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Introduction by Frank Gerits

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### Introduction by Frank Gerits, Utrecht University

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International historians in the past decade have rapidly expanded the terrain on which they operate. Geographically, an overwhelming emphasis on United States-Soviet relations and the trans-Atlantic alliance has been overtaken by an increased interest in the dynamics that shaped the Global South. African leaders, in particular their worldviews and their stances on the Cold War, are increasingly being studied.<sup>1</sup> Conceptually there has also been an enlargement, with books focusing on topics beyond U.S. power and the Cold War such as international law, human rights, and humanitarianism.<sup>2</sup> The ambition to recuperate those alternate understandings of global order and the search for opportunities to escape the rigidity of classical Cold War bipolarity has led historians to the United Nations (UN) where U.S. preponderance was contested through symbolic struggles at the General Assembly and the League of Nations, where experiments in international organisation were executed. Those “utopias are not to be ignored” because they provided “valuable political capital,” as Mark Mazower stressed in his *No Enchanted Palace*, a book that in many ways pointed scholars to the UN as a valuable and enriching topic of study.<sup>3</sup> In their work, Glenda Sluga and Susan Pedersen have established the importance of international organisations as places where different types of internationalism were not only put forward, but also vehemently defended.<sup>4</sup>

In this flurry of scholarship about the origins of the current global order, *The Diplomacy of Decolonisation* offers a timely contribution, namely a concrete case-study of UN intervention during the Congo crisis which unfolded between 1959 and 1964. By intertwining the intricacies of postcolonial Congolese politics, the Afro-Asian Bloc strategies, the Anglo-U.S. relationship, and Dag Hammarskjöld’s personal diplomacy, Alanna O’Malley offers a more complex interpretation of the crisis and the impact it had on the UN’s “mandate in monitoring the process of decolonisation” (5). This monograph, which is based on the author’s Ph.D. dissertation, conceptualises the UN not only as ‘a stage’ and ‘a socialising space,’ but also as ‘an actor.’ While Belgian scholars like Ludo de Witte have paid sustained attention to the UN because the Belgian government

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<sup>1</sup> Jamie Miller, *An African Volk: The Apartheid Regime and Its Search for Survival* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016); Poppy Cullen, *Kenya and Britain after Independence Beyond Neo-Colonialism*, Cambridge Imperial and Post-Colonial Studies Series (Houndmills: Palgrave Macmillan, 2017); Frank Gerits, “The Ideological Scramble for Africa: The US, Ghanaian, French and British Competition for Africa’s Future, 1953-1963” (Phd. Diss, European University Institute, 2014).

<sup>2</sup> Steven Jensen, *The Making of International Human Rights: The 1960s, Decolonization and the Reconstruction of Global Values* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2016); Or Rosenboim, *The Emergence of Globalism: Visions of World Order in Britain and the United States, 1939-1950* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2017); Tehila Sasson, “Milking the Third World? Humanitarianism, Capitalism, and the Moral Economy of the Nestlé Boycott,” *The American Historical Review* 121:4 (2016): 1196-1224.

<sup>3</sup> Mark Mazower, *No Enchanted Palace: The End of Empire and the Ideological Origins of the United Nations*, Lawrence Stone Lectures (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2009), 7.

<sup>4</sup> Glenda Sluga, *Internationalism in the Age of Nationalism* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2015); Susan Pedersen, *The Guardians: The League of Nations and the Crisis of Empire* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2015).

of Gaston Eyskens was forced to take a stance on UN intervention, the Secretary-General's role is often downplayed in international histories of the crisis.<sup>5</sup>

The book garners praise among reviewers, particularly for this focus on the UN as an actor that helped define what decolonisation meant as well as for the attention paid to the Anglo-American tandem in managing the crisis. In the words of Alessandro Iandolo, an expert on Soviet-African relations, it is an “excellent study of the Congo crisis from the point of view of the UN and with an eye to transatlantic exchanges.” Andy DeRoche, a historian of Zambia, welcomes the many novel aspects on the “micro level,” while Lise Namikas, who has written on the Congo crisis, judges the focus on the Anglo-American relation to be “unique and original.” Keven Spooner, who researches Canada's role in the UN peacekeeping operation, sees the monograph's most innovative contribution in the study of the “intersection of Cold War and decolonization.”

However, since the book highlights the fickleness of the Congo crisis, reviewers agree that they are left wanting more from the book in three areas in particular. First, some reviewers want a bit more clarity on Dag Hammarskjöld. Iandolo wonders if a “more critical analysis of UN ambitions, and particularly of Hammarskjöld's vision” would have added another dimension to this book. Namikas is curious about the way in which Afro-Asian pressures influenced the Secretary-General and if the negative aspects of UN intervention are not understated.

Second, the question of African agency also emerges from the reviews. What is the precise relationship between the Afro-Asian and the Anglo-American aspects of this book? Deroche, for instance, highlights in great detail how Kenneth Kaunda from Zambia also shaped the crisis in unexpected ways.

Third, as DeRoche notes, presenting an “innovative interpretation of a case study that has been carefully examined by many other previous scholars” is challenging. Spooner believes *The Diplomacy of Decolonisation* is “unlikely to overturn findings presented in the most recent scholarship on the Congo Crisis” while Namikas finds the manner in which decolonisation was accelerated by the Congo crisis “a bit unclear.”

In short, *The Diplomacy of Decolonisation* has given the reviewers enough material to mull over and it is clear that O'Malley has given historians enough ideas to work with. The model it provides, a study of how the pressures of decolonisation strained old diplomatic alliances in the Global North, could be replicated. The first step of a more robust analysis of the way in which the Congo crisis affected the relationship between Belgium and the Netherlands has already been taken by a Dutch historian, while the German-French alliance and the crisis in Ruanda as well as the Portuguese-Spanish relationship and the war in Angola would also be interesting case studies.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> Ludo De Witte, *Crisis in Kongo: De Rol van de Verenigde Naties, de Regering-Eyskens En Het Koningshuis in de Omverwerping van Lumumba En de Opkomst van Mobutu* (Leuven: Uitgeverij van Halewyck, 1996); Alanna O'Malley, “A Time for Pride and Prejudice, Anglo American Relations at the United Nations during the Congo Crisis from 1960-1964,” (Ph.D. dissertation, European University Institute, 2012).

<sup>6</sup> Bart Stol, “Trouwe Koloniale Bondgenoten: Nederland, België En de Europese Dekolonisatie, 1945-1963,” in *Nederland-België: De Belgisch-Nederlandse Betrekkingen Vanaf 1940*, ed. Duco Hellema, Rik Coolsaet, and Bart Stol (Amsterdam: Boom, 2011), 78-108.

It is clear that the Congo crisis still provides us with ample opportunity to discuss and research how decolonisation shaped international history. *The Diplomacy of Decolonisation* is a well-written invitation to seize these opportunities.

**Participants:**

Professor **Alanna O'Malley** is Chair of United Nations Studies in Peace and Justice at Leiden University/The Hague University. She completed a PhD at the European University Institute (EUI) in Florence from 2007-2012. She is the co-editor of *The Institution of International Order, From the League of Nations to the United Nations* (Routledge in 2018). She has also published a range of other articles in the *International History Review*, *Journal of Cold War Studies*, and the *Journal of Transatlantic History*. Her current research focuses on recovering the invisible histories of the UN, investigating the role of the Global South challenging the liberal world order from 1945-1981. She has been a TEDxFulbright speaker; her talk is entitled "The United Nations, From Blue Helmets to Blue Skies."

**Frank Gerits** is a lecturer in the history of international relations at Utrecht University, research fellow at the International Studies Group of the University of the Free State in Bloemfontein, South Africa and Senior Editor for History, Politics, IR, and Social Science for the European Journal of American Studies. He was the Agnese N. Haury postdoctoral scholar at NYU in 2015, NRF Innovation fellow at the University of the Free State in 2016 and Lecturer in Conflict Studies at the University of Amsterdam in 2017. He has published articles in *Cold War History*, the *International History Review* and *Diplomatic History*.

**Lise Namikas** is an associate professor of History at Baton Rouge Community College. She has written on the Congo crisis in *Battleground Africa: Cold War in the Congo, 1960-1965* (Woodrow Wilson Center Press and Stanford University Press, 2013).

**Andy DeRoche** earned his Ph.D. in diplomatic history from the University of Colorado in 1997. He has been teaching history full-time at Front Range Community College since 1998. His latest book is *Kenneth Kaunda, the United States and Southern Africa* (Bloomsbury, 2016). He is currently writing a biography of former National Hockey League defenseman Eric Weinrich, which will use Weinrich's career as a lens on globalization and the end of the Cold War.

**Alessandro Iandolo** is lecturer in International History in the Department of Politics and International Relations at the University of Oxford. He completed his PhD at Oxford in 2012, and was British Academy Postdoctoral Fellow at the London School of Economics and Fulbright Fellow at Columbia University between 2013 and 2016. Alessandro's research focuses on Soviet economic and technical cooperation with countries in Africa, Asia and Latin America during the Cold War. He has published articles in *Cold War History*, *The Journal of Cold War Studies*, *Contemporary European History* and *Diplomatic History*, and is currently writing a history of Soviet economic aid to Ghana, Guinea and Mali during the Khrushchev era.

**Kevin Spooner** is Associate Professor of North American Studies and History at Wilfrid Laurier University in Waterloo, Canada. An expert on the history of Canadian peacekeeping in the Congo, he has authored *Canada, the Congo Crisis, and UN Peacekeeping, 1960-64* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 2009). His current research project examines the history of Canadian relations with English-speaking, decolonizing Africa, during the Cold War.

Review by Andy DeRoche, Front Range Community College

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In this fascinating new investigation of early-1960s events in the Congo, Alanna O'Malley sets out with the ambitious goal of presenting an innovative interpretation of a case study that has been carefully examined by many other previous scholars.<sup>1</sup> She specifically hopes that in “scrutinizing the ways in which the various dimensions of the UN came into play in Anglo-American considerations of how to respond to the Congo crisis,” her work will illuminate “how and why the Congo question reverberated in the wider ideological discussions about how decolonization should evolve and what the role of the UN would be in managing this process” (2). O'Malley accomplishes her primary overall goal of presenting fresh analysis of the Congo crisis, insightfully addressing both its place in the decolonization drama and the significance of the United Nations in the story.

Beyond delivering a thought-provoking and valuable new emphasis on the broad themes of decolonization, the UN and the Congo at the macro level, O'Malley also provides much needed updated analyses of several critical specific aspects of the tale at the micro level. Among the many pieces of the Congo puzzle which O'Malley revisits and shines new light on are: the diplomacy of the UN Secretary-General Dag Hammarskjold, the murder of Congo Prime Minister Patrice Lumumba, a comparison of the Congo policies of the Eisenhower and Kennedy administrations, the death of Hammarskjold, the November 1964 military operation to save U.S. hostages, and, finally, the rise of General Joseph Mobutu. Her careful consideration of the inner workings of UN policy-making towards the Congo, and the often strained (and not always so special) relationship between the U.S. and England vis-à-vis the crisis, are crucial contributions that run throughout this important book.

O'Malley constructs a powerful case at the macro level and provides lively, engaging discussions of innumerable examples at the micro level by drawing on global sources gleaned from a dizzying array of at least 15 archives in at least 6 different nations, mining resources in Ghana, England, Belgium, India, Ireland, and the United States. Identifying all her sources was somewhat challenging given the fact that there is no bibliography or key to archival abbreviations, but that is perhaps more the fault of the publisher. Regardless, O'Malley's multi-continental research is impressive, and, more importantly, it allows her to make her case convincingly regarding the Congo's impact on decolonization and what the crisis shows about the evolving place of the UN in international affairs.

For the most part O'Malley did not miss any aspects or examples that could have added to her analysis; however, some discussion of the views and responses to the crisis by leaders from newly-independent Zambia during November and December of 1964 would have added the outlook of an important neighbor. The perspectives O'Malley incorporates from diplomats in nations such as Ghana and India are invaluable, but even a brief assessment of what the dramatic developments in the next-door Congo meant for President Kenneth Kaunda and his colleagues would have been a useful addition to this fine book. A short summary of Kaunda's reaction to the hostage rescue operation, at the time of his 2 December 1964 conversation with

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<sup>1</sup> For example, see Lise Namikas, *Battleground Africa: Cold War in the Congo, 1960-1965* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2013); David N. Gibbs, *The Political Economy of Third World Intervention: Mines, Money, and U.S. Policy in the Congo Crisis* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991).

President Lyndon Johnson in the White House, would have added value to the book's final full chapter. Furthermore, it would not have required a trip to the archives in Lusaka, as the story has been told.<sup>2</sup>

Kaunda visited the Oval Office with high hopes for significant assistance from the Johnson administration to boost his new nation in its first year of sovereignty. Unfortunately, the discussion derailed almost immediately when Johnson asked Kaunda what he thought about the hostage rescue and the Zambian leader responded honestly that he did not approve of it and thought it could set a bad precedent. Specifically, he feared a future intervention in his own country by South African forces on behalf of white miners and their families on the Copperbelt. Johnson countered defensively, claiming the right to go anywhere in the world to rescue U.S. citizens in danger of being eaten.<sup>3</sup> The carefully planned agenda for the Johnson/Kaunda 'summit' was scrapped, and so, at the very least, events in the Congo undermined bilateral U.S./Zambia relations in late 1964. Moreover, consideration by O'Malley of the perspective of a neighboring newly-independent African nation would have introduced the important angle of what the Congo crisis meant across the southern African region.

O'Malley does cite the record of a meeting between Kaunda and his British counterpart in November 1964 (note 181, 192) as an example of the views of black African leaders; but she does not identify Kaunda by name in the book's text. This could have been a natural jumping off point to add further analysis of Kaunda's views on the Congo and their significance as revealed in his talks in London and Washington, but the author missed this opportunity to add additional evidence to her persuasive and insightful study. Regardless of this very small critique about the absence of Kaunda and Zambia from the narrative, O'Malley's *The Diplomacy of Decolonization* makes a major contribution to the scholarship on the Congo crisis in the early 1960s and should be required reading for any professors or students interested in this dramatic time and place.

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<sup>2</sup> For a detailed account of the Kaunda/Johnson exchange and its significance see Andy DeRoche, "Dreams and Disappointments: Kenneth Kaunda and the United States, 1960-64," *Safundi: The Journal of South African and American Studies* (October 2008), 369-394.

<sup>3</sup> DeRoche, "Dreams and Disappointments," 386-389.

Review by Alessandro Iandolo, University of Oxford

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In recent years, the Congo crisis has received significant attention from a number of historians. Using a combination of newly-released sources and revisionist arguments, scholars such as Lise Namikas and Sergei Mazov have placed the Congo crisis as a key event in the global Cold War, whose legacy and repercussions still haunt the world we live in.<sup>1</sup> This recent literature adds to an already rich field of study, in which scholars like Madeleine Kalb and Stephen Weissman, among others, offered detailed reconstructions of the diplomacy, intrigues and fighting that happened in Congo in the early 1960s.<sup>2</sup> Moreover, David Gibbs and Ludo de Witte published dispassionate accounts dissecting the economic interests that guided Western intervention in Congo, and revealing Belgian connivance in the murder of Patrice Lumumba.<sup>3</sup>

Alanna O'Malley's new book contributes to this literature in several significant ways. *The Diplomacy of Decolonization* offers an exhaustive and precise account of the Congo crisis first and foremost from the point of view of the United Nations (UN). This adds a crucial dimension to previous studies that tended to focus on the role of intervening powers—mostly the U.S., Belgium, and the USSR. Moreover, O'Malley reframes the crisis as a nodal point not only of the Cold War but also, and more importantly, of the decolonization process. Congo was not so much at the center of a traditional bipolar confrontation between superpowers, and not even between models of modernization as contemporary Cold War scholarship would have it. Rather, according to O'Malley, the Congo crisis was a violent confrontation over the 'quality' and extent of decolonization that involved local politicians, foreign powers, and—crucially—the UN.

The main protagonist of the book is certainly the United Nations, both as a standing bureaucracy and as a forum for discussion for delegations from all sides of the conflict in Congo. When the crisis in Congo began, in the summer of 1960, UN Secretary-General Dag Hammarskjöld saw it as an opportunity. Following the (relative) success of UN peacekeeping efforts in Lebanon in the late 1950s, Hammarskjöld regarded Congo as the best way to affirm and expand the role of his organization. Besides acting as the leading guarantor of peace and stability worldwide, the Secretary-General hoped to expand the remit of the UN considerably. He aimed to follow up the initial peacekeeping mission, whose aims were simply to restore peace in Congo, with a systematic effort at state-building. Hammarskjöld believed that the United Nations should become active in the social and economic realms as much as in the diplomatic and military ones. Congo, as a newly-

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<sup>1</sup> Lise A. Namikas, *Battleground Africa: Cold War in the Congo, 1960-1965* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2013); Sergei V. Mazov, *A Distant Front in the Cold War: The USSR in West Africa and the Congo, 1956-1964* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2010). See also Alessandro Iandolo, "Beyond the Shoe: Rethinking Khrushchev at the Fifteenth Session of the United Nations General Assembly," in *Diplomatic History* 41:1 (January 2017): 128-154; Alessandro Iandolo, "Imbalance of Power: The Soviet Union and the Congo Crisis, 1960-1961," *Journal of Cold War Studies* 16:2 (Spring 2014): 32-55.

<sup>2</sup> Madeleine G. Kalb, *The Congo Cables: The Cold War in Africa, from Eisenhower to Kennedy* (New York: Macmillan, 1982); Stephen R. Weissman, *American Foreign Policy in the Congo, 1960-1964* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1974).

<sup>3</sup> David Gibbs, *The Political Economy of Third World Intervention: Mines, Money, and US Policy in the Congo Crisis* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991); Ludo de Witte, *The Assassination of Lumumba* (London: Verso, 2001).

independent country facing tough challenges, seemed to present a perfect opportunity for the UN to establish itself in these new areas.

*The Diplomacy of Decolonization* presents an ambitious UN under Hammarskjöld, actively looking to expand its area of operations as the decolonization process unfolded. O'Malley's careful research in the UN archives corroborates and enhances the argument of a United Nations profoundly shaped by the contrast between empire and decolonization, as brought forward by Mark Mazower in a recent book.<sup>4</sup> Confronted with the reality of the end of the European colonial empires after World War II, Hammarskjöld's United Nations cultivated the dream of shaping the future of former colonies in Asia and Africa. The UN would act as a semi-permanent consultative body, ready to provide expertise, funds, and guidance to newly-independent countries with relatively fragile and unstable governments. Although O'Malley is generally more lenient toward the UN than Mazower, her examination of Hammarskjöld's plans for Congo point to the same vision.

As chapters 2 and 3 show, however, not everyone was on board with Hammarskjöld's plan for Congo. Patrice Lumumba, the young and radical Congolese Prime Minister, certainly was not. His refusal to heed UN advice and his insistence that troops under UN command help him reunify the country following the Katanga secession quickly earned him Hammarskjöld's contempt. Other Congolese politicians—in Léopoldville, Elisabethville, and Stanleyville—were decidedly less radical than Lumumba, but no more malleable than the Prime Minister. Far from the dream of graciously leading Congo to a state of managed independence, the UN found itself fighting a vicious civil war, for which it was unprepared and poorly equipped.

Local actors were not the only ones to get in the UN's way. The European colonists – in this case Belgium, Britain and France—had no intention of resigning themselves to the status of former colonial powers. So far, they had managed to grant independence to some of their African colonies, while maintaining strong political and economic links to the territories over which they used to have total control. Through semi-imperial bodies such as the British Commonwealth and the French *Communauté*, the European powers managed to grant formal independence to some of their African colonies, while keeping a foothold in their governments and economies. Key areas of statehood and policymaking—typically the armed forces, police, and foreign policy—remained under the strong influence of the old *métropole*. The justification was that the African colonies were not ready to manage themselves and still needed European 'wisdom' to guide them. Such 'wisdom,' of course, also made sure that businesses and investors back in Europe maintained their privileged access to African raw materials. Congo was a case in point. Already at the independence ceremony, the Belgian King Baudouin made it clear in his speech that Belgian tutelage of Congo was not going to end.

Lumumba together with a few more radical Congolese leaders wanted total independence from Belgium. He accepted no form of managed independence, whether from the Europeans or from the UN. For their part, the Europeans fully intended to preserve their vast economic interests in Congo, especially in mineral-rich Katanga, and had little time for UN interference in their plans. Thus, the Congo crisis became an international civil war that pitched European colonialists and Katanga separatists against the Congolese central government, while the UN mission attempted at the same time to get rid of both the Europeans and Lumumba.

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<sup>4</sup> Mark Mazower, *No Enchanted Palace: The End of Empire and the Ideological Origins of the United Nations* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2009).



One of the strongest aspects of *The Diplomacy of Decolonization* is its analysis of European, and particularly British, motivations in Congo. While the Belgians had obvious reasons to want to preserve their empire, the British were just as involved in the crisis. Thanks to painstaking work in the British archives, O'Malley shows to what extent the 'Katanga lobby' in Westminster, in Whitehall, and in the Conservative Party could influence Harold Macmillan's government. British interests in the *Union Minière du Haut Katanga* (UMHK)—the Belgian company that had been exploiting Congo's copper and uranium reserves for decades—ran deep. MPs and ministers involved with UMHK wanted the same privileges for the company after Congo's independence, and they were more than willing to support a bloody civil war to make sure that this was the case.

Economic interests aside, however, *The Diplomacy of Decolonization* focuses just as much on another dimension of British concern about Congo. This is perhaps the book's most important contribution. Examining correspondence, reports and the British government's responses to the evolution of the Congo crisis, O'Malley demonstrates that it was a preoccupation about the nature of decolonization itself that motivated British policy. Macmillan and his ministers looked with fear at the possibility of a 'really' independent Congo emerging out of the crisis. For the British, this would be a dangerous precedent that risked jeopardizing the whole project of 'managed independence' in sub-Saharan Africa. Moreover, the idea of the UN replacing the European powers with its own version of post-imperial supervision of former colonies was just as scary to the British, who feared especially for their white minority-rule dominions. Therefore, both Lumumba and Hammarskjöld were considered hostile to British interests.

The arbiter between Congo's wish for independence and the UN and the Europeans' parallel projects of 'managed independence' was the United States. Despite their ambitions, neither the Europeans nor the UN had the means to realize their vision in Congo. Both needed U.S. support, and both vied to obtain it. For a power that was so crucial to the future of Congo, however, the U.S. government had remarkably vague plans about it. Thanks to her extensive analysis of American sources, O'Malley is able to confirm that the Dwight D. Eisenhower administration was primarily interested in preventing Congo from going Communist. This was never a possibility, given the USSR's weakness in Africa, but the British and Belgians hammered the message that Lumumba was ready to bring Congo into the socialist bloc. Eisenhower, CIA Director Allen Dulles, and a few other influential figures in Washington needed little convincing: they all agreed that Lumumba had to go, which sealed the Congolese Prime Minister's tragic fate.

Nevertheless, the U.S. government was wary of the Europeans' hope to keep their empires, albeit in a slightly different form, and suspicious of the UN's newfound ambition to replace them. If the Eisenhower administration was generally content to indulge the Europeans as long as they helped fight the specter of Communism in Africa, John F. Kennedy had different plans. His administration was interested in the Third World and had a much lower tolerance for European empires. Kennedy came to the realization that, with Lumumba dead, the Katanga secession had to end. Congo had to be reunified, but under the guidance of a pro-American rather than pro-Belgian or pro-British figure—Joseph-Désiré Mobutu. Therefore, the UN was assigned (and equipped for) the task of mounting a serious military operation against the Katanga separatists. As *The Diplomacy of Decolonization* explains, British and Belgian vocal objections were put aside. By the mid-1960s, a new Congo emerged – unified, open to Western businesses, anti-Communist and run by Mobutu, a prime American client for nearly three decades.

All other visions of a post-independence Congo waned. Lumumba's died with him in early 1961. Hammarskjöld also died, a few months after Lumumba and also in controversial circumstances, spelling the

end for the dream of a 'UN empire' in Africa. His successor, U Thant, proved less ambitious but more apt at managing crises, including the violent conclusion of the Congo crisis. The Europeans discovered how weak their hand was in Africa, even in their spheres of 'managed independence.' Once again, O'Malley does a fantastic job when analyzing the expectations, negotiations, and eventual disappointment of British diplomacy with its Commonwealth. Supposedly obedient colonial subjects, the leaderships of Nigeria, Rhodesia (today Zimbabwe), and South Africa had in fact well-defined agendas that only occasionally overlapped with London's.

Britain's ability to influence policy in Washington was even more limited. In a particularly revelatory passage in chapter 5, O'Malley discusses the British wish to continue making their presence in Katanga felt after reunification. The Congolese government, however, had decided to expel the British consul in Katanga (due to his support for the separatists), with American approval. To avert such a setback, Macmillan resorted to the only weapon he had at his disposal: a strongly worded letter to Kennedy. It had no effect. By end of the Congo crisis, the Americans fully realized that Britain was an unreliable declining power, and that they needed an independent African policy. Revealing the extent of this realization is among the key contributions of this book.

In conclusion, *The Diplomacy of Decolonization* is an excellent study of the Congo crisis from the point of view of the UN and with an eye to transatlantic exchanges. O'Malley carried out extensive research in the UN, American, and British archives, offering a complete picture of bilateral and trilateral relations. She also includes some interesting sources from the Indian and Ghanaian national archives, which provide more context on the position of these two crucial actors at the UN and in Congo.

As with all fascinating books, there are parts where the reader is left wanting even more on particularly intriguing topics. For example, a more critical analysis of UN ambitions, and particularly of Hammarskjöld's vision of a post-decolonization world, would have added a fascinating—and disquieting—look at the world's leading international organization. Likewise, the switch in Africa policy between the Eisenhower and Kennedy administration may have deserved a more thorough treatment, since in many ways it determined the outcome of the Congo crisis. To be fair to the author, though, both themes would merit a separate monograph of their own.

*The Diplomacy of Decolonization* is a highly significant contribution to the historiography on the Congo crisis. It is required reading for scholars of Congo, of African politics, of the United Nations, and of empire and decolonization in general.

Review by Lise Namikas, Baton Rouge Community College

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Alanna O'Malley has written a very captivating book on the diplomacy of decolonization during the Congo crisis. The book is based on her doctoral dissertation for the European Union Institute in Florence, Italy (2012). She quotes the Irish representative to the United Nations Gerry O'Sullivan who called the crisis in the Congo "a nice little stew" (138) and the phrase aptly fits the crisis in so many ways. O'Malley has a very specific goal in this book: to look at the Anglo-American relationship particularly through the diplomacy of decolonization during the Congo crisis from 1960-1964. In placing this one part of the whole under a microscope, her approach is unique and original. The diplomacy at the United Nations itself becomes the focal point. It was a "contested battleground," as the United States and Britain tried "to maintain the status quo ante" (2) while the Afro-Asian states worked to gain more influence in the organization. The goal of the African and Asian states was to "resist the hegemonic influence" (5) of the imperialists around the world, elsewhere what O'Malley refers to as "imperial internationalism" (201). While this might at first seem oddly juxtaposed, the author is able to show some of its wider global implications by isolating a small part of the crisis. Through this approach, O'Malley seeks to better understand global governance and contribute to the growing literature inspired by Mark Mazower, Paul Kennedy and others.<sup>1</sup>

O'Malley discussed the Congo crisis within the context of the competing world visions of North and South. In her conceptual framework, the United Nations (UN) took on three roles: as a forum, a socialization space, and an actor in its own right (2-3). A key question, she states, is how the "decolonization dimensions" of the Congo crisis "reverberated in the wider debates on colonial issues" (4). The Congo crisis thus becomes an important moment (or 'lightening rod') in global history. The crisis helped build the solidarity of African and Asian states, through which they could influence the U.N.'s Congo policy. In finding common cause, the newly independent African and Asian states found a cohesion would be helpful in "accelerating the anti-colonial campaign and attempting to reshape the relationship between North and South" (7). They were the clear winners, as compared to the United States and Britain, which found their own basis for cooperation, and ultimately their influence, undermined by Belgian intransigence.

In many ways, O'Malley's argument offers insights into international diplomacy and shows the strength of the African and Asian voice in the process. They were involved from the start in ensuring that the United Nations take a hands-on approach to limit the Cold War divisions from dominating Congo. In the earliest days of the crisis, she argues, U.N. Secretary General Dag Hammarskjold consulted with the African representatives "who urged for the 'Africanisation' of the crisis, by using only African peacekeepers" (39). Ghana's leader, Kwame Nkrumah, even called for a unified U.N. command over African troops, although O'Malley does not offer much discussion of this initiative. At times, the author's emphasis on Afro-Asian influence does not adequately show the variety of pressures on Hammarskjold. For instance, despite the growing African

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<sup>1</sup> Mark Mazower, *Governing the World: The History of an Idea, 1815 to the Present* (New York: Penguin, 2012), Paul Kennedy, *The Parliament of Man: The Past, Present, and Future of the United Nations* (New York: Vintage, 2007), Samuel Moyn, *The Last Utopia: Human Rights in History* (Cambridge: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2010), and Elizabeth G. Ferris, "Global Governance" in *The Politics of Protection: The Limits of Humanitarian Action*, 126-173 (Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institution Press, 2011), <https://www.jstor.org/stable/10.7864/j.ctt1261f7>.

influences, Hammarskjold still felt it important to internationalize the peacekeeping force, and troops from Ireland and Sweden and, later, India helped avoid the appearances of black versus white in Congo.

Another example where the African and Asian states had a great deal of influence was through the Congo Club and the Congo Advisory Committee (CAC). Hammarskjold, O'Malley argues, created the CAC to "construct U.N. Congo policy" and African and Asian states used it as a "funnel through which their objectives for the Congo, and Africa more broadly, could be realized" (41). Others, however, have seen its role more limited. For instance, Kevin Spooner argued that the CAC was created to "insulate" Hammarskjold against criticism of his direction of U.N. policy.<sup>2</sup> Whether Hammarskjold leaned toward an Afro-Asian line or perhaps used the alliance to achieve broader goals can be hard to determine. As Brian Urquhart has shown in his biography of Hammarskjold, the Secretary General often saw his efforts as forming a bridge between colonists and imperialists and he constantly worked to moderate both sides.<sup>3</sup> Hammarskjold walked a fine line to maintain U.N. neutrality and the appearance that it did not intervene in Congo's domestic affairs, although he was willing to sacrifice appearances at times.

Hammarskjold's increasingly poor relations with Congolese leader Patrice Lumumba, and eventually their estrangement, have raised questions about the neutrality of the Secretary General. By August 1960 their relationship was so bad that Hammarskjold feared Lumumba would order the troops of the United Nations Operation in the Congo (*Opération des Nations Unies au Congo*, or ONUC) out of Congo. O'Malley argues that Hammarskjold turned to African states like Tunisia for help with "the, by now, frantic and erratic Lumumba" (47). It was not Hammarskjold's pro-Western bias, she states, that explains why the United Nations "helped [Joseph] Kasavubu organize his coup" (45) and oust Lumumba from power on September 5, 1960. Rather, Hammarskjold was willing to close the airport and side with the West because he believed that UN soldiers should not be used to strike against Belgian forces to end militarily the secession of Katanga (46). Still, it could be asked whether their differences on the use of force (as expressed above) masked more fundamental differences on how to respond to imperialist actions that clearly violated Congolese sovereignty.

India's leader Jawaharlal Nehru and Ghana's Nkrumah led the firestorm of criticism leveled against Hammarskjold and the United Nations after the September 1960 coup. Nehru in particular threatened to withdraw some of India's troops unless the United Nations took a firmer line against Belgium. The longer-term result, O'Malley maintains, was Hammarskjold's "new" Congo policy of October that did indeed call for a stronger "line" against Belgium and now recognized that no solution was possible without Lumumba. The move by the Secretary General was "deliberate, strategic," "perhaps ideological," and certainly reflected "political realities" (49). Hammarskjold also sent Indian diplomat Rajeshwar Dayal, who supported the reconvening of parliament and return of Lumumba to power, as his Special Representative in the Congo. But reverse moves could arguably have indicated the pro-Western or Northern influences of power. When Dayal resigned or was withdrawn (the facts here unclear) in January 1961, as the new Kennedy administration wanted, the change resulted in the strengthening of Kasavubu and the pro-Western allies in Congo. By O'Malley's account, however, U.S. Congo policy after the departure of Dayal remained "indecisive" (82) and

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<sup>2</sup> Kevin Spooner, *Canada, the Congo Crisis and UN Peacekeeping* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2009), 90.

<sup>3</sup> Brian Urquhart, *Hammarskjold* (New York: Knopf, 1972).

committed to Cold War goals, an analysis that does not seem to capture the essence of the new Kennedy administration's policy.

In the days and months after Lumumba's assassination, O'Malley argues that Hammarskjold turned back to the CAC "to reflect his preference" (82) for the Afro-Asian interpretation of the February 1961 Resolution (on the use of force if necessary to prevent civil war in Congo). This line of argument raises a few questions about the position of Hammarskjold and the role of the peacekeepers in the Congo. With strong U.S. pressure to keep the UN peacekeepers in Congo, and Hammarskjold's own predilection to doing so, while Egypt was pulling out its troops and India threatening to, and the Soviet Union renewed its aid to Gizenga as a civil war loomed in Congo, Hammarskjold had a full-blown crisis to manage. It is also arguable that his decision to favor the interpretation of the African and Asian states was as much a concession to them as to keep ONUC in the Congo and appease his American supporters, who were the major financial backers of ONUC as well.

With Afro-Asian influence on the rise, that of the United States and Britain was on the decline. O'Malley makes a good point that in the early days of the crisis the United States placed a high value on coordinating policy with Britain. Since the rift created by the Suez crisis, there was a "reinvigoration" of relations and joint planning "in the post-colonial world" (23). Although this seems to over-state the closeness from an American perspective, O'Malley's work shows how the United States turned to Britain to help moderate its direct involvement even at the United Nations (28). The two allies were increasingly no longer aligned when it came to their relations with the Afro-Asian states. The British under Prime Minister Harold Macmillan opposed the use of force, in Congo and elsewhere, primarily it seemed to preserve their economic interests (21). It followed then, that London opposed the U.S. support for the February 1961 resolution authorizing the use of force if necessary to prevent a civil war.

O'Malley's focus on the United Nations downplays the importance of the executive branch, the presidency, and the CIA in creating U.S. foreign policy. Her account seems to over-estimate the influence of the State Department, via its role in representing the United States at the United Nations. Her statement that "pursuing a Congo policy through the UN, rather than unilaterally, was a strategic decision on the part of the State Department" seems to misrepresent the making of U.S. foreign policy. She acknowledges the importance of the CIA in "executing" (28) American foreign policy, but its actions are not fully incorporated into her account. For instance, the Lovanium parliament was more than just an example of a State Department victory in supporting the pro-Western Cyrille Adoula through its embassy diplomacy. More might have been made of the results of Lovanium, conducted under the umbrella of the United Nations and part of a larger series of talks with the Katangan leader Moise Tshombe to find a solution for Katanga. Similarly, after the failure of Operation Morthor, the author argues that the State Department led efforts to advocate a harder line toward ending secession and attempted to "reassert" American influence over the Secretary General and U.N. Congo policy (115).

O'Malley's main argument shows that "ONUC policy and its implementation increasingly came to reflect the Afro-Asian view of how the crisis should be managed, and by extension, enhanced the role of the U.N. in overseeing decolonisation and challenging the discriminatory, racist and imperialist policies of Britain and Belgium, and to a lesser extent, the US" (197-198). In the end, the United Nations helped accelerate decolonization, and the crisis "exposed the limitations of Anglo-American cooperation on colonial questions" (199) and became the last coordinated effort to assert a joint position. It is a bit unclear, however, how general decolonization was accelerated by the Congo crisis. The author might also have accounted for some of the

negative repercussions in the American response to the growing African and Asian influence at the United Nations. By the later part of the 1960s the United States' greater reliance on the CIA and direct aid to Congo, and later, to other states in Africa, such as Angola and Somalia, sidelined a greater role for the United Nations. Overall, however, the book is impressive and the focused approach gives great insight into the world—and diplomacy—of decolonization and the importance of the newly independent African and Asian states.

### Review by Kevin Spooner, Wilfrid Laurier University

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Alanna O'Malley's *The Diplomacy of Decolonisation* is the latest examination of a subject that has attracted the attention of scholars for nearly six decades. The Congo Crisis was a key event in the Cold War, even if in public memory it is overshadowed by conflict in Indochina and the Cuban Missile Crisis. Historians, however, have long recognized the value of studying events in the Congo, especially the tumultuous early years of the 1960s, for expanding our understanding of multiple facets of Cold War history. In fact, writing about the Congo Crisis in some way that presents new interpretations, evidence, or angles of inquiry is an increasingly difficult challenge. To its credit, *The Diplomacy of Decolonisation* meets that challenge.

Early scholarship on the Congo Crisis was very much focused on the role of the United Nations, particularly with respect to the peacekeeping mission dispatched to maintain law and order, the *Opération des Nations Unies au Congo* (ONUC).<sup>1</sup> Later, researchers focused on the wider Cold War context of the crisis and emphasized the perspectives of key Western nations, notably the United States and Britain.<sup>2</sup> The last decade has seen the publication of studies focusing on the role of middle powers or presenting revised interpretations of the Congo Crisis through the use of newly released archival material, particularly from the former Soviet Union.<sup>3</sup>

O'Malley's contribution is innovative in its approach to building on the existing, seminal work of authors such as Ernest Lefever, Richard Mahoney, and Alan James. Writing just as the Congo Crisis was coming to an end in 1965, Lefever's studies were among the first accounts of events in the Congo and at the United Nations (UN). While *The Diplomacy of Decolonisation* also firmly places the UN at the centre of its narrative, it does so in a way that portrays the UN not simply as a setting for historical events but as an institution exercising real agency in confronting the challenges posed by decolonization in the Congo. Previous accounts have certainly demonstrated the important impact of Secretaries-General Dag Hammarskjöld and U Thant on the course of events during the Congo Crisis,<sup>4</sup> but in O'Malley's work the UN emerges as an institutional actor in its own right. Readers see the implications of the seismic shift in UN membership brought about by the admission of new members, leading to an Afro-Asian majority and changing political dynamics in the

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<sup>1</sup> Ernest W. Lefever, *Crisis in the Congo: A U.N. Force in Action* (Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institution Press, 1965) and *Uncertain Mandate: Politics of the U.N. Congo Operation* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1967).

<sup>2</sup> Madeleine Kalb, *The Congo Cables: The Cold War in Africa from Eisenhower to Kennedy* (New York: Macmillan, 1982); Richard Mahoney, *JFK: Ordeal in Africa* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1983); Alan James, *Britain and the Congo Crisis, 1960-1963* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1996).

<sup>3</sup> Lise Namikas, *Battleground Africa: Cold War in the Congo 1960-1965* (Washington, D.C.: Woodrow Wilson Center Press, 2013); Michael Kennedy and Art Magennis, *Ireland, the United Nations and the Congo: A Military and Diplomatic History, 1960-1* (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2014); Kevin Spooner, *Canada, The Congo Crisis, and UN Peacekeeping, 1960-64* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 2009).

<sup>4</sup> See Brian Urquhart, *Hammarskjöld* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1994).

Security Council, the General Assembly, and key committees, especially the Congo Advisory Committee established by Hammarskjöld.

In a similar way, *The Diplomacy of Decolonisation* acknowledges Richard Mahoney's and Alan James's respective analyses of American and British policies but then strikes out into newer territory by focusing the narrative principally on the bilateral relationship between the two countries, as it evolved throughout the crisis. Others, Lyse Namikas and Kevin Spooner for example, have previously shown that Western solidarity was strained by the sometimes divergent aims and objectives pursued by alliance partners during the Congo Crisis. O'Malley's account reinforces this interpretation. In the earliest months of the crisis, British and American approaches proved more likely to coincide; as the years passed, and especially as ONUC used greater force to address the dilemma of Katanga secession, it became nearly impossible for Britain and the United States to find common ground. O'Malley suggests that in the wake of the 24 November 1961 Security Council Resolution, ultimately the American position in the Congo "was directly opposed to British objectives" (124).

Central to this interpretation is the study's backdrop of the politics of decolonization. Arguably, this is the work's most innovative contribution to Congo Crisis scholarship. The East/West rivalry is of course fundamental to the Cold War, but decolonization also profoundly shaped international relations in this period. At the UN, O'Malley asserts that "colonial dimensions had in fact an even wider resonance than the Cold War arguments for the development of UN Congo policy" (88). The intersection of Cold War and decolonization diplomacies is equally at the heart of her analysis of British-American relations, and substantive archival material from both sides of the Atlantic is presented to drive home the complexities of policy development in both governments. A related strength of the work is its demonstration of internal divisions and disagreements within American and British foreign policy elites. While the diversity of views within bureaucracies and amongst elected officials in both the United States and the United Kingdom has been previously addressed by other scholars, O'Malley further adds to this discussion by firmly rooting these conflicting attitudes and positions less in the ideological realm and more in the struggle to understand how contemporaries imagined the implications of the Congo Crisis with respect to wider processes of decolonization in Africa.<sup>5</sup> The strength of the Katanga lobby within the British Conservative party (123) and the roles played by key American officials, notably Under Secretary of State and later Special Adviser on African Affairs Chester Bowles and Ambassador to the UN Adlai Stevenson (24-26), are apt examples.

For students of Canadian foreign policy, there are interesting lessons to be drawn from this study about bilateral relations between Canada's two most important Cold War allies and about the UN, which is widely recognized as a cornerstone, multilateral instrument of Canadian foreign policy in the post war period. For Ottawa, Congo-Crisis diplomacy generally proved much less complicated when London and Washington were aligned, though, even then, difficult circumstances could arise. O'Malley recounts the concerted effort by Britain to convince Canada to support the seating of Joseph Kasavubu's Congolese delegation to the UN in 1960. In this instance, the British and Americans applied pressure in equal measure on the Canadian government to come out clearly in favour of Kasavubu over Patrice Lumumba. Secretary of State for External

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<sup>5</sup> In addition to the work of Mahoney and James previously cited, David N. Gibbs provides important insight into the diversity of views across American policy makers, emphasising economic self-interest. David N. Gibbs, *The Political Economy of Third World Intervention: Mines, Money, and U.S. Politics in the Congo Crisis* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991).



Affairs Howard Green may have overtly resisted Britain's call for "unity among Commonwealth members" with the Canadian delegation's abstention on this issue in the General Assembly (52), but he did so having done the math well enough to know that the British-American position would likely prevail without Canada's vote. Canada was not at all opposed to this outcome, but its membership on the Secretary General's Congo Advisory Committee required it to be far more discreet than was advocated by its Western allies.

O'Malley charts the trajectory of ever more divergent U.S. and UK policies as the Congo Crisis deepened from 1961-1962 and UN peacekeepers increasingly engaged in open hostilities with the separatist regime in Katanga. For Canada, this certainly posed a challenge. While Canadian Prime Minister John Diefenbaker typically felt a greater affinity for the Commonwealth than Canada's bilateral relationship with the United States, Canadian policy aligned more closely with American approaches in the later period of the Congo Crisis. Archival records of discussions in NATO meetings, especially the Committee of Political Advisors, have demonstrated the dynamics of British-American relations and the consequent impact on other NATO allies. The western alliance enters into O'Malley's narrative at a few points, notably in discussion of British Prime Minister Harold Macmillan's appeal for President John Kennedy to use his influence to have the UN restrain ONUC when peacekeeping became more forceful in Katanga (127). Given the centrality of NATO in the West, additional discussion of the failed attempts to develop a concerted, united alliance policy on the Congo could have provided even more evidence in support of the author's assessment of British-American relations.

One final point can be made about ONUC's December 1962 round of hostilities in Katanga. Here we see, in O'Malley's account, the fundamental break in British-American Congo policy. American support of the UN effort to end the Katangan secession was entirely incompatible with British political and economic interests. In the aftermath of UNOKAT or Operation Grandslam, O'Malley suggests the Congo experience "served to revitalise the image" of the UN for the United States (157). By comparison, ONUC's march on Jadotville that brought a final end to the secession was the subject of much handwringing in the UK. Once again, the British had turned to Canada, hoping that Ottawa would use its influence "to urge moderation on the Secretary-General" (154). While Howard Green may well have advised his diplomats to do just that at the UN, in Ottawa the government's overall policy had more in common with the United States. The ultimate resolution of the dilemma posed by Katanga's secession, even if by force in the very last resort, was an acceptable outcome for Canada if the UN was preserved as an effective tool for international diplomacy. Understanding the divergent British and American assessments requires an appreciation for the significance of decolonization, as O'Malley argues. As with Canada, the United States ultimately prioritized the need for a UN success in the Congo to affirm the organization's continued utility as an instrument of American diplomacy; for the United Kingdom, the UN's actions in the Congo served only to set worrisome precedents for the further, unwelcome engagement of the organization in decolonizing Africa.

*The Diplomacy of Decolonisation* is unlikely to overturn findings presented in the most recent scholarship on the Congo Crisis, in part because it presents an impressive array of additional primary material that in many respects confirms existing interpretations. With this book, however, O'Malley has significantly reframed our understanding of the Congo Crisis by foregrounding the importance of decolonization as a fundamental dynamic in international relations during the Cold War. By doing so, we gain new insights into the underlying factors that critically shaped British-American relations and the agency of the UN during a key episode of the Cold War.

Author's Response by Alanna O'Malley, Leiden University

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The Congo crisis from 1960-1964 is a subject that has intrigued historians for decades, proving almost kaleidoscopic in scale as it combined the challenges of the Cold War with decolonization, nationalism, and internationalism, and the changing nature of the UN, as much in its mission on the ground, as in the political offices in New York. Defining the contours of this book, while endeavoring to carve out an original contribution to the crowded field of literature on the subject, was one of the greatest challenges of writing *The Diplomacy of Decolonisation*. I am indebted to the insights and analysis of some of the leading historians on the topic in their careful review of the final product, and in particular in their reflections on how the book provides a major contribution to already existing works.

In particular, each of the reviews emphasizes how the Congo crisis is framed here in an innovative way, as a moment which had longer and wider implications for the debate about decolonization and the role of the UN in managing that process. Andy DeRoche points out that the book highlights the evolving position of the UN in international affairs, showing how the organization was changed by the crisis, expanding its agency as African and Asian actors utilized it to drive the agenda of decolonization forward. He argues that the leader of newly-independent Zambia, Kenneth Kaunda, and his reactions to the crisis deserve more attention. Kaunda does not feature in the text itself, although the footnotes contain some references to his meeting with U.S. President Lyndon B. Johnson in December 1964. As DeRoche's own work underscores and investigates,<sup>1</sup> Kaunda was an important actor in shaping the relationship between the U.S. and Southern Africa. Indeed, he is correct in his remarks that the continued instability of the Congo through this period certainly impacted on Zambia's road towards independence and in particular on efforts to position the country in a changing constellation of relationships between African states, the U.S., and the former colonial power Britain.

DeRoche terms the omission of the Zambian perspective a 'missed opportunity' to provide additional evidence to the argument that African states were particularly active at the UN on the Congo issues because many of them viewed it as a test case for decolonization. However, there is significant emphasis in the final chapter of *The Diplomacy of Decolonisation* on the ways in which African states criticized Belgium, Britain, and the U.S. for their intervention into the Congolese city of Stanleyville (now Kisangani) in November 1964, under the guise of rescuing the European population that had been taken hostage by a rebel faction. While Kaunda is not a specific focus, the chapter makes the argument that many African states in fact viewed this intervention as an illegal act which violated the sovereignty of the Congo and served as a veil for military action against the rebels who threatened the stability of the Western-friendly government in Leopoldville (now Kinshasa). In addition, many, including Kaunda, supported the rebels against the Congolese government, which was perceived as a regime that lacked authenticity and legitimacy. Kaunda certainly shared these views and expressed them to Johnson, but he was not alone in doing so and was not one of the more vocal critics of the intervention, precisely because he wished to preserve the relationship with the United States. DeRoche is quite correct in his point about the importance of African perspectives of the crisis, an element which opens interesting avenues of further study on the Congo.

Alessandro Iandolo captures well the main arguments of the book, summarizing them as an effort to frame the Congo as "a violent confrontation over the 'quality' and extent of decolonization." In a very thorough review,

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<sup>1</sup> Andy DeRoche, *Kenneth Kaunda, the United States and Southern Africa* (London: Bloomsbury, 2016).

he argues that the book shares Mark Mazower's view of the UN as a contested battleground decisively "shaped by the contrast between empire and decolonization."<sup>2</sup> In positioning the Congo crisis as a lightning rod in wider UN debates about the scope and pace of the decolonization process, the book certainly argues that in the process the UN was changed by the proliferation of actors and by the evolution of the means and methods of ending empire and the unfolding of decolonization. However, there is one crucial but important point of difference from Mazower's perspective, which the book goes to some length to demonstrate. Whereas Mazower maintains that ultimately the UN is little more than a tool of the Great Powers, particularly the U.S., I make the argument that actors from Africa and Asia, in close cooperation with their Latin American colleagues, impact the UN significantly. Partly this is because their numbers swell as more states become independent and this gives them a majority position in the General Assembly, but also because they have specific visions of how to utilize the potential of the UN. I argue that the Afro-Asian bloc in particular evokes the Congo in wider debates about decolonization in an effort to critique the state quo and to challenge the North-South relationship more generally.

Iandolo also argues for a more critical assessment of the role of the Secretary-General Dag Hammarskjöld, and in particular his relationship with the U.S. The book emphasizes his relationship with African and Asian states, particularly how he cultivated these partnerships in an effort to maintain support and the supply of troops for the peacekeeping mission. While I argue that Hammarskjöld was not afraid to break relations with the US, despite their crucial financial support of the UN, his wider relationship with American officials certainly deserves more attention. In particular, the role of his deputy Andrew Cordier, often perceived as representing the views of the State Department, could be investigated further. The recent turn in the scholarship on Hammarskjöld towards a more critical analysis of his policies and views takes first step in this direction.<sup>3</sup>

Lise Namikas picks up on the ways in which U.S. Congo policy is analyzed and criticizes the book for overestimating "the influence of the State Department, via its role in representing the United States at the United Nations." In many ways her own book, *Battleground Africa, Cold War in the Congo 1960-1965* does an excellent job in tracing how the different branches of government interacted to formulate the American policy towards the Congo.<sup>4</sup> The focus in my book on the State Department arises for two reasons, one strategic and one empirical. First, during the early part of the crisis the U.S. did not have a clear policy towards the Congo. Deeply invested both militarily and politically in the Vietnam War, Washington paid only scant attention to the crisis which was initially perceived as an issue that fell under the purview of Cold Warriors who, it has been shown by Sergey Mazov among others, overestimated the influence of the USSR in the Congo.<sup>5</sup> The

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<sup>2</sup> Mark Mazower, *No Enchanted Palace: The End of Empire and the Ideological Origins of the United Nations* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2009); Mark Mazower, *Governing the World, The History of an Idea 1815 to the Present* (New York: Penguin, 2013).

<sup>3</sup> Henning Melber, *Dag Hammarskjöld, the United Nations and the Decolonization of Africa* (London: Hurst, Forthcoming 2019).

<sup>4</sup> Lise Namikas, *Battleground Africa: Cold War in the Congo, 1960-1965* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2013).

<sup>5</sup> Sergei Mazov, *A Distant Front in the Cold War: the USSR in West Africa and the Congo, 1956-1964* (Washington, D.C.: Woodrow Wilson Center and Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2010). See also Alessandro

State Department gradually became split over how the crisis should be dealt with, whether framed solely as a Cold War concern, or as a wider challenge to the balance of relations between traditional European allies (who in many cases were also former or continuing colonial powers) and developing relations among the newly-independent countries of African and Asia. This led the crisis to produce an interesting political dynamic within the State Department which often resulted in an ambivalent position on the Congo and other decolonization questions at the UN. The decision to focus on tracing how this dynamic unfolded was both an effort to show the contestation of views on the meaning of the Congo and decolonization for U.S. foreign policy and also a way of highlighting how Cold War powers themselves perceived other dimensions of the crisis that ultimately shifted their view of the UN and its utility for their national interests. As this crisis progressed, my decision to maintain the book's focus on the State Department was also driven by the vast array of documentation available, particularly with regard to the Stanleyville hostage crisis in 1964, some of which has been newly released.

To Namikas's criticism that "it is a bit unclear...how general decolonization was accelerated by the Congo crisis," I would argue that the book reveals how the specter of the Congo was raised by African and Asian actors in an array of debates about how to develop, in political and economic dimensions, the newly-independent states which emerged during those tumultuous years. The Congo sparked off a critical debate about the role and capacities and potential agency of the UN in moderating and managing this longer process. In many ways this was also important in changing the meaning of decolonization as being more than the acquisition of territorial sovereignty, but had longer implications for other interpretations such as economic sovereignty and human rights as ends of the decolonization process.

Finally, Kevin Spooner's insightful remarks help to offer more context around the role of the Canadian actors who appear in the book at crucial junctures. The analysis of Canada as a country which was positioned as a strategic ally of Britain and the U.S. while at the same time performing a leading role in the Commonwealth group at the UN shows how even countries without a direct interest in the crisis became drawn into the debate by its wider implications for a series of global relationships. Spooner argues that more attention could have been paid to the role of NATO and the failed attempts of Western powers to develop a coherent approach to the crisis. Indeed, the book argues that the splintering of Anglo-American relations was indicative of the lack of Western unity on this question, which was not unusual for many crises of decolonization but was used, in this instance, by African and Asian actors as a way to prise apart the Western position at the UN.

A feature which would deserve further analysis is just how Belgium and France at different moments, and for different reasons, scuppered attempts to agree on a joint position on the Congo. Ultimately this pointed to differing views of the UN and its traditional position in protecting the interest of Western powers, but the wider attempts outside the organization to agree a common position also point to how each of the actors perceived the challenges of decolonization in different ways. More work remains to be done on how and why these divergent approaches problematized the way in which decolonization unfolded and arguably marred the efforts of the UN to provide structure and coherence to this process. Similarly, following Spooner's comments on the Canadian role, another avenue of investigation which would prove fruitful would be to probe the role

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Iandolo, "Imbalance of Power: The Soviet Union and the Congo Crisis, 1960-1961," *Journal of Cold War Studies* 16:2 (Spring 2014): 32-55.

of middle powers during the crisis, in particular those, including Ireland and Sweden, who were crucial contributors to the UN peacekeeping mission in the Congo.

In his introduction, Frank Gerits brings together these reviews in an engaging way and I thank him for his lucid analysis. As these perceptive and intuitive reviews highlight, the Congo remains a changeable and challenging subject of study and the history of the crisis has, as yet, many unexplored avenues of potential research. I hope that this book, and these discussions, will highlight just some of the remaining intricacies and misperceptions of the crisis and of how the UN sought to solve it, which had a lasting impact on how the organization henceforth operated. In many ways this research should draw more attention to the ways in which decolonization transformed the world with as much, if not more, impact than the Cold War that continues to dominate teleological histories of both the Congo and the UN.