated photocopy of the typewritten foundation of AB2191.

The annotations present on the CIC-version are extremely difficult to analyse. Differences in ink colour are hardly distinguishable on this type of monochrome photocopy. Moreover, the notes were later traced in blue ballpoint pen in several places, to remedy the limited legibility of the photocopied notes. Formally, the handwritten revisions clearly differ from those present on AB2191. Crucially, they were drafted in separate handwritings (fig. 10) bearing no resemblance to that of Lumumba (fig. 2).

Conversely, although the absence of a title is striking, *content-wise* the handwritten revisions are virtually identical to their counterparts in AB2191.¹²⁹ Differences mostly involve minor variations in *articles contractés*, punctuation, diacritic marks or agreement: the CIC-version contains "ou périrent" (instead of "où périrent" in AB2191), "dans le regime" (vs. "au le regime"), "nous que" (vs. "nous, que"), "à se mettre" (vs. "de se mettre") and "l'indépendance et l'Unité Africaine" (vs. "l'indépendance et l'unité africaines"). In contrast with AB2191, the conjunction "et" is missing from "Medames Messieurs", while the conjunction "ou" in "ou les cachots" was not deleted. Finally, the CIC-version lacks the adjective "tous" in "J'invite les citoyens congolais" and the clause "dans quelques années", discussed above.

125. The speech can be found among the records of CIC-chairman Edgar Van der Straeten (AGR2, Société d'Entreprise et d'Investissements SIBEKA (ref. 545 189), 5286).

126. The author has not been able to identify the paper type exhibiting this kind of jagged edges.

127. *Office Printing and Reprography*, Preservation Self-Assessment Program (University of Illinois) website, < <https://psap.library.illinois.edu/collection-id-guide/officeprintcopy#diffusiontransfer> >, accessed 10 April 2025.

128. A Gevacopy booklet explicitly describes how to avoid such creases. *For perfect copies in seconds use Gevacopy*, [1960?], 4 (FOMU, Historisch Archief AGFA Gevaert, D830-F).

129. For the sake of completeness, two unidentified groups of characters – possibly initials, abbreviations or stenographic notes – are present on pages 1 and 5.

	AB2191	CIC-version
1	ineffaçablement garderez/gravée dans	ineffaçablement garderez/gravée dans
2	à leur tous	à leur tous
3	d'un Noir ?:	d'un Noir ?:
4	: Tout cela	: Tout cela
5	fin à lax'oppression	fin à lax'oppression
6	déclaration des Droits	déclaration des Droits
7	efficacement	efficacement
8	Ensemble.	Ensemble.

Fig. 9 Examples of identical typos or imperfections in AB2191 and the CIC-version.

	AB2191	CIC-version
1	<i>Sire</i> <i>Mrs dan</i> Excellence <i>et Meme</i> Congolais et Congolaises,	<i>Sire</i> Excellence <i>Mrs dan</i> Congolais et Congolaises,
2	<i>Nous avons connus</i> Qui oubliera que	<i>Nous avons connus</i> Qui oubliera que
3	<i>mais en avons profondément souffert</i> tout cela jamais nous ne l'oublierons.	<i>mais en avons profondément souffert</i> tout cela jamais nous ne l'oublierons.
4	<i>indépendance des</i> l'indépendance des <i>C'est un pas vers</i> l'indépendance des <i>de tout le peuple</i>	<i>C'est un pas vers</i> l'indépendance des <i>de tout le peuple</i>

Fig. 10 Handwritten revisions in AB2191 and their counterparts in the CIC-version.

The observation that AB2191 is an authentic ribbon copy and the CIC-version a contemporary photocopy paves the way for a number of hypotheses. Only conjecture is possible about the provenance and creation of the photocopied original. Further technical analysis may be able to provide a definitive answer. However, it seems plausible that a carbon copy of [A] was annotated after the fact based on Lumumba's own, final copy [D] (found in Kashamura's possession). The presence of the deleted "*totale et complète de l'Afrique*" but not of "*dans quelques années*" is odd but in the absence of contextual information, it is only possible to speculate as to why that is the case. Perhaps the copyist was careless (in passing over the second deleted phrase) or, on the other hand, too rigorous (in realising too late that only the pronounced words were of importance).

This fourth and final pillar concludes by proving that the CIC-version *cannot have been* Lumumba's copy [D]. First, unlike AB2191, this document is a contemporary photocopy. It does not bear the handwriting of the Congolese prime minister, proving that the photocopied original could not have been Lumumba's own version either. Finally, although in content the text is particularly close to the actual address (only AB2191 is closer in this respect), there is no concrete evidence whatsoever that Lumumba actually held this document on the podium. The CIC secretariat could have received this photocopy, eventually filed in a 'miscellaneous' subject folder, from any number of sources. The presence of another identical copy in the SIBEKA archives proves that such a photocopy was at least circulating among the middle management of the CIC.

IV. Conclusion

Our hypothesis that AB2191 is most likely Lumumba's own text of his famous first speech of 30 June 1960 rests on four pillars. First, the CGI, the service of the *Gouvernement général* (and the embryonic Republic of Congo) responsible for distributing official communiqués, is where the

trail of Lumumba's copy [D] ends and the custodial history of AB2191 begins. The document came into the possession of Piet Lenain (the CGI's number two) and was transferred to CegeSoma by an acquaintance of his widow. Stating that Lenain received AB2191 in his official capacity requires the least assumptions. Furthermore, AB2191 is the only known original typescript. It contains annotations in Lumumba's handwriting. It is not a duplicate or reproduction but an authentic, integral document having as its base a contemporary paper format bearing the watermark of the Belgian colonial administration. Mechanically duplicated (i.e. stencilled) copies require masters that differ fundamentally from AB2191 in physical appearance. Third, of all known versions including editions distributed afterwards, AB2191 most closely matches Lumumba's spoken words. It includes his revisions made during the speeches of Baudouin and Kasa-Vubu. AB2191 is the only version containing both deleted, unpronounced passages "*totale et complet de l'Afrique*" and "*dans quelques années*", drafted in the prime minister's handwriting. Finally, the CIC-version is a contemporary photocopy that, based solely on formal criteria, cannot be identified as [D]. Moreover, its provenance points to a radically different archival context, the document does not contain notes in Lumumba's handwriting and lacks a deleted, handwritten passage present in AB2191.

Notwithstanding the results of our inquiry, it would be intellectually dishonest to claim an outcome that is one hundred per cent conclusive. Other versions of the speech could always surface. At the time of writing, a sufficiently granular view of the public and private archives kept in the Democratic Republic of Congo was not available. In Brussels, the arrangement and description of the archives of the former Ministry of Colonies and the *Gouvernement général* will take years. Hemeleers's archive and AB2191 itself are proof that relevant material can also be found in private hands. However, any alternative candidate for [D] should be analysed in light of the evidence presented here. Any assertion that AB2191 is not [D] must (1) indicate what Lumumba's copy should

look like and (2) identify AB2191's location in the textual genealogy. Additional assumptions should be evaluated highly critically, especially when not based on reliable sources.

The originality of the present investigation into typescript AB2191 lies not so much in the amount of new historical facts it sheds light on. What is significant here is the method: an archival analysis of a *concrete* record, created from a *concrete* process of records creation. This inquiry, firmly rooted in primary sources and engaging critically with existing literature, not only produces a definitive transcription of Lumumba's actual words, but questions common assumptions about one of the most famous speeches in Congolese and Belgian history. Notably, Lumumba's improvisations and the observation that he did address the dignitaries present challenge the image of an intransigent prime minister set on confrontation. Most importantly, however, this analysis has identified what is in all probability Lumumba's own copy of the address: an object with clear cultural and political value.

The complex edition history of the text, as well as the fact that Lumumba's speech is incorrectly transcribed even by contemporary scholars, highlight the importance of primary source research as a safeguard, among other things, against quasi-closed citation circuits. Criticism of a historiography that has embraced interpreting archives 'along the archival grain' as a refreshing revelation implies neither source fetishism nor positivist resurrection. Rather than a '*retour aux sources*', a Benjaminian *détour* would be more fertile.¹³⁰

This article has highlighted the advantages in applying the methodology of archival science, and, consequently, advocates a basic understanding of its praxis. This is by no means an imagined necessity, as proven by the generally inadequate application of archival concepts by scholars from a range of disciplines when writing about archives – the inflation of the concept of 'the archive' itself (with or without fashionable capitalisation) first and foremost.¹³¹ It is not uncommon today to read the kind of parapaxis in which the causal link between historiographical output and archival prerequisite is obfuscated.¹³² However, archives are not created for historians; scholarly research is not even the primary motivation for preserving them. Above all, archives are a product of the concrete (formal and unofficial) activities of their creators, of their internal contradictions and of the power relations within which they operated.

It is therefore all the more striking that the focus on the history of colonial media, cultures and mentalities – the 'colonisation of the mind' – has not yet been accompanied by an equal interest in the uneven and combined development of the state apparatus that shaped the Belgian Congo. Certainly, criticism of the archival policies of the descendants of the Ministry of Colonies is justified, and finding aids to the fonds in transit to the State Archives are eagerly awaited.¹³³ Nevertheless, despite their obvious limitations, studies like Pauwels-Boon's show what was possible half a century ago even with a fraction of the available archives.

It is, in conclusion, not sufficient to analyse a record simply as a 'text' without also approach-

130. In Löwy's words a "dialectical leap [...] first towards the past and then towards the future". MICHAEL LÖWY, *Fire Alarm. Reading Walter Benjamin's 'On the Concept of History'*, London/New York, 2005, 87.

131. BRIAN M. WATSON, "Please Stop Calling Things Archives. An Archivist's Plea", *Perspectives on History*, 2021, < <https://www.historians.org/perspectives-article/please-stop-calling-things-archives-an-archivists-plea-january-2021/> >, accessed 23 April 2025.

132. For example, in the respective chapter of the experts' report of the 'Congo Commission', archives are consistently framed as primarily a source for historians and secondarily, as a kind of auspicious incidentality, as an "important institution of the modern Nation", a "means of governance" of "practical importance". Chamber of Representatives, 55 (2019-2024), document 1462/3, 391.

133. GUY VANTHEMSCHE, "Préface" in PIERRE-ALAIN TALLIER, MARIE VAN ECKENRODE & PATRICIA VAN SCHUYLENBERGH (dir.), *Belgique, Congo, Rwanda et Burundi. Guide des sources de l'histoire de la colonisation (19e-20e siècle). Vers un patrimoine mieux partagé!*, 2 dln., Turnhout, 2021, 9-14. Cf. also BÉRENGÈRE PIRET, "Exhumer les vestiges de la colonisation. Les archives coloniales belges et leur histoire", *Comma*, 1, 2015, 51-62.

ing it as a *'Record in Contexts'*.¹³⁴ Such contextual reconstruction is a fundamentally different exercise from an intellectual history, editorial or discourse analysis. Among other things, it requires the identification of the records creator as well as a cor-

rect understanding of its institutional history and real functions. Typescript AB2191, the CIC-version and other documentary condensates of Lumumba's speech cannot be understood in isolation from the concrete activities of which they are the product.

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Abbreviations

AGR1 : Archives générales du Royaume 1

AGR2 : Archives générales du Royaume 2 - Dépôt Joseph Cuvelier

Arch. AEDS : KADOC KU Leuven, Archief August-Edmond De Schryver (BE/942855/209)

Arch. BV : RMCA, Archief Benoît Verhaegen (HA.01.0869)

Arch. Fin. : AGR2, Finoutremer 1e neerlegging (545 150)

Arch. JVL : CegeSoma, Jean Van Lierde. Deelarchief Belgisch Congo/Zaire (547 1417 AA1643)

Arch. Pers. M. : AGR2, Afrikaans archief - Ministerie van Koloniën. Personeel van Afrika. Individuele dossiers. Archiefonds Metropool (545 516)

Arch. Pers. K. : AGR2, Afrikaans archief - Afrikaanse Administratie. Personeel van Afrika - Individuele dossiers. Archiefonds Kolonie (545 553)

Arch. PW : AGR1, Pierre Wigny (510 0.III.1560)

Arch. WGVDM : ULB Archives, patrimoine et réserve précieuse, Archief Walter Ganshof van der Meersch (180PP)

BA : Bulletin Administratif du Congo Belge

CegeSoma : Study- and Documentation Centre for War and Contemporary Society

CGI : Commissariat général à l'Information

CID : Centre d'information et documentation du Congo belge

DAT : Dictionary of Archives Terminology

Inforcongo : Office de l'Information et des Relations Publiques pour le Congo Belge et le Ruanda-Urundi

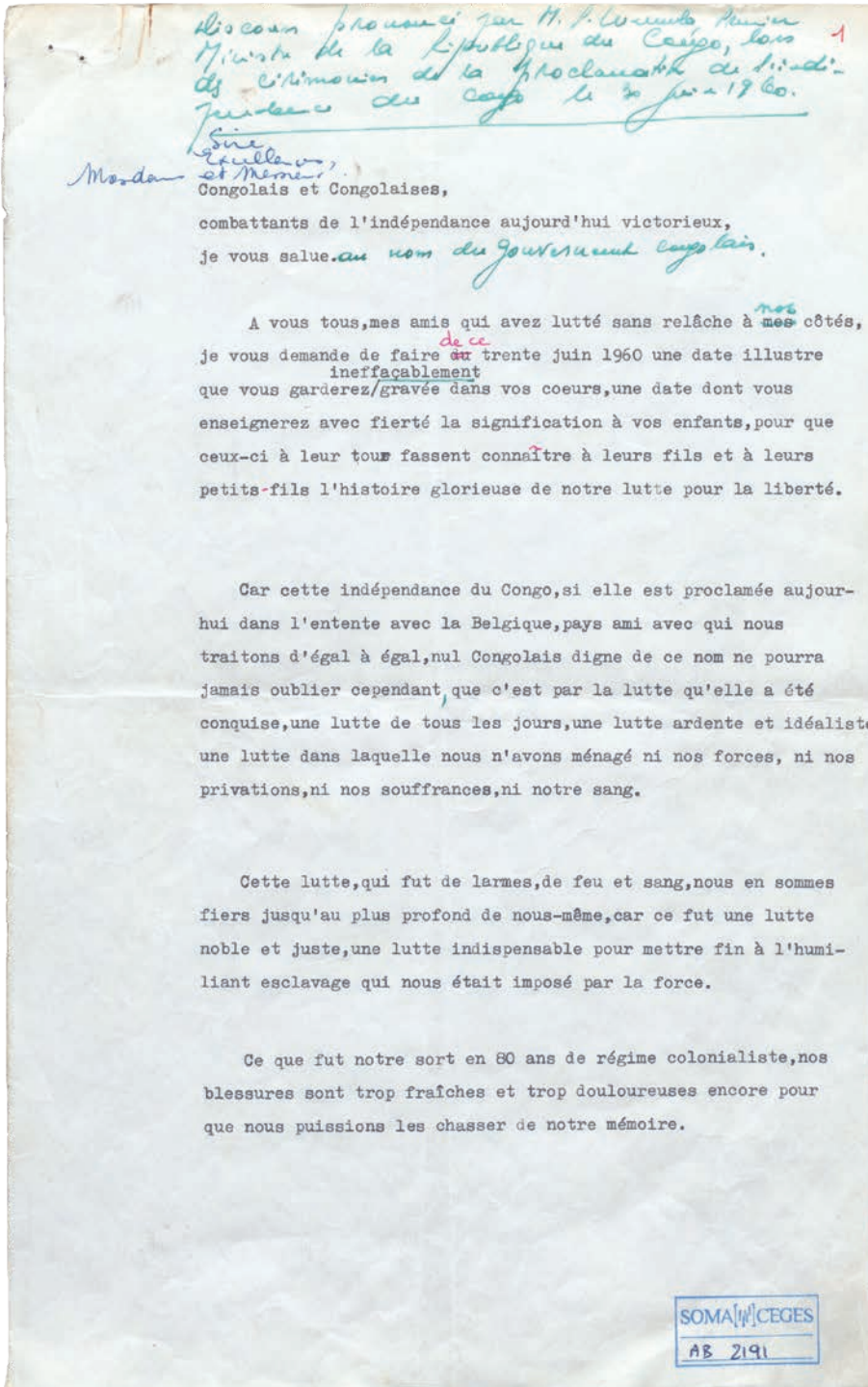
INR : Institut national de radiodiffusion

MB : Moniteur Belge

RMCA : Royal Museum for Central Africa

134. Records in Contexts is the latest standard for archival description, developed by the International Council on Archives. Cf. < <https://www.ica.org/resource/records-in-contexts-introduction-to-archival-description/> > accessed 10 April 2025.

Appendix I: Typescript AB2191



Nous avons connu
 Car qui oubliera le travail harrassant exigé en échange de salaires qui ne nous permettaient ni de manger à notre faim, ni de nous vêtir ou nous loger décentement, ni d'élever nos enfants comme des êtres chers ?

Nous avons connu
 Qui oubliera les ironies, les insultes, les coups que nous devions subir matin, midi et soir parce que nous étions des "nègres"? Qui oubliera qu'à un Noir on disait "tu", non certes comme à un ami, mais parce que le "vous" honorable était réservé aux seuls Blancs ?

Nous avons connu
 Qui oubliera que nos terres furent spoliées au nom de textes prétendument légaux qui ne faisaient que reconnaître le droit du plus fort ?

Nous avons connu
 Qui oubliera que la loi n'était jamais la même selon qu'il s'agissait d'un Blanc ou d'un Noir ? accommodante pour les uns, cruelle et inhumaine pour les autres ?

Nous avons connu
 Qui oubliera les souffrances atroces des relégués pour opinions politiques ou croyances religieuses: exilés dans leur propre ~~propre~~ patrie, leur sort était vraiment pire que la mort même.

Nous avons connu
 Qui oubliera qu'il y avait dans les villes des maisons magnifiques pour les Blancs et des paillottes croulantes pour les Noirs; qu'un Noir n'était admis ni dans les cinémas, ni dans les restaurants ni dans les magasins dits "européens"; qu'un Noir voyageait à même la coque des péniches, aux pieds du Blanc dans sa cabine de luxe ?

Qui oubliera
 Qui oubliera enfin les ~~pendaisons~~ ou les fusillades, où périrent tant de nos frères, ~~et~~ les cachots où furent brutalement jetés ceux qui avaient échappé aux balles des soldats dont les colonisateurs avaient fait l'outil de leur domination ?

au sein desquels furent jetés les fils de la République, d'oppression, d'oppression et d'oppression ?

nous en avons profondément souffert.
 : Tout cela ,mes frères, ~~tout cela~~ jamais nous ne l'oublierons.

Mais tout cela aussi, ^{nous,} moi, que le vote de vos représentants
 élus ~~ont~~ a agréé, pour diriger notre cher pays, ^{nous,} moi, Lumumba qui
^{avons} ~~ai~~ souffert dans ^{notre} mon corps et dans ^{notre} mon coeur de l'oppression
 colonialiste, ^{nous,} je vous le dis, tout cela est désormais fini.

La République du Congo a été proclamée et notre cher pays
 est maintenant entre les mains de ses propres enfants.

Ensemble, mes frères, nous allons commencer une nouvelle lutte,
 une lutte sublime qui va mener notre pays à la paix, à la prospérité
 et à la grandeur.

Nous allons établir ensemble la justice sociale et assurer
 que chacun reçoive la juste rémunération de son travail;

Nous allons montrer au monde ce que peut faire l'homme noir
 quand il travaille dans la liberté, et nous allons faire du Congo
 le centre de rayonnement de l'Afrique tout entière;

nous allons veiller à ce que les terres de notre patrie
 profitent véritablement à ses enfants;

nous allons revoir toutes les lois d'autrefois et en faire
 de nouvelles qui seront justes et nobles;

nous allons mettre fin à ~~la~~ l'oppression de la pensée libre
 et faire en sorte que tous les citoyens jouissent pleinement des
 libertés fondamentales prévues dans la déclaration des Droits de
 l'Homme;

nous allons supprimer efficacement toute discrimination quelle qu'elle soit et donner à chacun la juste place que lui vaudra sa dignité humaine, son travail et son dévouement au pays;

nous allons faire régner non pas la paix des fusils et des bayonnettes, mais la paix des coeurs et des bonnes volontés.

Et pour tout cela, chers compatriotes, soyez sûrs que nous pourrons compter non seulement sur nos forces énormes et nos richesses immenses, mais sur l'assistance de nombreux pays étrangers dont nous accepterons la collaboration chaque fois qu'elle sera loyale et ne cherchera pas à nous imposer une politique quelle qu'elle soit.

Dans ce domaine, la Belgique même qui, comprenant enfin le sens de l'histoire, n'a plus essayé de s'opposer à notre indépendance, est prête à nous accorder son aide et son amitié, et un traité vient d'être signé dans ce sens entre nos deux pays égaux et indépendants. Cette coopération, j'en suis sûr, sera profitable aux deux pays. De notre côté, tout en restant vigilants, nous saurons respecter les engagements librement consentis.

Ainsi, tant à l'intérieur qu'à l'extérieur, le Congo nouveau que mon gouvernement va créer sera un pays riche, libre et prospère. Mais pour que nous arrivions sans retard à ce but, vous tous, législateurs et citoyens congolais, je vous demande de m'aider de toutes vos forces.

-je vous demande à tous d'oublier les querelles tribales qui nous épuisent et risquent de nous faire mépriser à l'étranger;

-je demande à la minorité parlementaire d'aider mon gouvernement par une opposition constructive et de rester strictement dans les voies légales et démocratiques;

Appendix II: Transcription of the speech (D')

Source: digital copy of the sound recording "Toespraak Patrice Lumumba over onafhankelijkheid Belgisch Congo" (VRT, Televisie-archief, media ID GW_2173_3). Paragraphs, capital letters and punctuation marks based on typescript AB2191.

Excellences, Mesdames, Messieurs, Congolais et Congolaises, combattants de l'indépendance aujourd'hui victorieux, je vous salue au nom du gouvernement congolais.

À vous tous, mes amis qui avez lutté sans relâche à nos côtés, je vous demande de faire de ce trente juin mille neuf cent soixante une date illustre que vous garderez ineffaçablement gravée dans vos cœurs, une date dont vous enseignerez avec fierté la signification à vos enfants, pour que ceux-ci à leur tour fassent connaître à leurs fils et à leurs petits-fils l'histoire glorieuse de notre lutte pour la liberté.

Car cette indépendance du Congo, si elle est proclamée aujourd'hui dans l'entente avec la Belgique, pays ami avec qui nous traitons d'égal à égal, nul Congolais digne de ce nom ne pourra jamais oublier cependant, que c'est par la lutte qu'elle a été conquise, une lutte de tous les jours, une lutte ardente et idéaliste, une lutte dans laquelle nous n'avons ménagé ni nos forces, ni nos privations, ni nos souffrances, ni notre sang.

Cette lutte, qui fut de larmes, de feu et de sang, nous en sommes fiers jusqu'au plus profond de nous-mêmes, car ce fut une lutte noble et juste, une lutte indispensable pour mettre fin à l'humiliant esclavage qui nous était imposé par la force.

Ce que fut notre sort en quatre-vingts ans de régime colonialiste, nos blessures sont trop fraîches et trop douloureuses encore pour que nous puissions les chasser de notre mémoire.

Car nous avons connu le travail harassant exigé en échange de salaires qui ne nous permettaient ni de manger à notre faim, ni de nous vêtir ou nous loger décentement, ni d'élever nos enfants comme des êtres chers.

Nous avons connu les ironies, les insultes, les coups que nous devons subir matin, midi et soir

parce que nous étions des « nègres ». Qui oubliera qu'à un Noir on disait « tu », non certes comme à un ami, mais parce que le « vous » honorable était réservé aux seuls Blancs ?

Nous avons connu que nos terres furent spoliées au nom de textes prétendument légaux qui ne faisaient que reconnaître le droit du plus fort.

Nous avons connu que la loi n'était jamais la même selon qu'il s'agissait d'un Blanc ou d'un Noir: accommodante pour les uns, cruelle et inhumaine pour les autres.

Nous avons connu les souffrances atroces des relégués pour opinions politiques ou croyances religieuses: exilés dans leur propre patrie, leur sort était vraiment pire que la mort elle-même.

Nous avons connu qu'il y avait dans les villes des maisons magnifiques pour les Blancs et des pailletes croulantes pour les Noirs; qu'un Noir n'était admis dans les cinémas, ni dans les restaurants ni dans les magasins dits « européens »; qu'un Noir voyageait à même la coque des péniches, aux pieds du Blanc dans sa cabine de luxe.

Qui oubliera enfin les fusillades, où périrent tant de nos frères, les cachots où furent brutalement jetés ceux qui ne voulaient plus se soumettre au régime d'injustice, d'oppression et d'exploitation ? Tout cela, mes frères, nous en avons profondément souffert.

Mais tout cela aussi, nous, que le vote de vos représentants élus a agréés pour diriger notre cher pays, nous, qui avons souffert dans notre corps et dans notre cœur de l'oppression colonialiste, nous vous le disons, tout haut, tout cela est désormais fini.

La République du Congo a été proclamée et notre cher pays est maintenant entre les mains de ses propres enfants.

Ensemble, mes frères, mes sœurs, nous allons commencer une nouvelle lutte, une lutte sublime qui va mener notre pays à la paix, à la prospérité et à la grandeur.

Nous allons établir ensemble la justice sociale et assurer que chaque-chacun reçoive la juste rémunération de son travail;

Nous allons montrer au monde ce que peut faire l'homme noir quand il travaille dans la liberté, et nous allons faire du Congo le centre de rayonnement de l'Afrique tout entière;

Nous allons veiller à ce que les terres de notre patrie profitent véritablement à ses enfants;

Nous allons revoir toutes les lois d'autrefois et en faire de nouvelles qui seront justes et nobles;

Nous allons mettre fin à l'oppression de la pensée libre et faire en sorte que tous les citoyens jouissent pleinement des libertés fondamentales prévues dans la déclaration des Droits de l'Homme;

Nous allons supprimer efficacement toute discrimination quelle qu'elle soit et donner à chacun la juste place que lui vaudra sa dignité humaine, son travail et son dévouement au pays;

Nous allons faire régner non pas la paix des fusils et des baïonnettes, mais la paix des cœurs et des bonnes volontés.

Et pour tout cela, chers compatriotes, soyez sûrs que nous pourrons compter non seulement sur nos forces énormes et nos richesses immenses, mais sur l'assistance de nombreux pays étrangers dont nous accepterons la collaboration chaque fois qu'elle sera loyale et ne cherchera pas à nous imposer une politique quelle qu'elle soit.

Dans ce domaine, la Belgique qui, comprenant enfin le sens de l'histoire, n'a pas essayé de s'opposer à notre indépendance, est prête à nous accorder son aide et son amitié, et un traité vient d'être signé dans ce sens entre nos deux pays égaux et indépendants. Cette coopération, j'en suis sûr, sera profitable aux deux pays. De notre côté, tout en restant vigilants, nous saurons respecter les engagements librement consentis.

Ainsi, tant à l'intérieur qu'à l'extérieur, le Congo nouveau, notre chère république, que mon gouvernement va créer sera un pays riche, libre et prospère. Mais pour que nous arrivions sans retard à

ce but, vous tous, législateurs et citoyens congolais, je vous demande de m'aider de toutes vos forces.

Je vous demande à tous d'oublier les querelles tribales qui nous épuisent et risquent de nous faire mépriser à l'étranger;

Je demande à la minorité parlementaire d'aider mon gouvernement par une opposition constructive et de rester strictement dans les voies légales et démocratiques;

Je vous demande à tous de ne reculer devant aucun sacrifice pour assurer la réussite de notre grandiose entreprise;

Je vous demande enfin de respecter inconditionnellement la vie et les biens de vos concitoyens et des étrangers établis dans notre pays; si la conduite de ces étrangers laisse à désirer, notre justice sera prompte à les expulser du territoire de la République; si par contre leur conduite est bonne, il faut les laisser en paix, car eux aussi travaillent à la prospérité de notre pays.

L'indépendance du Congo marque un pas décisif vers la libération de tout le continent africain.

Voilà, Sire, Excellences, Mesdames, Messieurs, chers compatriotes, mes frères de race, mes frères de lutte, ce que j'ai voulu, vous dire au nom du gouvernement en ce jour magnifique de notre Indépendance complète et souveraine.

Notre gouvernement, fort, national, populaire, sera le salut de ce pays.

J'invite tous les citoyens congolais, hommes, femmes et enfants, de se mettre résolument au travail en vue de créer une économie nationale prospère qui consacra notre indépendance économique.

Hommage aux Combattants de la Liberté Nationale!

Vive l'indépendance et l'unité africaines.

Vive le Congo Indépendant et Souverain!

Appendix III: Biographical Notes

Ancelet, Henri (1922-?). Belgian civil servant. INR Léopoldville (1947-1952), Bureau *Information-Loisirs pour indigènes* (1952-1954), *Service*

Information and CGI (Bureau *Presse-Rédaction*, 1954-1957; *émissions africaines* service at *Radio Congo belge*, 1957-1960). Press secretary

in Prime Minister Lumumba's cabinet (30 June - 18 July 1960).

Blouin, Andrée (1921-1986). Political activist, born in French Equatorial Africa. Ally of Sékou Touré. Organiser for the *Parti Solidaire Africain* in Congo. Chief of protocol in Prime Minister Lumumba's cabinet (1960-1961) and well-known figure in his inner circle.

Bolamba, Antoine-Roger (1913-2002). Congolese author, politician. State secretary for Information and Cultural Affairs in the Lumumba government.

Boland, René (1928-?). Belgian career soldier. Belgian army (1947-1954), *Force Publique* (1955-1960). Promoted captain (1958). Orderly officer to Prime Minister Lumumba (30 June - 18 July 1960?).

Bolikango, Jean (1909-1982). Congolese author, journalist, politician. Deputy commissioner-general of the CGI (1959-1960). Minister of Defence and Information in the Iléo government. One of the 'fathers' of Congolese independence.

Diallo Telli, Boubacar (1925-1977). Guinean ambassador to the USA (1959-1961) and the UN (1958-1964). Representative of Guinea in Léopoldville during the independence celebrations.

Duvivier, Pierre (1931-?). Belgian civil servant. Legal adviser at the *centre extra coutumier* (1957-1958) and *Service du Contentieux* in Stanleyville (1959-1960). Attaché in Lumumba's cabinet (*chef de cabinet*, 11-30 June 1960) and the cabinet of Minister of the Interior Gbenye (30 June - September 1960)

Gabbai, Sylvia (1931-?). Italian journalist, civil servant. *Service Information* (bureau Public Relations, 1957-1958; section *Radiodiffusion*, 1958-1959) and CGI (1959-1960). Press secretary in Prime Minister Lumumba's cabinet (30 June - July 1960?).

Gaspar, Daniel (1926-1972). Belgian civil servant. *Radio Congo Belge* (French-language editorial board; 1951-1953); *Service Information* and CGI (*Radio Congo Belge*, 1957-1958; *émissions africaines* service at *Radio Congo Belge*, 1959 - 30 June 1960). Adviser to Minister Kashamura (1-15 July 1960).

Grootaert, Jozef (1913-1989). Belgian civil servant. *Administrateur territorial adjoint*, Coquilhatville (1938-1939) and Léopoldville (1939-1943) provinces. *Juge auxiliaire* at court of first instance of Léopoldville (1943-1945). Attaché at the *Secrétariat-général* of the *Gouvernement general* (1945-1946). *Substitut du procureur du Roi* at court of first instance of Léopoldville (1947-1951), judge at court of first instance of Katanga (1951-1959). Deputy counsellor at Court of Appeal of Léopoldville (1959-1961). Legal adviser to the Lumumba and Lumbala cabinets (1960-?).

Hemeleers, Regis ('Reginald') (1915-1988). Belgian civil servant, Christian democratic politician. Lawyer at the Brussels bar (1938-1949), deputy *chef de cabinet* of the Minister of the Interior (1949-1952), head of the Press Division of UNESCO's Information Department (1952-1955), PR officer at SABENA (1956-1959), *commissaire général à l'Information* in the *Gouvernement général* (1959-1960). *Chargé de mission* in cabinet of National Defence (1961), deputy *chef de cabinet* of the Minister of the Interior and Public Service (1961-1965?). PSC alderman in Saint-Gilles (1946-1952), one of the founders and editors of *La Revue Nouvelle*, editor-in-chief of *La Relève*.

Hockers, Maryse (1927-2020). Belgian academic (*Institut de Solvay*), assistant to Arthur Doucy. Secretary in Lumumba's cabinet (21 June 1960 - early September 1960).

Jabon, Emile (1926-?). Belgian lawyer, Léopoldville bar (1953-?). One of Lumumba's lawyers (1959-1960). *Chef de cabinet* of the Congolese Justice Ministry (July 1960-?).

Kanza, Thomas (1933-2004). Congolese politician. Representative to the UN of the Lumumba (1960) and Gizenga governments (1960-1962).

Kashamura, Anicet (1928-2004). Congolese politician. Member of the *Collège exécutif general*, responsible for *Force Publique*, Information and Labour. Minister in the Lumumba (Information and Cultural Affairs) and Gizenga (Economic Affairs) governments.

Lenain, Piet (1918-1996). Belgian journalist and civil servant. Clerk at the Brussels *justice de paix* (1939-1944), (parliamentary) editor at *Het Laatste Nieuws* (1944-1959). Various functions within organisations of the liberal movement, general secretary of the *Liberaal Vlaams Verbond* (1948-1959). First deputy *commissaire-général à l'Information* (1959-1960). Cabinet attaché to the Minister of Justice (1960-1961), editor at *Agence Belga* (1962). Co-founder of the *Institut belge d'Information et de Documentation* (1961).

Mandi, André (1934-?). Congolese politician. Secretary of state for Foreign Affairs in the Lumumba government.

Moumié, Félix-Roland (1925-1960). Cameroonian politician. Secretary-general of the *Union des Populations du Cameroun* (1958-1960).

Nyns, Jacques (1925-?). Belgian lawyer, bar of Brussels (1947-1952) and Léopoldville (1952-1974).

Rigot, Jean (1928-?). Belgian airline pilot (SABENA), Brussels-Léopoldville and Brussels-Stanleyville-Elisabethville lines (1955-1982). Allegedly one of the pilots (with André 'Arsène' Ruwet) of the DC3 transferring Lumumba from Port Francqui to Léopoldville after his arrest on 1 December 1960.

Toukara, Tibou (?-1971). Guinean ambassador to Léopoldville (1960).

Van Lierde, Jean (1926-2006). Belgian leftwing Catholic, political activist, pacifist, conscientious objector and anticolonial militant. Managing director and general secretary of the *Centre de recherche d'information socio-politiques*. Confidant of Lumumba.

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