

= South Kasai =

South Kasai (French : Sud @-@ Kasai) was an unrecognised secessionist state within the Republic of the Congo (the modern @-@ day Democratic Republic of the Congo) which was semi @-@ independent between 1960 and 1962 . Initially proposed as only a province , South Kasai sought full autonomy in similar circumstances to the much larger neighbouring state of Katanga , to its south , during the political turmoil arising from the independence of the Belgian Congo known as the Congo Crisis . Unlike Katanga , however , South Kasai did not explicitly declare full independence from the Republic of the Congo or reject Congolese sovereignty .

The South Kasaian leader and main advocate , Albert Kalonji , who had represented a faction of the nationalist movement (the Mouvement National Congolais @-@ Kalonji or MNC @-@ K) before decolonisation , exploited ethnic tensions between his own ethnic group , the Baluba , and the Bena Lulua to create a Luba @-@ focused state in the group 's traditional heartland in the south @-@ eastern parts of the Kasai region . As sectarian violence broke out across the country , the state declared its secession from the Congo on 9 August 1960 and its government and called for the Baluba living in the rest of the Congo to return to their " homeland " . Kalonji was appointed President . Although the South Kasaian government claimed to form an autonomous part of a federal Congo @-@ wide state , it exercised a degree of regional autonomy and even produced its own constitution and postage stamps . The state , supported by foreign powers , particularly Belgium , and funded by diamond exports , resolved numerous crises , including those caused by the large emigration of Luba refugees , but became increasingly militarist and repressive .

Soon after its secession , South Kasaian and Congolese troops clashed after the Congolese central government ordered an offensive against it . The offensive , planned to be the first act of an offensive against Katanga , was accompanied by widespread massacres of Baluba and a refugee crisis termed a genocide by some contemporaries . The state was rapidly overrun by Congolese troops . The violence in the suppression of Kasai provided much legitimacy to Joseph Kasu @-@ Vubu 's deposition of Patrice Lumumba from the office of Prime Minister in late 1960 and Lumumba 's later arrest and assassination . As a result , South Kasai remained on relatively good terms with the new Congolese government from 1961 . Its leaders , including Kalonji himself , served in both the South Kasaian government and the Congolese parliament . South Kasai continued to exercise quasi @-@ independence while Congolese and United Nations troops were able to move through the territory without conflict with the South Kasaian gendarmerie . In April 1961 , Kalonji took the royal title Mulopwe (" King of the Baluba ") to tie the state more closely to the pre @-@ colonial Luba Empire . The act divided the South Kasaian authorities and Kalonji was disavowed by the majority of South Kasai 's parliamentary representatives in Léopoldville . In December 1961 , Kalonji was arrested on a legal pretext in Léopoldville and imprisoned . UN and Congolese troops occupied South Kasai . In September 1962 , shortly after his escape from prison and return to South Kasai , Kalonji was ousted by a military coup d'état which forced him into exile and brought the secession to an end .

The end of South Kasai 's secession is usually held to be either December 1961 , the date of Kalonji 's arrest , or October 1962 with the anti @-@ Kalonji coup d'état and final arrival of government troops .

= = Background = =

= = Colonial rule = =

European colonial rule in the Congo began in the late 19th century . King Leopold II of Belgium , frustrated by his country 's lack of international power and prestige , attempted to persuade the Belgian government to support colonial expansion around the then @-@ largely unexplored Congo Basin . The Belgian government 's ambivalence about the idea led Leopold to eventually create the colony on his own account . With support from a number of Western countries , who viewed Leopold

as a useful buffer between rival colonial powers , Leopold achieved international recognition for a personal colony , the Congo Free State , in 1885 . The Luba Empire , the largest regional power in the Kasai region , was annexed into the new state in 1889 . By the turn of the century , the violence of Free State officials against indigenous Congolese and the ruthless system of economic extraction had led to intense diplomatic pressure on Belgium to take official control of the country , which it did in 1908 , creating the Belgian Congo .

Belgian rule in the Congo was based around the " colonial trinity " (trinité coloniale) of state , missionary and private company interests . The privileging of Belgian commercial interests meant that large amounts of capital flowed into the Congo and that individual regions became specialised . On many occasions , the interests of the government and private enterprise became closely tied and the state helped companies break strikes and remove other barriers imposed by the indigenous population . The country was split into hierarchically @-@ organised administrative subdivisions , and run uniformly according to a set " native policy " (politique indigène) ? in contrast to the British and the French , who generally favoured the system of indirect rule whereby traditional leaders were retained in positions of authority under colonial oversight .

= = = Ethnicity = = =

Before the start of the colonial period , the region of South Kasai formed part of the Luba Empire , a federation of local kingdoms with a degree of cultural uniformity . During the 17th and 18th centuries , the Baluba spread across large parts of the Kasai @-@ Katanga savannah along the Kasai river basin and eventually developed into a number of ethnic subgroups , notably the Luba @-@ Kasai and the Luba @-@ Katanga . Although never united into a single centralised state , the groups retained a degree of emotional attachment based around shared origin myths and cultural practices . Other groups , like the Songye and the Kanyok , also had long histories in the Kasai region .

One of the major legacies of colonial rule in Kasai was the arbitrary redivision of the population into new ethnic groups . Despite the shared language (Tshiluba) and culture of the two groups , colonial administrators believed the inhabitants of the Lulua river area to be ethnically different from the Baluba and dubbed them the Bena Lulua . The colonists believed the Baluba to be more intelligent , hardworking and open to new ideas than the Bena Lulua who were believed to be more reactionary and stupid . As a result , from the 1930s , the state began to treat the two groups differently and applied different policies to each and promoted the Baluba to positions above other ethnicities .

During the 1950s when the Belgians began to fear that the rise of a powerful Luba elite would become a threat to colonial rule , the administration began to support Lulua organisations . This further contributed to the growing ethnic polarisation between the two groups . In 1952 , an organisation called the Lulua Frères (Lulua Brothers) was established to campaign for socio @-@ economic advancement of the Lulua group and became an unofficial representative of the Bena Lulua .

In 1959 , Luba @-@ Lulua animosity was brought to a head by the discovery of a colonial proposal to move Luba farmers out of Lulua land to the less fertile land on Luba territory . As a result , animosity rose and violent clashes broke out . In August 1959 , Luba demonstrations against the plan which were violently repressed by the colonial military and police .

= = = Nationalist movement and Congolese politics = = =

= = = Congolese nationalism = = =

An anti @-@ colonial Pan @-@ African and nationalist movement developed in the Belgian Congo during the 1950s , primarily among the évolués class (the urbanised black bourgeoisie) . The movement was divided into a number of parties and groups which were broadly divided on ethnic and geographical lines and opposed to one another . The largest , the Mouvement National

Congolais (MNC) , was a united front organisation dedicated to achieving independence " within a reasonable " time . It was created around a charter which was signed by , among others , Patrice Lumumba , Cyrille Adoula and Joseph Ileo . Lumumba became a leading figure and by the end of 1959 , the party claimed to have 58 @, @ 000 members . However , many found the MNC was too moderate . A number of other parties emerged , distinguished by their radicalism , support for federalism or centralism and affiliation to certain ethnic groupings . The MNC 's main rival was the Alliance des Bakongo (ABAKO) led by Joseph Kasa @-@ Vubu , a more radical party supported among the Kongo people in the north , and Moïse Tshombe 's Confédération des Associations Tribales du Katanga (CONAKAT) , a strongly federalist party in the southern Katanga Province .

= = = = Kalonji @-@ Lumumba split and polarisation = = = =

Although it was the largest of the African nationalist parties , the MNC had many different factions within it that took differing stances on a number of issues . It was increasingly polarised between moderate évolués and the more radical mass membership . A radical and federalist faction headed by Ileo and Albert Kalonji split away in July 1959 , but failed to induce mass defections by other MNC members . The dissident faction became known as the MNC @-@ Kalonji (MNC @-@ K) , while the majority group became the MNC @-@ Lumumba (MNC @-@ L) . The split divided the party 's support base into those who endured with Lumumba , chiefly in the Stanleyville region in the north @-@ east , and those who backed the MNC @-@ K , popular in the south and among Kalonji 's own ethnic group , the Baluba . The MNC @-@ K later formed a cartel with ABAKO and the Parti Solidaire Africain (PSA) to call for a united , but federalised , Congo .

The 1959 elections degenerated into an " anti @-@ Baluba plebiscite " in Kasai as the Luba MNC @-@ K succeeded in obtaining a plurality but failed to take control of the provincial government . Instead , Lumumba promoted a Lulua candidate , Barthélemy Mukenge , as provincial governor while Kalonji was refused an important ministerial portfolio in Lumumba 's government . Kalonji refused Lumumba 's offer of the Agriculture portfolio .

The Kalonjists , who felt rejected and marginalised by the central government , began supporting alternative parties . Among them , the Kalonjists supported Tshombe 's CONAKAT party in nearby Katanga which , because of its strongly federalist stance , opposed to Lumumba 's conception of a strong central government based in the capital Léopoldville . As part of this , the Kalonjists supported CONAKAT against their main local rivals , the centralist Association Générale des Baluba de Katanga (BALUBAKAT) party led by Jason Sendwe , which , although it represented the Baluba of Katanga Province , was in favour of centralism . The Kalonjists , who believed themselves to be acting on behalf of all the Luba @-@ Kasai , created an animosity between the Luba @-@ Kasai and the Luba @-@ Katanga but also failed to gain the full support of CONAKAT , much of which had racial prejudice against the Baluba and supported only the " authentic Katangese " .

= = Secession = =

= = = Persecution of the Baluba = = =

The Republic of the Congo received independence on 30 June 1960 under a joint government of Kasa @-@ Vubu and Lumumba . Four days previously , MNC @-@ K officials had petitioned the Léopoldville parliament to peacefully divide the Province of Kasai along the lines suggested by Kalonji . The motion , which would have required the modification of the Congo 's new constitution (Loi fondamentale) , was received by a parliament divided between Lumumba and Kasa @-@ Vubu factions and no agreement could be reached .

In the aftermath of independence , ethnic tensions flared up across the country , much of it directed against the Baluba , and a number of violent clashes occurred . Despite rejecting earlier proposals for Luba repatriations to Kasai in January 1960 , the Kalonjists made an official call to the Baluba across the Congo to return to their Kasaian " homeland " on 16 July . Initially , the Kalonjists

envisaged the division of Kasai Province in two in order to allow for the creation of a quasi @-@ autonomous MNC @-@ K and Luba @-@ dominated provincial government . The proposed province was termed the Federative State of South Kasai (État fédératif du Sud @-@ Kasai) . Rapidly , however , Kalonji realised that the chaos in the rest of the Congo could be used to secede unilaterally and declare full local independence . This decision was further re @-@ enforced by the full secession of the State of Katanga (État du Katanga) , led by Tshombe , on 11 July 1960 . Kalonji visited Katanga at the start of August 1960 , shortly after its secession , where , on the 8 August , he declared that Kasai " must be divided at all costs . "

= = = Secession = = =

On 9 August 1960 , Kalonji , still in Katanga , declared the region of south @-@ eastern Kasai to be the new Mining State of South Kasai (État minier du Sud @-@ Kasai) or Autonomous State of South Kasai (État autonome du Sud @-@ Kasai) .

Unlike Katanga , however , South Kasai 's secession did not explicitly mean the rejection of its position within the Republic of the Congo . Rather , it resembled the self @-@ declared local governments in Équateur Province . The " Autonomous State " title was chosen in order to re @-@ enforce the impression that the secession was not a rejection of Congolese sovereignty , but the creation of a federally @-@ governed region of the Congo . The secession had some support among journalists , intellectuals and politicians in Léopoldville , with one newspaper calling it " a model by which the many new states now mushrooming in the Congo might form a new federation " . In practice South Kasai had considerably more independence than a regular province and , by mandating its own federated powers unilaterally , was effectively seceding from the Congo . Despite this , Kalonji and members of his party continued to sit as deputies in the Congolese parliament in Léopoldville .

Kalonji was declared President and Joseph Ngalula Prime Minister . Although the Luba @-@ Kasai had never lived in a single state before , Kalonji was able to gain the broad support of the Luba chiefs for the secession . Kalonji was able to portray the secession internationally as the result of the persecution and the failure of the Congolese government to sufficiently protect the Baluba in the rest of the Congo . At its height , South Kasai numbered around a million inhabitants and 30 @,@ 000 square kilometres (12 @,@ 000 sq mi) of territory . The state 's capital was Bakwanga (currently known as Mbuji @-@ Mayi) .

= = = Governance = = =

Once established in power , Kalonji positioned himself personally as " big man " and patron from whom state power originated . Tribal leaders from Luba and other ethnic groups enjoyed a close , client @-@ like relationship with Kalonji himself and received preferential treatment in exchange for services . In particular , Kalonji was reliant on tribal leaders to mobilise paramilitaries to support the South Kasaian army .

The immediate internal problems faced by South Kasai were large number of unsettled Luba refugees and internal dissent from non @-@ Luba minorities . The state was able to direct money from diamond exporting and foreign support to fund public services which allowed Luba refugees to be settled in employment . Social services were " relatively well @-@ run " . On the 12 July 1961 , the state adopted a constitution turning itself into the Federated State of South Kasai (État fédéré du Sud @-@ Kasai) , declaring the state itself both " sovereign and democratic " but also part of a hypothetical " Federal Republic of the Congo " . The state had its own flag , published its own official journal , the Moniteur de l 'État Autonome du Sud @-@ Kasai , and even produced its own postage stamps .

The South Kasaian army or gendarmerie grew from just 250 members at its inception to nearly 3 @,@ 000 by 1961 . In 1961 , the military led a campaign to expand the size of the state 's territory at the expense of neighbouring ethnic groups . Despite receiving some support from Belgium , the gendarmerie was poorly equipped and constantly low on supplies and ammunition .

As government authority in South Kasai was consolidated , the government became increasingly militaristic and authoritarian . Non @-@ Luba groups were increasingly marginalised . Political opponents were killed or driven into exile , including Ngalula . Non @-@ Luba groups in the region , especially the Kanyok , fought a constant but low @-@ level insurgency against the South Kasaian government .

= = = International support = = =

Kalonji went to great lengths to secure international recognition and support for the state of South Kasai . The former colonial power , Belgium , distrusted the Congolese central government and supported both the governments of South Kasai and Katanga . Like Katanga , South Kasai had important mineral deposits , including diamond fields , and Belgian companies had large sums of money tied up in mines in the area . A Belgian company , Forminière , was the state 's principal supporter and received concessions from South Kasai in exchange for financial support . The comparatively large income from these companies meant that South Kasai was able to support significant public services and cope with large numbers of internally @-@ displaced Luba refugees . In the context of the Cold War , Kalonji was supported by Western powers and moderates in the Congolese government who viewed him as both a moderate pro @-@ Westerner and anticommunist . Although both Katanga and South Kasai were supported by South Africa , France and the Central African Federation , neither state ever received any form of official diplomatic recognition .

After the coup d'état which removed Lumumba from power , Kalonji tried to cultivate good relations with the Congolese government . Joseph @-@ Désiré Mobutu , in particular , was able to use South Kasai for the execution of his political opponents and dissident Lumumbists including Pierre Finant .

= = = Kalonji as Mulopwe = = =

Because of the importance of the Luba ethnicity to South Kasai , Kalonji used his support from the traditional Luba tribal authorities to have himself declared Mulopwe . The title , Mulopwe (usually translated as " King " or " Emperor ") , was extremely symbolic because it was the title employed by the rulers of the pre @-@ colonial Luba Empire and had been disused since the 1880s . By taking it , along with the extra name Ditunga (" homeland ") , Kalonji was able to closely tie himself and the South Kasaian state to the Luba Empire to increase its legitimacy in the eyes of the Baluba . In order to avoid accusations of impropriety , the title was bestowed on Kalonji 's father on 12 April 1961 , who then immediately abdicated in favour of his son . With the accession of Kalonji to the title of Mulopwe on 16 July , the state 's title changed to the Federated Kingdom of South Kasai (Royaume fédéré du Sud @-@ Kasai) .

Kalonji 's accession to the position of Mulopwe was heavily criticised even by many Luba in South Kasai . Kalonji remained popular among some groups , but lost the support of the South Kasaian évolués who saw his elevation as flagrant opportunism . Soon after his elevation , Kalonji was publicly condemned and disavowed by ten of South Kasai 's 13 representatives in the Léopoldville parliament beginning the disintegration of the secessionist state .

= = Collapse and reintegration = =

= = = Campaign of August ? September 1960 = = =

When South Kasai seceded , government troops from the Armée Nationale Congolaise (ANC) were already fighting Katangese troops in the Kasai region . South Kasai held important railway junctions needed by the Congolese army for its campaign in Katanga , and therefore soon became an important objective . South Kasai also had important mineral wealth which the central government was anxious to return to the Congo . The central government also misunderstood the

South Kasaian position , believing that , like Katanga , the region had declared full independence from the Congo and rejected Congolese sovereignty .

Initially , Lumumba hoped that the United Nations (UN) , which sent a multi @-@ national peacekeeping force to the Congo in July 1960 , would help the central government to suppress both Katangese and South Kasaian secessions . The UN was reluctant to do so , however , considering the secessions to be internal political matters and its own mission to be maintaining basic law and order . Rejected by both the UN and United States , Lumumba sought military support from the communist Soviet Union . Within days of the secession and with Soviet logistical support , 2 @,@ 000 ANC troops launched a major offensive against South Kasai . The attack was extremely successful . On 27 August , ANC soldiers arrived in Bakwanga .

During the course of the offensive , the ANC became involved in ethnic violence between the Baluba and Bena Lulua . As a result , the ANC perpetrated a number of large massacres of Luba civilians . In September , Dag Hammarskjöld , the UN Secretary @-@ General who had recently deployed a large peacekeeping force to the Congo , referred to the massacres as " a case of incipient genocide " . The Baluba were also attacked by the Katangese from the south . In the ensuing massacres , in which ANC or Katangese troops often participated , around 3 @,@ 000 Baluba were killed . The violence of the advance caused an exodus of many thousands of Luba civilians who fled their homes to flee the fighting with more than 35 @,@ 000 left in refugee camps in Élisabethville (the capital of Katanga) alone . As many as 100 @,@ 000 sought refuge in Bakwanga . Diseases , notably kwashiorkor but also malaria , smallpox and anemia , were widespread and reached " epidemic proportions " among Luba refugees between October and December 1960 .

Allegations of genocide and brutality by the ANC were used to provide legitimacy to Kasa @-@ Vubu 's dismissal of Lumumba , with the support of Mobutu , in September 1960 . In the aftermath of the campaign , the South Kasaian state was able to provide substantial aid to its refugees , many of whom were resettled in homes and jobs .

= = = Coexistence and attempted reconciliation = = =

Despite the occupation of South Kasai , the South Kasaian state was not dismantled and co @-@ existed with the rest of the Congo . Congolese delegates , as well as ANC and UN troops were generally able to move around the territory without conflict with the South Kasaian authorities while their sporadic campaign against Katangese forces continued . Nevertheless , throughout much of the period , the South Kasaian gendarmerie fought with Kanyok and Lulua militias across the region while local ethnic violence continued .

In mid @-@ 1961 , conferences were held at Coquilhatville (modern @-@ day Mbandaka) and later in Antananarivo , Madagascar to attempt to broker a peaceful reconciliation between the secessionist factions and the central government in the face of a rebel government in the Eastern Congo led by Antoine Gizenga . It was believed that , with Lumumba dead , it might be possible to create a federal constitution that could reconcile the three parties . The agreements instead led to more uncertainty .

= = = Kalonji 's arrest = = =

On 2 December 1961 , Kalonji was accused by another deputy , the communist Christophe Gbenye , of having ordered corporal punishment against a political prisoner in South Kasai . Parliament voted to remove Kalonji 's political immunity and he was taken into custody by the ANC in Léopoldville . A delegation of around 400 Luba tribal elders sent to Léopoldville to protest were also briefly arrested . Mobutu and Victor Lundula visited Bakwanga soon afterwards .

On 9 March 1962 , the recently re @-@ convened Léopoldville Parliament , under Cyrille Adoula , agreed to modify the Constitution and gave South Kasai official provincial status . In April 1962 , UN troops were ordered to occupy South Kasai as part of U Thant 's new aggressive stance against secession following Hammarskjöld 's death . In Léopoldville , Kalonji was sentenced to five years '

imprisonment . On 7 September , however , Kalonji escaped from prison and returned to South Kasai where he hoped to regain an official position in local elections and , at the head of a government , regain his immunity .

= = = Coup d'état of 1962 = = =

As dissatisfaction with the secession grew , Ngalula and other South Kasaian émigrés in Léopoldville plotted to overthrow the regime in Bakwanga . In September 1962 , the Léopoldville government appointed Albert Kankolongo as Special Commissioner (commissaire extraordinaire) , giving him full military and civil power , to dismantle the local state . Ngalula approached Kankolongo to lead a mutiny and coup d'état against Kalonji .

On the night of 29 / 30 September 1962 , military commanders in South Kasai , led by Kankolongo , led a coup d'état in Bakwanga against the Kalonjist regime . The coup d'état was followed by calls for South Kasai to be fully re @-@ integrated into the Congo . On 5 October 1962 , central government troops again arrived in Bakwanga to support the mutineers and help suppress the last Kalonjist loyalists , marking the end of the secession . Kalonji himself escaped capture during the coup and fled into exile in Barcelona in Francisco Franco 's Spain .

= = Aftermath = =

= = = In Kasai = = =

In October 1962 , South Kasai returned to the Republic of the Congo . The State of Katanga continued to hold out against the central government until it too collapsed in January 1963 after UN forces began to take a more aggressive stance under Thant . As a compromise , South Kasai was one of the 21 provinces formally established by the federalist constitution of 1962 . As the Mobutu regime launched a centralist restructuring of the Congolese state from 1965 , South Kasai was one of the few provinces which was retained . In order to discourage further secessionist sentiment , the province was later restructured to include new territory in Kabinda and Sankuru Districts and renamed Eastern Kasai (Kasai @-@ Oriental) .

The majority of the South Kasaian soldiers were integrated into the ANC after the dissolution of the state but nearly 2 @,@ 000 loyalists went into hiding to await Kalonji 's possible restoration . The rebels were led by General Mwanzambala and fought a guerrilla war against the new provincial government until 1963 when they also accepted integration into the ANC . Soon after the end of the secession , the city of Bakwanga was renamed Mbuji @-@ Mayi .

= = = End of the Congo Crisis = = =

In 1965 , Mobutu launched a second coup d'état against the central government and took personal emergency powers . Once established as the sole source of political power , Mobutu gradually consolidated his control in the Congo . The number of provinces was reduced , and their autonomy curtailed , resulting in a highly centralised state . Mobutu increasingly placed his supporters in the remaining positions of importance . In 1967 , to illustrate his legitimacy , he created a party , the Popular Movement of the Revolution (MPR) , which until 1990 was the nation 's only legal political party under Mobutu 's revised constitution . In 1971 , the state was renamed Zaire and efforts were made to remove all colonial influences . He also nationalised the remaining foreign @-@ owned economic assets in the country . By the time of its disestablishment , Zaire was characterised by widespread cronyism , corruption and economic mismanagement .

The issues of federalism , ethnicity in politics and state centralisation were not resolved by the crisis and partly contributed to a decline in support for the concept of the state among Congolese people . Mobutu was strongly in favour of centralisation and one of his first acts , in 1965 , were to reunify provinces and abolish much of their independent legislative capacity . Subsequent loss of faith in

central government is one of the reasons that the Congo has been labeled as a failed state , and has contributed violence by factions advocating ethnic and localised federalism .