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Mapping through Memory:

The 2010 *Rencontres Picha* biennial

in Lubumbashi, Democratic Republic of Congo

A thesis submitted in partial satisfaction

of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts

in Culture & Performance

by

Elaine Ericksen Sullivan

2015

ABSTRACT OF THE THESIS

Mapping through Memory:

The 2010 *Rencontres Picha* biennial in Lubumbashi, Democratic Republic of Congo

by

Elaine Ericksen Sullivan

Master of Arts in Culture & Performance

University of California, Los Angeles, 2015

Professor Mary Nooter Roberts, Chair

In October of 2010 the second iteration of the Lubumbashi arts biennial, *Rencontres Picha*, took the city as its stage. This paper examines how the biennial unified theories of memory and mapping via an artistic commentary on Lubumbashi's past and present as capital of the Katanga region of the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). In the first section of this paper I take a phenomenological approach to memory to explain how the lived experience of the biennial was itself an act of remembering. Next I provide a brief overview of the history of Lubumbashi, which celebrated the centennial of its founding in 2010. With this history in mind, one can understand how the act of walking through the city grounded the artistic event in a specific place and history. Through the interactions between bodies, works of art, memory and places, the curators and visitors can be seen as participating in an act of mapping, in fact *re*mapping new meanings onto the preexisting grid of Lubumbashi. Finally, with the decision to call the presentation of works of art a "biennial" (rather than a festival or exhibition), its creators placed Lubumbashi on a global art map of biennials.

The thesis of Elaine Ericksen Sullivan is approved.

Saloni Mathur

Allen Fraleigh Roberts

Mary Nooter Roberts, Chair

University of California, Los Angeles

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This thesis could not have been written without my mom by my side – literally – refusing to let me be distracted during the final days of getting words onto a blank screen. Nor could it have been finished without my dad, who taught himself to send photos via text message so I could keep up to date on Annie and Philip's naps, and for reminding me that writing can be as simple as sitting down just doing it.

The fodder for my months of thinking and writing came from my 2013 trip to Lubumbashi, generously funded by UCLA's Graduate Summer Research Mentorship program. Without the Hoovers (Jeff and Ellen) I could not have gotten my bearing in Lubum, or even found a place to live. A trip to Mulungwishi with Jeff and Ellen is like a semester course on the history and geology of Katanga. The Hoovers put me in contact with Olivier Mulumbwa Luna, a graduate student in archaeology at Université de Lubumbashi and now a dear friend and colleague. I cannot imagine my time in Lubumbashi without him, his sense of humor and ability to make me laugh at myself, and his love of family and ideas. Finally, Patrick Mudekereza's generosity inspired me to pursue this thesis, and our long talks about museums, Belgium, and Lubumbashi will stick with me for years to come.

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Introduction

This paper analyzes how *Rencontres Picha,* the 2010 Lubumbashi biennial, unified

theories of memory and mapping via an artistic commentary on Lubumbashi's past and present

as capital of the Katanga region of the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). I take a

phenomenological approach to memory, relying, in particular, on Edward Casey's writings on

the subject, to explain how the lived experience of the biennial – walking through the city from

photograph to photograph - was itself an act of remembering. Furthermore, the act of walking

through the city grounded the artistic event and the experience of remembering in a specific

place. Through the interactions between bodies, works of art, memory and places, the curators

and visitors can be seen as participating in an act of mapping, in fact *re*mapping new meanings

onto the preexisting grid of Lubumbashi. Finally, with the decision to call the presentation of

works of art a "biennial" (rather than a festival or exhibition), its creators placed Lubumbashi on

a global art map of biennials.

The 2010 biennial, interchangeably referred to as the Picha biennial, *Rencontres Picha*,

or the Lubumbashi Biennial, was the second iteration of the event, which was first held in 2008.

The 2008 biennial was organized by a group of artists living and working in Lubumbashi who

wanted to foster the arts in their home town. This group created Picha, employing the Swahili

word for "image" or "picture" (the Swahili "picha" being itself a loan from English), and

continued on after the biennial as a community of artists and later as a physical arts center,

supporting local artistic practices (Mudekereza 2011: 72). True to the biennial title, Picha hosted

its second biennial in 2010.[1] The two directors of the Centre Picha, photographer Sammy Baloji

and writer Patrick Mudekereza, invited the internationally-recognized curator Simon Njami to

serve as artistic director of the 2010 *Rencontres Picha.*

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[1] A third biennial was held in 2013, discussed later in this paper.

The year 2010 marked the centennial of the founding of Lubumbashi and the fiftieth anniversary of Congolese independence from Belgium. For its 100th birthday Lubumbashi was not only the host of *Rencontres Picha*, but was also the stage and subject of this biennial. In addition to customary locations for exhibitions like the contemporary art gallery at the National Museum, photographs were placed on billboards around the city, and film screenings were held in public squares. The placement of photos and choice of screening locations were selected with an awareness of the urban grid structuring the city, highlighting what the biennial's organizers saw as the city's three "axes," running along major thoroughfares in the center of the city: the Axis of Power, the Axis of Culture and Memory, and an axis labeled, simply, "Neutral Zone" (Figure 1).

Though only one of the axes has "memory" in its official title, each axis is a route through Lushois' – as the people from Lubumbashi are called – memories. Walking from installation to installation was a walking tour of the city, rivaling what any tourist office could create. Keeping in mind that walking depends on the body's movement through physical space, this paper will apply Casey's ideas of "body memory" and "place memory" to walking through Lubumbashi and along the axes of *Rencontres Picha*. Walking along the axes visitors followed a map laid out for them by the biennial organizers. This paper will unite theories of memory with theories of mapping, discussing the two in relation to the social and human creation of maps.

This paper's approach to mapping relies heavily on the writings of Denis Wood, author of *The Power of Maps*. Wood suggests that maps exist both in the present and in the past, relying on knowledge gained over generations to create a guide for use in the present (Wood 1992: 5). Maps are constructed, and their makers choose what to include and what to leave out. In addition, maps turn the abstract into the concrete. They allow us to not only describe a place but

to make a place real (4). Walking along the axes, visitors followed the directions on a map, and their interactions with the built environment and spaces of encounter (such as photograph displays) created moments of reflection on past and present. The biennial not only created a map unifying past and present; it made its underlying ideas *real*. Biennial visitors mapped new meanings onto Lubumbashi's layout and created new maps as they followed the biennial's axis of memory.

The 2010 biennial was not only interested in mapping on the local level. In choosing the label "biennial," its creators entered into an international map of contemporary art. In the past two decades biennials have proliferated around the world and especially in countries once labeled "Third World."[2] A new global community of artmakers, dealers, and curators arose and developed a certain power and influence, though the countries and the artistic environment and infrastructure are still considered "developing" in comparison to Euro-American markets and their cousins, cultural institutions.

This paper consists of four sections that address the 2010 *Rencontres Picha* and its importance in Lubumbashi art. In the first section of the paper I lay out the importance of body and place when discussing memory and mapping in any culture. To understand the significance of curatorial decisions made in *Rencontres Picha*, the reader must know some of Lubumbashi's history and how it has shaped the physical environment of the city. The second section of this paper recounts the founding of Lubumbashi, its early role as a mining town, the colonial treatment of native Congolese as reflected in city planning and policy, the city's key role during the Katangan secession of 1960-1963, and the effects of the recent copper boom on the physical

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[2] Though an outdated term, I use "Third World" here because of its broad use in the literature on "third world biennials," discussed later in this paper.

structure of the city. The 2010 biennial's importance is due, in part, to its creative use of the historic physical structure of the city.

In the third section the paper presents the 2010 *Rencontres Picha* in depth, and discusses how it remapped the city. The city itself was turned into an exhibition space and the biennial integrated itself into the urban fabric. Photographs on display could not be separated from their physical location on the city's grid or from the buildings that surrounded them. Furthermore, while walking through the city and visiting the installations, visitors could make their own map of Lubumbashi from any and all angles of their choosing. Using Michel de Certeau's theorizing of strategies and tactics while walking in the city, I explore how the biennial "insinuated" itself into the existing framework, using tactics to highlight the memories within the built environment. Walking through the city, it was as if visitors were drawing their own maps with their footprints, creating new connections and meanings with their own experiences.

In the final section, I discuss *Rencontres Picha* within an international context of biennials. As host to a biennial, Lubumbashi has become a stop (albeit an out-of-the-way one) on the worldwide biennial circuit, staking a claim on the map of the global art world. In the second biennial organizers were again successful in bringing invited artists from across Africa (and a few from Spain) to show their works to local audiences and members of the international art community who were visiting. In this section I will present a more detailed analysis of the 2010 biennial within the larger context of the global art world and the growth of art biennials across the globe, particularly in the Global South. While the biennial was remapping Lubumbashi, it was also placing the city on the art world map, adding another node to global art circuits.

This thesis is the culmination of master's degree studies at UCLA's Department of World Art and Cultures / Dance, and reflects ideas explored in coursework in that department, as well

as in the departments of Art History, History, and Anthropology. In fall of 2011 Allen F. Roberts' class "Theories of Culture" introduced me to interdisciplinary studies of culture from a large variety of approaches, including material culture, visual culture, memory, and museums. During the winter quarter of 2012 I enrolled in both Susan Leigh Foster's "Theories of Performance" and Janet O'Shea's "Theories of Corporeality," two classes taught by dance scholars that pushed me to consider "the body in space" and introduced me to phenomenology. Mary (Polly) Nooter Roberts' classes "Curating Cultures" and "Introduction to Museology," Saloni Mathur's "Museum Studies in the 21st Century" and Steven Nelson's "Contemporary African Art" provided me with opportunities to consider histories of exhibitions in Africa and around the world. Finally, Polly Roberts' seminar "Performing Memory" inspired me to address visual art, performance, and exhibition practices in conversation with each other, and led to me to consider Edward Casey and Paul Connerton's writings in depth. I am indebted to all of these teachers and to my classmates, whose guidance and conversation help me form the foundations of this paper. Finally, the inclusion of my own memories and experiences in Lubumbashi as a "walker" reflects my broad exposure to reflexive ethnography throughout my coursework (e.g. Clifford 1988). Since my paper focuses on the physical, bodily experience of art, memory, and Lubumbashi's built environment, as the author I cannot ignore my own experience.

Memory in Motion: Mapping With the Body[3]

I know exactly where my mother was when she found out that JFK had been shot. I was not even alive, but I have been told so many times I can easily imagine myself there. I grew up in Berkeley, California, one mile north of the UC Berkeley campus, where my mother was in college in 1963. As a kid I went to summer camp on the campus, attended concerts at Zellerbach Hall, and bought all my Cal sweatshirts at the Student Union. And whenever my mother and I crossed Lower Sproul Plaza toward the steps leading up to Sproul Hall, my mother would stop for a second and tell me: "This is where your mommy was when she found out the president had been shot." In the United States, Kennedy's assassination is frequently referenced as a time when anyone alive can tell you exactly where they were when they heard the news. Whenever it is mentioned I imagine myself in Berkeley, holding on to my mother's hand, and try to understand the gravity of such a memory. Whenever I am in that spot I momentarily feel as if I am in my six year-old body, and I think of my mother and of JFK. I feel grounded in place: I know there is cement ground beneath my feet divided into perfect squares across the plaza, I know the building to my left is one of those cement 1960s buildings impossible to avoid on UC campuses and that the building on the right is the multi-story Student Union, scaffolded in steel to keep from crumbling in an earthquake. I cannot separate my memory (and even my memory of my mother's memory) from my body and from that specific place.

I present this anecdote to illustrate the undeniable link between memory, body, and place. In a specific space I have a heightened awareness of my body and remember, "This is where my mother was when she found out Kennedy had been shot." I cannot be in that place without

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[3] The phrase "Memory in Motion" comes from Roberts and Roberts, who use it as a chapter title in *Memory: Luba Art and the Making of History* for their chapter on the performance of memory by Luba diviners. In this case, I use it to refer to memory being created by visitors and citizens interacting with the biennial.

recalling that memory or becoming aware of where my body is in relation to the buildings and bodies around it. The moment passes and I continue on my way. In that moment I experienced what philosopher Edward Casey might consider body memory joining with place memory. Casey describes body memory as "memory that is intrinsic to the body, to its own ways of remembering: how we remember in and by and through the body" (Casey 1987: 147). In this instance, memory cannot be separated from my body. Walking through Sproul Plaza my body remembers the grasp of my mother's hand, and reminds me to think of her and JFK. I have done this so many times, first being reminded by my mother and then on my own, that the memory is automatic. I am not trying to remember, but it feels as if my body is reminding me to remember.

Casey would consider this type of body memory "habitual body memory."[4] Walking across the square I am not actively trying to recall a memory; my body brings me *into* what is being remembered. In this way, the past becomes immanent with the present, but still separate, as is necessary for its existence as memory (Casey 1987: 168). (If the past did not remain separate from the present, it would not be memory but present reality.) Casey argues that memory is just as much of the body as it is mental, and that our body is intrinsic to our ability to remember, as it is the mediator between the mental and the outside world (175, 179). Finally, Casey points out that body memory, and especially habitual body memory, is not necessarily conscious (178) – it can seem to be in the dark recesses of our brains, reminding our foot that the brake pedal is on the left in a split second, for example. A city is filled with humans who may be rushing to work and worrying about a grocery list, but whose bodies are also remembering and reacting to the surrounding environment.

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[4] Similarly, Casey's contemporary Paul Connerton would call this "habit memory" (Connerton 1989). I have focused on Casey because of his explicit concentration on bodily experience.

As mentioned above, this paper is interested in the link between memory, body, and place. If memory is embodied, it is by definition in a place. Embodied memory takes place somewhere specific just as equally as it takes place at a specific time (Casey 1987: 182). Though the planned streets of Lubumbashi are a grid, the city is not made up of points in space but of places, and particularly of places that act as containers of memories (186). Casey differentiates between a site, which is vacuous and undifferentiated from any other site, and a place, which is specific and can contain memories (185). The locations the biennial organizers chose to place their installations were all specific places, which could act as containers of memory.

Memory is never static, even when described as existing within its own built container. In their essay "Audacities of Memory," Mary Nooter Roberts and Allen F. Roberts explain that memory is "a dynamic social process of recuperation, reconfiguration, and outright invention that is often engendered, provoked, and promoted by visual images" (Roberts and Roberts 1996: 17). As a dynamic social process, memory requires the push and pull of human interaction. This push and pull is frequently spurred by interactions with visual images, be they family photographs or objects in museums – or even large photographs on billboards on the side of busy city streets, as in the case of the 2010 biennial.

The only way for us to access the memories contained in places is through our bodies. Our bodies act as mediators between our internal, mental memories and the external place memories. Casey explains, "through its active intentional arc, the lived body traces out the arena for the remembered scenes that inhere so steadfastly in particular places" (Casey 1987: 189). The lived body is necessary in order to create a space for the memories linked to place. Places of memory also become more potent through use; they are animated by the bodies that move through them and use them. The specific installation locations of the 2010 *Rencontres Picha* are

passed by every day by thousands of people. Without the exhibition they are still places of memory, and the people who pass through them have their own body memory. During the biennial, however, art interrupted the familiar, momentarily changing the relationship between place and body that had likely become so habitual as to be nearly unconscious.

These encounters with memory occurred both on the personal and on the social level. Individuals experienced photographs in dialogue with architecture in the most public arena, the city street. While very personal memories may have been accessed, the choice of locations provokes recognition of the public and shared memories of Lushois. The state house, slag heap and Methodist church all act as landmarks of Lubumbashi. They do not merely represent themselves, but act as common points of reference from which other locations can be deduced. As such, these locations were also part of Lushois collective memory. Engaging with these locations and their meanings in the urban context thus brings awareness of the political histories embedded in the city (Jewsiewicki and Mudimbe 1993: 10), and, as Paul Connerton might point out, this social memory is passed on through habitual remembering (Connerton 1989). As a result, memory is not stagnant but is in a perpetual state of creation and construction (Roberts and Roberts 1996: 29).

During the biennial, momentary artistic interruptions occurred in specific locations around the center of Lubumbashi, creating moments of memory. Tracing lines from one spot to another, a map appears. Maps of Lubumbashi already exist, from Google maps to colonial prospecting maps in archives in Belgium. The 2010 *Rencontres Picha* created a new map, one of specific place memories of historical importance and of recent experiences at the biennial. Though this map could be represented on paper, it was created by moving bodies on the streets of Lubumbashi. As memory cannot exist without the body, the 2010 biennial could not exist

without bodies, and particularly without the bodies walking from display location to display location, creating the 2010 Lubumbashi biennial map.

An average person likely thinks of a map as lines drawn on paper representing space, or as an app on a smart phone directing one to one's destination. A moment of thought brings the political power of maps to mind, such as the voting district maps greatly discussed during each election, or the straight line dividing the United States and Canada at the 49th parallel in the western half of both countries. On the African continent, the political power of maps is exemplified by the national borders resulting from the so-called Scramble for Africa of the late 19th and early 20th century, illustrated in the popular imagination as a room of European rulers drawing lines on a map of Africa and haggling over land rights in a continent upon which few would ever set foot. The 1884-1885 Berlin Conference is largely recognized as the starting point for the "scramble," and is most famous for giving the territory of today's DRC to King Leopold II of Belgium as the Congo Free State, his own personal property over seventy times the size of Belgium (Forbath 1977, Pakenham 1991, Slade 1962). For King Leopold, Congo remained lines on a map or in a ledger book, since he never visited the source of his wealth. Many Europeans did travel to Congo, however, and especially to Lubumbashi, which became the capital of the mining region of Katanga.[5]

Maps do not merely represent the world. Maps have specific makers and uses, which guide the ultimate product of the map. For example, a map of tourist sites might not be useful if one is a resident looking for the nearest grocery store. A street map showing the grid of blocks is almost useless to a bicyclist who needs to know how steep streets are to predict time to destination. To make a map useful to a specific situation, a mapmaker must take on the particular user's needs, and therefore the map embodies the author's and user's own experiences (Wood

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[5] For population numbers of indigenous and European populations see Fetter 1976: 74.

1991: 24). [6] Though a map's social construction is an inherent aspect of its character, maps are still generally treated like true, infallible documents. As such, they can be used to wield power, to stake a claim, and to impose desires. Mapmakers (or those who pay them), then, can wield power not only through pen on paper but through the translation of such marks into reality, a "reality we have all accepted" as users of maps (Wood 1992: 4).[7]

The most common conception and use of a map, the street map, is not only a human-made representation, but a representation of a human-made construction. In the local understanding of the map of Lubumbashi, a resident likely thinks of the major thoroughfares used to get to and from the center city, and the major avenues in the center city, home to large supermarkets, churches, and government buildings. The streets and the map are inextricably linked to the colonial history of the city, and are reminders of Belgian colonial power. As Benedict Anderson asserts, maps, along with census-taking and museums, were part of a European "totalizing classificatory grid" (Anderson 2006:184) illustrating colonial powers' control over land, people, and products. Though most Belgians left Lubumbashi in the 1960s, the Belgian "presence" is unavoidable, found in the city's gridded plan, leftover institutions and even offices of power. The 2010 biennial brought attention to this tension, and in creating its own map it constructed its own history, its participants actively writing themselves onto a map Lubumbashi and onto its history.

In this approach to history, memory, and the 2010 biennial, my project focuses on bodies moving through space, influenced by Merleau-Ponty's writings on phenomenology and my

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[6] To illustrate this point Denis Wood created *Everything Sings: Maps for a Narrative Atlas*, an atlas of his neighborhood in Raleigh, North Carolina, which includes maps of pumpkins in his neighborhood on Halloween, windchimes, streetlights, and various road signs. Wood was also featured on an episode of *This American Life,* which is where the author first heard of his work.
[7] Roberts and Roberts also use Wood's writing on maps to frame their chapter "Mapping Memory" in *Memory: Luba Art and the Making of History*.

experience in graduate seminars on performance and corporeality. By "corporeality" I refer to the theoretical idea that bodies are not just vehicles of meaning, but that they can create meaning arising from their very physicality (e.g. Foster 1996, Albright 2013). As the bodies move through space, they are creating their own maps, based on embodied experience. One way to think about this is if the visitors to the biennial put paint on the bottom of their shoes and walked on streets of paper from place to place,[8] and with paint spread thicker in locations where visitors have stopped for a while (to look at a photograph, perhaps, or to have a conversation with a friend). At the end of the day, we would have a giant map of the biennial. But the extra step of inscription with ink onto a sheet of paper is not necessary to say that the bodies have constructed a map and have made meaning. The map is being created by the bodies navigating by walking through the city, encountering art, buildings, memories, and each other.

Mapping is inherent in our interactions with a city, or as Regina Mamou writes, it is "part of the performance, activity, and engagement of the city" (Mamou 2014:143). Venturing out in a new city, we take note o f personal landmarks so that we may find our way back. We hear the rapid conversations, car horns and haggling, feel the polluted air and the warmth of the density of human bodies. This is what I see when looking at the Manhattan intersection of Broadway and Canal on my computer screen, or at the Lubumbashi intersection of Avenue des Usines and Avenue Kapenda. I specifically remember staring at a map of Lubumbashi every day leading up to my visit, trying to imagine the streets and the potential landmarks indicated by Google. Looking back at those hours of map-gazing, I know it was barely useful. My first days in Lubumbashi I was so out of my element and overwhelmed with information I had to create a

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[8] Belgian-born Mexico-city based artist Francis Alÿs had a similar idea for his 1995 piece "The Leak," for which he attached a can of paint to himself and walked from a São Paulo gallery around the city, dripping paint as he went. This performance was repeated in Paris in 2003 and in Jerusalem in 2004, where it was retitled "The Green Line" (Alÿs 2015 and Zwirner 2015). Polly Roberts alerted me to the similarities between his work and my approach to mapping.

map of my own to learn to navigate the city, and my own landmarks became ATMs, supermarkets, and the neighborhood boys who would always say hello from their front doors. Looking at a map now these experiences are what I see; at Avenue des Usines I see vans (used as buses) so congested one can barely walk, at Kasa-Vubu and Likasi I see speeding cars and where I learned how to cross a street. This mapping was not merely drawing lines on paper, but immersing myself into the city, and experiencing it in terms of the relationships between my body, the bodies of others, and roads, sidewalks, and walls that directed my movement (Mamou 2014:144).

Rencontres Picha created a new map of Lubumbashi through the movements of those experiencing its installations. Points on the map were created at the intersections of bodies, place, memory, and art. Though navigating congested streets is an example of habitual body memory, encounters with photographs interrupted the habitual, if only for a moment. The locations chosen for the placement of these photographs were locations of social memory, linked to a larger history of the city. Finally, the act of mapping performed by those experiencing the biennial could only be done by those physically present. The map was created by bodies interacting with each other and with the world around them.

From Elisabethville to Lubumbashi: A Short History

In the hectic streets of Lubumbashi a few things catch the eye on almost every block: makeshift stands for converting dollars into piles of Congolese francs, brightly painted signs advertising the cell service provider whose "minutes" are for sale (one must buy a card and type in a code to add minutes to cell service), and, less frequently, waffle stands. Encountering these stands, I wracked my brain to figure out why my favorite brunch item was available almost as frequently as bags of drinking water. When speaking with a gourmand friend of mine I was teased for my ignorance. Did I not know that waffles were the national food of Belgium? Along with La Brioche, a packed café in the center of town, street corner stands continued to provide popular Belgian pastries decades after the Belgians had left. On a street surrounded by hurrying Lushois, shouting taxi drivers and vendors selling their wares, a taste of emptier, white, Belgian Lubumbashi claimed its plot of land.

To best appreciate the 2010 biennial's use of mapping and "axes" in its organizational schema, one must consider the drastic changes that have occurred over the past 150 years. Remnants of the area's history are scattered through the city today. Lubumbashi began as a spot on a map, undeveloped land close enough to mines, rivers, and the Rhodesian railroad to justify development. Over a century it developed into a bustling city, the second-largest in the Democratic Republic of Congo. An attempt to write "a short history" is no small task, as each person, building, event or even animal at the zoo has its own history in regards to the city. This paper relies heavily on Bruce Fetter's *The Creation of Elisabethville: 1910-1940* with dates, tables, and a chronological narrative that serve as a clear introduction to the foundation of the

city before the Second World War.[9] Another important text covering a similar time period is André Yav's "Vocabulaire de Ville de Elisabethville," found in Johannes Fabian's 1990 *History From Below* and in 2010's *Lubumbashi 1910-2010: Mémoire d'une ville industrielle* edited by Bogumil Jewsiewicki, Dibwe dia Mwembu and Rosario Giordano. Both books include illuminating essays about the text and Lubumbashi's history useful in and of themselves. The city's architectural history has been the focus of Johan Lagae's research for the past decade, and is also the subject of *Lubumbashi: Capitale Minière du Katanga 1910-2010: L'architecture* (2008) put together by Serge Olivier Songa-Songa Mwitwa, Marc Pabois and Johan Lagae, featuring photographs by Sammy Baloji.

The city of Lubumbashi was founded in 1910 as Elisabethville, named after Queen Elisabeth, wife of Belgian King Albert I. It lies in the far southeast of Katanga, Congo's southeastern province, on a segment of Congolese land jutting into Zambia. It only takes a few hours' drive south or east to reach the border, which is also less than a day's drive to the west (Figure 2). The city's location was chosen due to proximity to the Lubumbashi River and the Mine d'Étoile, one of many copper mines in this region known as the Copper Belt and where a number of Europeans and Africans had settled (Fetter 1976:1, Lagae 2010: 184).

Lubumbashi, "le capital du cuivre," is surrounded by a relatively flat landscape and has few tall buildings. Its skyline is dominated by the chimney and slag heap of the copper ore smelting oven built on the Lubumbashi river by the Union Minière du Haut Katanga (UMHK; now Gécamines) (Figure 3). Founded in 1906, by the 1950s UMHK was the largest mineral extraction company in Katanga and one of the largest producers of copper and cobalt in the world (Lemarchand 1964, Kovar 1967, Singh 2008, Rubbers 2010). UMHK was the major

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[9] Though having a chronological narrative is helpful, such an approach is not without problems, frequently turning to over-simplification, forcing events into preconceived frameworks and ignoring that which does not fit (Jewsiewicki and Mudimbe 1993 discussing Umberto Eco's *Lector in fabula*).

employer of citizens of Elisabethville, and ran its own hospital, mess hall, and residences for

workers. After independence UMHK was nationalized and renamed Gécamines (Société

générale des Carrières et des Mines), and remains a significant employer in Katanga.[10]

Lubumbashi did not become a major colonial city simply because of its mines, however. The

choice for the specific placement of Lubumbashi as regional capital hinged on another major

factor: the railroad.

Lubumbashi was a piece on the global colonial gameboard of politics and profit. The city

was surrounded on three sides by British territory, which extended southward all the way to the

Cape of Good Hope. British investors hoped to link the copper deposits around northern Zambia

(then Northern Rhodesia) and Katanga to southern Africa, and were rapidly developing mines in

the region, including one at Lubumbashi in 1909 (Jewsiewicki 1977:319, Fetter 1976: 3). In

1910 the majority of European settlers in this Belgian-controlled region were British, and the

Belgians founded their regional capital immediately next to a mine, keeping an eye on the

foreigners (*ibid*). The Belgians and the British were by no means enemies, but in previous

decades stronger colonial powers had annexed land from other European powers, including the

actions that led to the 1899-1901 Boer War.[11] Though not thoroughly trusted, British investors

were needed to provide capital for the development of mining, which would later lead to

Katanga's prosperity. And to reap the profits of the copper mines, the railroad was needed to

export the product (Figure 4).

With the railroad from Rhodesia due to arrive by the end of 1910, the Belgian Colonial

Ministry sent a thousand troops south from Kivu to reinforce the Belgian presence at

Lubumbashi and to provide extra law and order in preparation for the predicted influx of

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[10] See Jewsiewicki *The Beautiful Time* 2010.
[11] The political maneuvers by colonial powers during this period of history are extremely complex, particularly in regions such as Katanga where there was a lot of mineral wealth to be extracted. See Pakemham 1991.

"rowdies and subversives" arriving with the railroad (Fetter 1976: 29). When the railroad arrived, there were two major work sites in the Lubumbashi area: the Mine de l'Etoile to the east, and the smelter to the west next to the Lubumbashi River. Colonel Emile Wangermée, the Belgian Vice Governor-General, was in charge of the city's development and laid out a rectilinear plan (ibid). In a city with mostly British-backed mines and rail, even the urban layout looked to the British: following the advice of technicians from the Belgian Ministry in Colonies, Lubumbashi was laid out in a pattern copying the rectilinear grid plan of Bulawayo in Southern Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe), almost due south of Lubumbashi and halfway to Johannesburg (ibid).[12]

After the arrival of rail service the European population grew to over a thousand individuals, and by 1912 Lubumbashi's white population was majority Belgian, but had significant numbers of British, Russians, Italians and Greeks, as well as a large Jewish population (who constituted most of the Russian population).[13] These communities flourished in the first few decades of Lubumbashi's history, and their later architectural additions to the city still stand and serve as urban landmarks today.[14] The synagogue (Figure 5, completed in 1930) stands at the major roundabout where Avenue Lumumba (a major route from city center to the airport) meets Chaussée Kasenga, an important thoroughfare leading to the Ruashi district and the still-functioning Mine de l'Etoile, and rue Tabora (previously Avenue Katanga and also known as Avenue de Hemptinne).[15] Two blocks north of the synagogue on Avenue Lumumba

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[12] Mwitwa and Pabois also suggest that the grid may have been influenced by new South American cities where M. Halewijck, head of the Union miniere, had recently lived (Mwitwa and Pabois 2008: 5). For more information on the affinity between Katanga and South Africa, see Lemarchand 1964:81-82.

[13] Fetter provides a table with population data of the Europeans living in Lubumbashi (Fetter 1976:33).

[14] Italians and Greeks remain in Lubumbashi today, and along with Belgians, Indians and Chinese they play significant roles in Katanga's industrial sectors (Rubbers 2009: 270).

one encounters the Greek Orthodox Church (Figure 6, completed in 1956), whose white columns and aqua blue detailing make it hard to miss.

None of Lubumbashi could have been built without the labor of Africans, brought to the city from local and distant communities. Laborers came from across Katanga province and also from Kasai and Zambia.[16] In the 1910s, most arrived because of the need to work in order to pay taxes: the government had created a system in which taxes could only be paid with currency, which one could only earn through working for European employers (Fetter 1976:34-35). Many Africans lived in Lubumbashi only as long as it took to make the required tax amount and returned home (ibid). They lived in camps around the periphery of the city, each according to his (African laborers were almost all men) employer. Each man was responsible for building his own house, and most of the buildings in the camps were made of sticks, mud brick, and grass thatch (Fetter 1976: 57, Mitwa and Pabois 2008: 37). Homes were cramped together and Elisabethville soon earned a reputation for its high death rate (Fetter 1976: 35-36).

Lubumbashi, then, began as a European city surrounded by temporary settlements of local Africans, coming to the city to work just long enough to pay taxes. Though on Belgian territory, the European population was made up of immigrants from across Europe, but mostly from Belgium and England. At the start of the First World War, a few buildings were erected that still stand today: a few one- or two-story houses for whites with vast gardens and wide porches, Colonel Wengermée's office, now a part of the large city government structure, and most notably the governor's mansion. Most African workers lived in temporary housing, though the first permanent buildings for a cité africaine were built in the Kamalondo neighborhood south

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[15] Due to Mobutu's policy of "Africanization" during the late 1960s and 1970s, personal and place names throughout the country were changed, most notably the country's name, changed from Congo to Zaire.

[16] A table with population data is available in Fetter 1976, p. 40.

of the center city, to be torn down after the war. During the First World War fighting occurred further to the east of Elisabethville around Lake Tanganyika and in the German and British colonies of East Africa, though Elisabethville was not wholly unaffected. British and South African officers introduced the colour bar, and in 1918 Spanish influenza took the lives of over 1000 inhabitants of Elisabethville (Roberts 1987).

After the First World War

After the First World War Elisabethville had a more permanent and Belgian air. Those Belgians who had stayed in Katanga did not experience the German occupation in Europe, and the war had led to the copper mines finally becoming profitable (Fetter 1976:61, Singh 2008:245). The percentage of Belgians among the European workforce rose to become a majority. Politicians refused to grant land to American Methodists to build schools (reinforcing the strength of the Belgian Catholic fathers), and French was the dominant language (Fetter 1976:68-71). The governor's mansion (Figure 7) and the office of the Vice Governor-General had been built before the war, but many of today's remarkable downtown shop buildings were built immediately after the war: the old Bon Marché building, now Vodacom (Figure 8, built in 1919), the building currently housing the Quincaillerie Mukuba on Avenue des Usines (1920) and the building with scrolled gables currently housing the Alliance Française at the corner of Avenue Kabila and Boulevard Kamayonla (Figure 9, built 1920), two blocks away from Picha's current location.[17] These more permanent buildings were concentrated in the European downtown, open only to Africans during the day for running errands.

In 1921 the Governor General of Congo, Maurice Lippens, visited Elisabethville. At this time Elisabethville was more connected to South Africa than to the rest of Congo, and settlers

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[17] All dates from Mwitwa and Pabois 2008.

had already proposed creating a relationship with Belgium separate from the rest of Congo

(Fetter 1976: 69-70). A visit from a colonial official from Leopoldville (the capital of Belgian

Congo, currently Kinshasa) was therefore extremely rare, and generally unwelcome (*Ibid.*).

Lippens had just been appointed Governor General in 1921 and was touring all of the Congo as

an introduction to his post. Significantly, as Governor General he was also commander-in-chief,

and could order soldiers to *build* rather than fight.

In Elisabethville, Lippens put the forces under his control to work, razing the African

camps and building the first *cité indigène* (a district solely for non-Europeans) following plans

Lippens had seen in Johannesburg (Fetter 1976:73). There, he had been impressed by the city-

owned neighborhoods built a certain distance from European neighborhoods for "hygienic"

purposes, a still largely undeveloped area known as the "zone neutre" or neutral zone.[18] The new

cité had houses built of brick and each block had its own water supply and sanitary facilities

(Fetter 1975: 73). The neighborhood quickly became the most popular among Africans, and the

most densely populated. Today this neighborhood is known as Kamalondo, south of the TP

Mazembe soccer stadium, and is still one of the most preferred neighborhoods in Lubumbashi

(Sizaire 2001: 93).

While in Elisabethville, Lippens also laid the cornerstone of the cathedral (Figure 10),

now known as Cathedral Saints Peter and Paul. The cathedral was placed across from the

governor's mansion, linking two of the major arms of what is now known as the "colonial

trinity" of government, religion, and industry (Mudekereza 2011).[19] Today, starting at the

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[18] The "zone neutre" or "cordon sanitaire" separated the cité indigène from downtown, and was theoretically the distance that a mosquito could fly.

[19] Lagae recounts that the placement was the result of "difficult and long-lasting negotiations between the Benedictine Fathers and their direct missionary rivals in Elisabethville, the congregation of the Salesians" (Lagae 2010: 186).

northeastern end of Rue Tabora (originally Avenue du Katanga), one could walk from the city's synagogue to the central square, past Emile Wangermée's original office (the oldest building in the city), across the square where one finds city hall (1952-1960), the hall of justice (1928-1930), and the old social club Le Cercle Albert-Elisabeth (1930's) and arrive at the main entrance to the Cathedral (1921-1935). To continue along this powerful avenue one would have to walk around the cathedral and cross a busy block of Avenue Kasa-Vubu, only to be greeted by the back side of the governor's mansion, built to face away from the city and down the hill toward the Lubumbashi river, a land parcel now occupied by the Lubumbashi zoo.[20]

By the late 1920s Elisabethville was becoming an increasingly desirable place to live for both Europeans and Africans, and families came to join the men who had settled there.[21] Africans could choose to either live in camps provided by the mining companies they worked for, where food, housing, and medical care were provided but workers were poorly compensated, or they could move to the cité built in 1922 to replace the 1911 cité that had fallen into grave disrepair (Mwitwa and Pabois 2008: 38). The cité was divided into four quarters: a neighborhood for "independents" who did not work for Europeans on a regular basis, for those who worked for companies with enough money to own housing in the cité, for government employees, and finally an area for independent merchants (Fetter 1975: 115). These buildings are still inhabited today, in the neighborhoods of Kamalondo and Kampemba closest to the center city.

As the Great Depression spread across the globe, demand for copper plummeted and copper-belt mines were forced to cut back production; thousands of employees were laid off, and many returned home either to their rural villages or European cities (Fetter 1976:122,

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[20] It is all too tempting to interpret the church's placement as an obstruction of the clean line from governor's mansion to city hall, though such speculation is unsupported.

[21] For a history of Lubumbashi from a woman's perspective, read *Femmes-Mode-Musique*, the book which accompanied the 2002 exhibition of the same name at the Musée National de Lubumbashi (Sizaire 2002).

Jewsiewicki 1976:57, Jewsiewicki 1977:158). The population became more xenophobic, viewing "outsiders" as competitors for jobs (Fetter 1976:125, Jewsiewicki 1977:169). Government relief funds, for example, were not given to non-Belgian whites. In an act again imitating South Africa, the Belgians required every African in Elisabethville to carry an internal passport, including proof of employment (Fetter 1976:125). Though Belgium quickly fell to Nazi Germany at the start of the Second World War, the Belgian Congo remained loyal to the Allies, and was a significant source of raw materials, notably gold, industrial diamonds, timber, copper and uranium. Katanga was the primary source of copper and uranium, including the uranium used in the Manhattan project (Rubbers 1988:201, Singh 2008:245, 249). Elisabethville continued to grow, and was especially important because of its rail connection to ports through British colonies. Workers were needed more than ever, but in 1941, African workers for the UMHK went on strike throughout Katanga. Large protests broke out in Elisabethville, police fired on the crowd, and several protestors died. Workers did eventually get a small raise, however, but the action of workers to organize and put pressure on the colonial establishment marked a new chapter in Congolese history, moving toward independence (Higginson 1988, 1989).

Independence

Many Africans began agitating for independence from colonial powers throughout the 1950s. Ghana and Guinea were the first sub-saharan countries to gain independence, in 1957 and 1958,[22] respectively, and in 1960 seventeen countries gained independence, including the Democratic Republic of the Congo. In 1957 Elisabethville held the first municipal elections in which the African population could vote, and members of the ABAKO political party were

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[22] Sudan gained independence from the British in 1956, but whether or not to consider it *sub*-Saharan is up for debate.

elected to power on a platform of immediate independence from Belgium.[23] In January of 1959

there was a major riot in Léopoldville (now Kinshasa), prompting the Belgian government to

begin planning for Congo's independence in earnest and a date was set for independence: June

30th, 1960. Elections were held in May, and the population was divided into many different

political parties, mostly notably ABAKO, MNC, and Conakat. ABAKO, which was led by

Joseph Kasa-Vubu, was originally founded by Bakongo leaders and had its base of support in

Léopoldville and the Lower Congo region in the far west of the country. MNC, the Mouvement

National Congolais, was led by Patrice Lumumba and advocated for Congolese nationalism.

Though it had national intentions, the majority of its support came from the region around

Stanleyville (now Kisangani), in the northeastern area of the country. Conakat, the Confédération

des associations tribales du Katanga, was led by Moise Tshombe, and was based in Katanga,

which then – as now – was the richest province in Congo. This political party wanted autonomy

for Katanga, and worked closely with Belgian businessmen and political groups who also

favored autonomy.

In the 1960 elections Lumumba's MNC received the most votes, but Belgian authorities

would not let go of control so easily. Instead, Belgians helped set up complicated political

coalitions and Kasa-Vubu was made non-executive president. Lumumba won the votes to be

prime minister, however, a position the Belgians would noy deny him. During the first week of

independence the national *Force Publique* mutinied on a wide scale, and much of the white

population that had planned on staying in an independent Congo fled. Belgian forces still in

Congo began to take control of strategic locations though Lumumba had refused Belgian offers

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[23] The information in this paragraph and the following paragraph is culled from three main references: Meredith 2005 (chapter six in particular), Marriage 2015 and Encyclopedia Britannica.

for help restoring order. Taking advantage of the chaos, on July 11th 1960, Moise Tshombe declared Katanga an independent state, with its capital in Lubumbashi.

The municipal theater (Figure 11, built from 1953-1956) became the seat of the Katangese government, which developed its own currency and its own postage stamps. All of the monetary bills had Moise Tschombe's face on one side, and the municipal theater on the other side (Figure 12). This building was designed by local architect Claude Strebelle, who founded the architectural group *Yenga* (from Swahili for "to build") that would later design the museum next door (Lagae 2008:21, de Plaen 1989). Inside, local painters like Bela and Pili Pili, who had been trained by Pierre-Romain Desfossés[24], painted murals on walls at the entrance and leading up the main staircase. Architectural historian Johan Legae notes that the design of the building was a way to define a new kind of contemporary African architecture, moving away from tropical modernism (21). Legae is quick to point out, however, that as "African" as the design may be, the funding for the building came from UMHK and the railroad, and was made for the Belgian population. On the other hand, however, the building is distinctly Katangese: the muralists were Lushois, the sculpture inside is made of copper, and the funding came from the mining corporation, which only worked in that one region (23). Its use as Tshombe's assembly and as the present assembly for the state of Katanga reinforces its specifically Katangese identity, despite Mobutu's renaming it "Batiment 30 juin," the date of independence for *all* of Congo.

While Katanga had seceded from the DRC, Joseph Mobutu, Lumumba's Chief of Staff and a Colonel in the Congolese army, staged a coup d'état, taking over the government from

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[24] Pierre Desfossés was a French painter who established an art center in Lubumbashi after World War II, named "Le Hangar." There he taught painting to local artists (which was in contrast to the more common indigenous sculpture), and this group became internationally famous. Of the Lushois artists, Bela and Pili Pili are the most well-known (Visonà et al 2008:424-427).

both Kasa-Vubu and Lumumba in September of 1960.[25] In just four months, Lumumba was

placed under house-arrest, escaped to Stanleyville (now Kisangani), was re-captured, and was

sent to Elisabethville (the seat of a rebel government extremely hostile towards him) where he

was imprisoned, tortured, and executed on January 17th, 1961. The Katangese republic did not

last long, however, and in 1963 Tshombe conceded defeat.[26]

   In 1965, five years after independence, Joseph Mobutu declared a state of emergency and

granted himself full power over the Congolese government. Mobutu would rule Congo (later

renamed Zaire) for the next thirty-two years, a tenure which ended with his 1997 flee into exile.[27]

Apart from embezzlement and violence, Mobutu's lasting legacy in Congo is present in city and

street names. One of Mobutu's first actions was to launch his campaign for "authenticité,"

changing the name of the country to Zaire (which was actually the Portuguese mispronunciation

of the Kikongo word *nzere* or *nzadi*, the name of the Congo river) in 1971, his own name to

Mobutu Sese Seko Kuku Ngbendu Wa Za Banga in 1972, and the names of Congolese cities. In

1966 Leopoldville became Kinshasa, and Elisabethville became Lubumbashi.

   In addition to changing city names, Mobutu also made sure that street names carrying the

names of colonial authorities were also changed. Whereas in 1920 one would walk down Avenue

du Katanga to get from the city hall to the cathedral to the governor's mansion, in 1980 one

would be walking down Rue. Tabora. The street's name changed from Katanga to Tabora, the

name of the capital of German Tanganyika, after the First World War, to celebrate the capture of

that city by Congo's force publique in 1916. In 1963 the street became avenue Godefroid

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[25] See Meredith 2005, Marriage 2015, and Encyclopedia Britannica.
[26] These events are some of the most important in modern Congolese history and are certainly not given justice here. See *A Congo Chronicle: Patrice Lumumba in Urban Art* for a Lubumbashi- and visual arts-focused approach to Lumumba's lasting influence in Congolese culture. Combining two points in this section, I also recommend Guy Tillim's "Avenue Patrice Lumumba," a collection of photographs of streets, which includes photographs of various "Avenues Patrice Lumumba" across the African continent.

Munongo Msiri, after the politician from Katanga who held various roles in governments in the early 1960's. The street changed back to Rue Tabora in 1968, and in 2009 was named avenue Monseigneur de Hemptinne, in celebration of the 100th anniversary of the archdiocese of Lubumbashi, of which Hemptinne was the founder (Bilonda 2010: 128). So many name changes are not unusual for the streets in central Lubumbashi, particularly for those once named for politicians. Though the Congolese government did not erase the built legacy of the colonial period, it exerted its own power through naming and consequently through maps.

The early 1990s were especially violent in Lubumbashi. In May of 1990 pro-democracy student protests at the Université de Lubumbashi were quelled by government forces killing an unknown number of students, and prompting protests at universities around the country.[28] From the early 1990s, years referred to as "les années crises" by my Lushois acquaintances, tensions between those identifying as from Katanga and those they identified as from Kasai (even if their families had lived in Lubumbashi for several generations) led to violent confrontations in neighborhoods around the city, and the forced removal of Kasaïens.[29] The First Congo War took place from 1996-1997, which ended with a battle for the Lubumbashi airport and Laurent-Désiré Kabila (a Katangan native) declaring himself president from his base in Lubumbashi.[30] Kabila's tenure as president was not peaceful, however, and the Second Congo War began in 1998 with a rebellion in the northeastern part of the country. Multiple countries in the region became

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[28] For an extremely detailed account of the protests (including first-person accounts) by one of the student leaders, see *Le Campus Martyr,* Nkongolo 2000.

[29] The historical context leading up to the violence and details of the incidents are too complex for me to cover here. I recommend, however, *Vivre Ensemble au Katanga*, by Donatien Dibwe Dia Mwembu and Marcel Ngandu Mutombo for an in-depth analysis of what it has meant to be Katangais.

[30] Once again I cannot do justice to the magnitude of the events mentioned. In *La Libération de Lubumbashi (1997)* Crispin Bakatuseka "écrit à chaud" a history of the events almost immediately after they occurred, along with interviews of fellow Lushois; *Récits de Libération d'une Ville* is a collection of essays by professors at the University of Lubumbashi attempting to make sense of the previous decade's chaos and presents hopes for the future of their country.

involved on both sides of the conflict, which came to be known as "Africa's World War."[31]

Lubumbashi became the legislative capital of the Democratic Republic of the Congo in 1999, when President Kabila moved the parliament from Kinshasa in an attempt to bring some unity to a large, divided country. Once again the old municipal theater became home of a country's parliament. Laurent-Désiré Kabila was assassinated in 2001, and his son, Joseph Kabila, was elected to replace him by a parliamentary vote. In 2003 a transitional government was set up and tasked with guiding the DRC toward peace and democracy (Marriage 2014). All institutions were moved back to Kinshasa, and elections were held in 2006. Kabila was elected to President again, though this time by a vote of Congolese citizens and not just the parliament.

During the tumultuous 1990s Katanga's mining industry greatly suffered, but it has been staging a comeback since 2001 (Rubbers 2010: 330). In the summer of 2013 I walked the streets of Lubumbashi weaving through decades-old vans packed with people on their commute and brand-new shining Hummers, remarkably clean during the dusty dry season. Glass facades of still-growing buildings rose around downtown, and in the packed $20-a-seat section (the expensive seats) of a TP Mazembe soccer match iPhones were as ubiquitous as team jerseys. Copper wealth was impossible to ignore in Lubumbashi. According to the US Geological Survey, in 2013 DRC was the sixth-largest producer of copper in the world, producing 900,000 tons of copper from mine production, up from 600,000 tons of copper produced in 2012 (US Geological Survey 2014). Whereas UMHK or Gécamines was the ubiquitous employer in the region during the 20th century, however, foreign private companies have now established themselves, sponsoring soccer teams, paving roads, and even donating street lights to the city.[32] Today, the central post office from the 1930s at the intersection of avenues Kabila, Mwepu and

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[31] For a much more detailed account of the violence throughout DRC and neighboring countries in the 1990s, see Prunier 2011, Mbavu Muhindo 2003, and Jewsiewicki 2012.
[32] In addition to my own observations while in Lubumbashi, see French 2015.

Sendwe is now a large bazaar for buying cell phones, across the square from a statue of Moise Tshombe. This is the Lubumbashi that the organizers of the 2010 *Rencontres Picha* engaged with, whose history was revealed in new ways, whose memories were provoked.

Rencontres Picha 2010 and (Re)mapping the City

In Lubumbashi, I learned not to cross at street corners. Instead, I made sure I was at least two meters from the corner when I crossed the street, even if I had to go out of my way to do so. Soon, I noticed that a few meters from each corner paths have been worn through the dirt or plywood has been placed across ditches specifically for this purpose. It took me weeks of walking Lubumbashi's grid every day to understand why Lushois take this extra time to walk through the city. With no stop sign or street lights it seemed that I would be taking my life into my hands no matter where I crossed. Yet even when running late, my friend Olivier would take the time to walk a few meters out of his way to cross streets. When I asked him why he did so, he explained, "It's so you have time to see the cars!" In a city where you cannot take for granted that a driver will stop for you and you cannot depend on turn signals to tell you what a driver will do, you give yourself a few meters of leeway in case a car comes zooming around the corner. After crossing a few meters away from intersections thousands if not millions of times, Lushois had carved their own pathways for cross streets on the colonial-planned grid of Lubumbashi.

The Organizers

Three years before *I* was walking the dusty streets of Lubumbashi, the city hosted the second *Rencontres Picha.* The first biennial, in 2008, was organized by a group of artists living and working in Lubumbashi who wanted to foster the arts in their hometown. This group created Picha and continued on after the biennial as a community of artists and later as a physical arts center on Avenue Adoula, supporting local artistic practices. True to the biennial title, Picha hosted its second biennial in 2010. The two directors of the Centre Picha, photographer Sammy Baloji and writer Patrick Mudekereza, had known each other for years and were members of the

"Vicanos Club," a group of young artists in Lubumbashi who gathered to explore a mutual interest in comic strip art ("bandes déssinées," which along with chocolate, beer and waffles are one of Belgium's claims to fame, though are also popular throughout Africa) and later other art forms (Njami 2010: 8). By 2010 both Baloji and Mudekereza were deeply involved with their own projects related to Lubumbashi and Congo's colonial past in addition to the biennial.

Sammy Baloji's photographs explore themes of history and memory in the industrial landscapes of Katanga. Through his lens abandoned factories are beautiful and haunting, and seem to echo with voices from the past. The same year as the 2010 *Rencontres Picha*, *The Beautiful Time*, an exhibition of his photographs on the theme of memory curated by Bogumil Jewsiewicki, opened in New York, and travelled to Lubumbashi for the biennial. In his most well-known work, a series of photographs titled *Mémoire*, Baloji juxtaposes the figures from black and white archival photographs with a background of his contemporary color photographs of empty mines and factories, bringing the past into the same frame as the present. The photographs of empty mines remind the viewer of Katanga's industrial past that is still not fully recovered from decades of instability, and also bring forward the significant effect on the local landscape that such industry had and has left behind. The archival photographs bring forgotten individuals from the colonial era into the present. Though the skeletons of old storage hangers can still be found around Katanga reminding passers-by of a mighty industry, the labor and the conditions which allowed for such industry are not as easily encountered.

Patrick Mudekereza is the writer among the group of Lubumbashi artists that formed the Vicanos Club, and his work also focuses on memory and the colonial past in and around Lubumbashi. From 2008 to 2010 Mudekereza and Baloji worked on *Congo Far West*, an exhibition of Baloji's photographs and Mudekereza's writings curated by Sabine Cornelis and

Johan Lagae from the Royal Museum for Central Africa (RMCA) in Tervuren, Belgium, where they were also in residence in 2008 and 2010.[33][34] For this project Mudekereza focused on the RMCA's collection of "treaties" between Belgians and Congolese chiefs, which were signed with an "X" by chiefs who could not write. Mudekereza wrote poetry he termed "parasite texts" riffing on words and phrases in the treaties (Lagae and Cornelis 2011: 99). These poems were then recorded by contemporary Congolese people, and the track was played in the room where the treaties were on display. Mudekereza and Baloji's shared interest in local history and memory can be seen as guiding influences of the 2010 *Rencontres Picha*.

For the 2010 biennial Picha invited internationally-recognized curator Simon Njami to serve as artistic director. In the international contemporary art scene Njami is most well-known for his 2004 exhibition *Africa Remix*, which travelled throughout Europe for three years, and for curating the African Pavillion at the 52nd Venice Biennale in 2007. Njami began his career as a writer, and in 1991 he co-founded now-defunct *Revue Noire*, an influential quarterly dedicated to contemporary African art. He also began curating international contemporary art shows in the early 1990s, and was co-curator of the Dakar biennale (Dak'Art) in 2000. In the past decade Njami has travelled the world curating in at least three continents.

Njami's curatorial career also brings to light a small slice of the international networks that create the global art world. From 2001 to 2007 he was chief curator of *Rencontres africaines de la Photographie*, the Bamako biennial, which only featured photography and whose 2007 edition featured two Lubumbashi photographers, Gulda El Magambo and Sammy Baloji. In the year 2010 Njami was not only the artistic director of *Rencontres Picha* but also the artistic

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[33] Though Katanga is in the far east of Congo, the show was titled "Far West." During the 1990s Congo/Zaire was referred to as the "last far west of Africa," evoking the American "wild west" (Bakatuseka 1999:69).

[34] *Congo Far West* travelled to Lubumbashi during the summer 2013, and was on view in the Halle de l'Etoile while I was visiting.

director of SUD, the Douala triennial in Cameroon, and of the Luanda triennial in Angola.

Finally, Njami's 2014 show *The Divine Comedy: Heaven, Hell, Purgatory revised by Contemporary African Artists* opened in Frankfurt (and then travelled to the SCAD Museum of Art in Savannah, Georgia and to the National Museum of African Art in Washington, DC in 2015), and included work by Sammy Baloji and Zineb Sedira, a participant in the 2010 Picha biennial.

The Stage

Like the first biennial, the 2010 edition of *Rencontres Picha* featured photographers and filmmakers from across Africa in public spaces around Lubumbashi, as well as in white cube galleries in the city. In addition to public spaces, visitors could also see some of the biennial's artwork in museum and in cultural centers around Lubumbashi. The National Museum of Lubumbashi hosted the exhibition "The Beautiful Time," the Goethe Institute of Nairobi presented a show of works by Davis Kabala and Kevin Irungu in the National Museum's contemporary art space "Gallerie Dialogues," the French Cultural Center at Halle de l'Etoile presented a series of videos, and Heiner Hotappels, director of the Dutch Institute of Arts and Media, showed work from his own collection at Lubumbashi's Institute of Fine Arts (Mudekereza 2011:75). Furthermore, Picha showed ten videos produced by young Lushois filmmakers in their own space downtown.

In 2010, photo and video installations were placed with an even greater consciousness of the urban grid structuring the physical space of the city. The Axis of Power, for example, went down the newly re-named Avenue Hemptinne, turned left at Avenue Kapenda heading toward the Methodist church, jogged right at Avenue Likasi (since Ave. Kapenda ends at the church)

and continued on Avenue de la Karavia into Kamalondo, where it ends, before picking up again in the Kenya neighborhood (Figure 1). Along this route, one could see several photographs from Adama Bamba's "Bouctou" series of Malian camel riders placed in front of the Governor's Mansion and in front of the Methodist Church. As cars filled to bursting sped by, Touareg men astride camels looked down from canvas billboards. In the Kenya neighborhood, Kiluanji Kia Henda's photographs evoking Angolan pasts from colonialism to the Cold War were placed along train tracks, which are alongside many small shops.

At the intersection of Avenue Likasi and Avenue Karavia, one of the busiest intersections in Lubumbashi, one would have encountered a photograph taken by Adama Bamba (Figure 13). In the photograph, a single blue-clad camel rider looking into the distance shielding his eyes from the sun sits on top a bedecked camel. The low angle emphasizes the magnificence and stature of the camel, seemingly looking down at the commuters rushing by. The photograph was placed on the west side of the Methodist church, itself a symbol of religious power (though not as imposing as the Catholic cathedral, and not as historically powerful). Furthermore, Avenue Likasi – previously named Limite Sud – was the southern limit of the European center city. The Methodist Church, on the south side of the street, was in fact built in the Neutral Zone, making it possible for both Africans and Europeans to attend the same services.

As previously mentioned, the "Neutral Zone" was initially planned as an uninhabited area separating the white city from the African cités. A few buildings were soon built there, however, including the Methodist church, a prison, a hospital for Africans (now the Hopital Sendwe) and a few schools. For the purposes of the biennial, the organizers extended their conception of the "neutral zone" to include the city's industrial zone (which also divides cités from the city center), highlighting the social segregation that exists decades after the end of racial segregation

(Mudekereza 2011: 73). For the biennial, photographs by Kiripi Katembo Siku, Pierrot Men and Jellel Gasteli were placed along the streets bordering the cités and outside of large swath of land occupied by the smelter and other Gécamines offices. From the road, the outlines of desert dunes in Gasteli's photograph mirror the slag heap's mountainous form, contrasting desert forms of emptiness and beauty with the similar urban forms of waste (Figure 14); Pierrot Men's photograph of miners working an open-pit mine in Madagascar with the slag heap and smoke stack rising just behind remind the viewer of the people needed to make Lubumbashi's signature landmark (Figure 15).

The Axis of Culture ("Parcours Culture"), also referred to as the "Memory path," was not continuous but rather on either side of the center city. The northern portion went by the national museum, the old theater (the current seat of state government), an old soccer stadium and the former Academy of Fine Arts. The southern portion passed by the train station, the main marketplace, the new soccer stadium, and an abandoned movie theater. This axis featured the work of Zineb Sedira, Mouna Karray and Kiripi Katembo, along with the work of two Spanish photographers, David Jimenez and Dionisio Gonzalez.

Urban planning and the urban existence are not neat, however. The routes along the axes skip over blocks, turn right and left, and sometimes include locations that might be better suited to a different axis. Two of Zineb Sedira's photographs from her *Shipwreck Series* were placed outside of the national museum and the old theater, the Building of June 30th, buildings found along the Axis of Culture but also clearly locations of power. These photographs of abandoned ships off the coast of Mauritania are haunting on their own. A decaying freighter placed in front of the state assembly building evokes ideas of a shipwrecked government, a shell of power hollow on the inside (Figure 16). In front of the national museum, a photo of two decaying

freighters, one halfway rusted and the other seemingly holding it up, reminds us of how

relatively empty the museum is, and of the history of pillaging the country for its beautiful

sculpture, with both pillager and sculpture leaving the country behind (Figure 17).[35] Culture,

power, and industry are intertwined, as shown by the theater-turned-assembly hall *Bâtiment 30*

juin, or the museum at the very top of Avenue George Forrest, named for the most successful

mining CEO in Katanga who is also a major donor to the museum,[36] or in the person of Moïse

Katumbi, a multimillionaire mine owner who bought Lubumbashi's beloved soccer team TP

Mazembe and is now governor of Katanga.

Une Balade dans la Ville

    The organizers of the 2010 biennial proudly state "Picha, ce fut une balade dans la ville"

(Njami 2010: 129) – Picha was a stroll through the city. In the summer of 2013 I accompanied

Patrick Mudekereza as he led a group of visiting Belgian students along the routes of the

biennial. From the Methodist church to Picha's house to the Catholic Church and the Hotel de

Ville it became clear that this was not just moving from one point to another on a map, but it was

a walking tour of the city. From the cathedral we looked straight down Avenue Kasa-Vubu and

noticed the Methodist church standing almost defiantly at the street's dead end, four blocks

away. At the Place Royale we saw how Wengermée's office (built in the 1910s) was dwarfed by

the city government office complex. Standing across from the Hotel de Ville, Mudekereza

explained that the lettering on the side of the building – HOTEL DE VILLE – was supposed to

light up at night, but that the lights in the letter "d" had gone out. The words then read "Hotel E

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[35] For a history of the creation of the Musée National de Lubumbashi, see Couttenier 2013.

[36] On November 24th, 2014, BBC news reported that George Forrest's Belgian company, Groupe Forrest International, was accused by Amnesty International of bulldozing homes near a copper and cobalt mine in Katanga, which the company denies (BBC: 2014).

ville," harkening back to Éville, the colloquial term for Elisabethville, reminding us of the push and pull between history and the present. As Casey would say, the past is imminent with the present, and citizens' memories were on display.

In his essay "Spores of the Stamen" written for the catalogue accompanying the exhibition "Africas: The Artist and the City: A Journey and an Exhibition," Njami writes

> *The African city is an improbable labyrinth for the foreign visitor in search of known codes. The codes are progressively invited here. […] After independence, it was necessary for them [Africans] to blend into a world that couldn't match their aspirations. Whence the inevitable and necessary bastardization of urban space* (Njami 2001: 72).

In what Njami terms a "bastardization," one sees echoes of the DRC's "Article Fifteen," the ironically-named Congolese motto of "se débrouiller" (to make to), the unofficial amendment to the fourteen-article Constitution of the Second Republic (Mudekereza 2011: 72). Living in a city of imperial leftovers, independence-era modernist buildings and recent glass-paneled office buildings, Lushois adapt to their surroundings as they make their way through the city.

Walking through the city evokes memories, both of colonial dominance and of local resistance. The biennial created its own kind of resistance, bringing awareness to the colonial grid and to local subversions and appropriations of city structures. To better understand how the biennial undermined the colonial dominance of the gridded layout and particularly how this was done through the bodies of citizens and visitors to the biennial, philosopher Michel de Certeau's ideas on strategies and tactics prove useful. Michel de Certeau defines a "strategy" as something used by a powerful institution – say, for example, urban planners setting up a mining town in 1910 – to organize its environment. It has its own base of operations from which it creates and orders relations distinct from itself. A "tactic" does not have its own base of operations, and

instead must *insinuate* itself into the relations created by a strategy without being able to take anything over entirely (de Certeau 1984: 35-36).[37]

Below the lofty theorizing of urban planners, everyday pedestrians walk the city streets of Lubumbashi. A century after Belgian colonial officers planned out Lubumbashi, Lushois walk the streets to get to work, to market, and home. These pedestrians are what de Certeau calls practitioners, writers of an urban "text." Through their own movements weaving between crowded taxi buses and crossing the street a few feet down from the corner, Lushois are creating their own maps of Lubumbashi. The pedestrian is a tactician, appropriating the city's rational structures and creating his or her own relationships between spaces.

Furthermore, the biennial itself acted like a pedestrian by insinuating itself into the urban structure of the city. Njami described the biennial like a piece of tracing paper (papier calque), on which artists and curators drew the aesthetic, social and historic contours of the city (Njami 2010: 17). Though artists and curators drew points on tracing paper, viewers and pedestrians drew the lines between points. Walking through the city, pedestrians built meaning with their steps. At each encounter with a photograph or video installation, new meanings could be made. In front of buildings representing locations of collective memory, individual meanings were made in relation to the city.

Bringing the work of international artists into the city fostered interactions, dialogues, and responses on an intimate, local level. The placement of photographs by international artists in front of specific buildings made a local argument about built history and everyday experience with international tools. On the other hand, reading Njami's catalogue essay it is clear that Njami is making an international argument with local tools. For Njami, the *Rencontres Picha* was a

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[37] Allen F. Roberts and Mary Nooter Roberts make a similar point about muralists in urban Senegal, viewing these street-side exhibitions in contrast with colonial museums, their artists as tacticians (Roberts and Roberts 2003: 134).

chance to grapple with what he sees as a societal divide inherent in biennials around the world: a biennial exposes the divide between public and private spaces, which have competing interests. Public projects are political, while private projects depend on an individual. A biennial like that in Lubumbashi in 2010 places art, chosen by individual taste, in a public space. In his catalogue essay Njami wonders: if *Rencontres Picha* was created to fill a void felt by its artist-founders, is this void elitest? Is there a way to make a biennial spring from roots deeper than a public/private divide (Njami 2010: 15)?

Njami turns to French philosopher Jacques Rancière, who argues that art is not made for a specific reason, but that art itself *makes* – and what it makes is community:

> *Mais l'art ne travaille pas* pour *rendre les contemporains responsables à l'égard du passé ou* pour *construire des rapports meilleurs entres les différentes communautés. […] Il construit des formes effectives de communauté : des communautés entre objets et images, entre images et voix, entre visages et paroles, qui tissent des rapports entre des passés et un présent, entre des espaces lointains et un lieu d'exposition.* (Rancière 2008)

> *But art does not work* in order to *make contemporaries responsible for the past or* in order to *build better relationships between different communities. […] It creates effective forms of community: communities between objects and images, between images and voices, between faces and speech, which weave relationships between pasts and a present, between far-away places and the location of the exhibition* (translation by author)

In Lubumbashi a new community was created between Lushois, photographs on display, buildings around the photographs, and biennial visitors. For Njami, a successful biennial cannot be state-run or privately created. A biennial is a reality that builds itself (Njami 2010: 16). The 2010 biennial did build itself, or at least it was built by its visitors. The visitors built the biennial, and in so doing, the visitors created a map, which like communities and the biennial is also socially created (Wood 1992:18). On the tracing paper Njami placed over the city visitors' steps

left trails across the city, a map to the biennial, a map to built history, and a map placed onto the globe.

Patrick Mudekereza wrote that Lubumbashi was "transformed into a miniature Africa that welcomed viewing by its children and put them into a physical reality with the city" (Mudekereza 2011: 73). But the biennial brought Lubumbashi to Africa as much as it brought Africa – and elsewhere – to Lubumbashi. The 2010 biennial was not only for local citizens, but welcomed visitors from across the globe.

Going Global: Biennials

In late winter of 2013 I googled "contemporary art Lubumbashi." I was visiting Lubumbashi that summer, and hoped to learn about the local art scene, what art was being made by whom, and how such art was shown. Following the age-old advice "you have to start *somewhere*" I turned to Google. To my surprise, the first search result linked to a page on the website of the New Museum in New York City. That someone at such an institution even knew how to find Lubumbashi on a map was promising. The page was part of the New Museum's Art Spaces Directory, a guide to international arts spaces created as part of the New Museum's "Museum as Hub" initiative. The page provided a paragraph overview of Picha, an art center in Lubumbashi, and a link to its webpage.

When first beginning work on an arts event in Lubumbashi, Baloji and Mudekereza consciously chose to call their project a *biennial* and not a fair, festival, or exhibition. A biennial is different than these other exhibitory frameworks. As its etymology makes clear, it happens every two years, rather than annually or once. The term signifies more than just "every two years," however. Using the term, Picha joined a worldwide network of biennial organizers, who are not a formal body and yet who share a certain number of principles (such as a focus on contemporary art and living artists) and a history, part of which will be explained below. To understand *Rencontres Picha* in this global environment of biennials, in this section I will outline a brief history of how biennials emerged onto the global art scene and how they have gained particular importance outside of Europe and the United States. I will then focus on Picha's closest biennial neighbors in sub-Saharan Africa. Finally, I show how biennials fit into the larger map of the global art world.

The first international large art exhibition to take the name "biennial" was the Biennale di Venezia, which opened to the public in 1895 and has occurred every two years since, except for during the two world wars. It was made official by a decree from the City Council of Venice, which declared the biennial's mission as the "unbiased development of the intellect" and the "fraternal association of all peoples" (Vogel 2010:14). Countries were invited to send a representative artist and to present art in their own pavilions, much like the pavilions at the World's Fairs whose popularity peaked in the decades preceding the first *Biennale*.[38]

Biennials and politics have been intertwined from the start (though many would argue art and politics are never truly separate). The Venice Biennial was founded by politicians who were members of the city council. With its country pavilions (still in use today), the Venice Biennial also works on a diplomatic level, and most countries choose their artists through national commissions or even the Foreign Office.[39] Many biennials today receive funds from civic agencies, which must weigh the possible gains from tourism or cultural cachet with the expenditure of tax dollars. Since the 1980s many biennials have been established in the so-called Global South, challenging the cultural and monetary influence of Europe and North America.

For many years biennials were seen as solely the domain of Western art and Western viewers, taking place in countries like Italy, Germany, and the United States, though Sao Paulo's biennial began in 1951.[40] Since the early biennials, hundreds more have been founded around the world, with varying degrees of success. The most influential of those in the "Global South" have been the biennials in Sao Paulo, Havana, Cairo, Istanbul, Dakar, Sharjah, and Gwangju. The

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[38] The development of biennials out of world's fairs is explored by Caroline A. Jones in her article "Biennial Culture: A Longer History" (2010).

[39] The commissioners responsible for the German selections for the biennial are chosen by the Foreign Office, for example (Vogel 2010: 7).

[40] Though it takes place in Brazil, many have complained that Sao Paulo's biennial – especially in its earlier years – was focused more on the European styles and viewership (McEvilley 2010: 407).

Havana biennial of 1989 in particular is considered a turning point in global art history, and marked a shift away from Europe for those interested in exciting new artists.

The Havana biennial (Bienal de la Habana) was first held in 1984, and featured artists from the Caribbean and Latin America. The 1989 edition was titled "Biennial of the 3rd World," and only accepted artists from the Caribbean, Asia, Latin America, and Africa, definitively setting itself up apart from the Euro-American art world. The biennial also became a model for the familiar format of today: only new art was put on display, art was displayed thematically, and individual artists were presented rather than countries (Niemojewski 2010, Esche 2011). The Havana biennial dramatically shifted the art world's focus away from Europe toward the "Third World," and particularly toward new and relatively unknown artists.[41] It was unapologetically political, and with its lectures and seminars alongside art on display, it was "one of the early instances of a new type of heterogeneous discursive sphere capable of addressing current art practice while simultaneously exploring some of the most complex predicaments of our time (Niemojewski 2010:98). No prizes were awarded, since all artists were present in solidarity with one another (Weiss 2011:37). The Havana biennial was actively subversive, purposefully renouncing the dominance of the western art world.

In 1992 Dakar hosted the first art biennial on the African continent, Dak'Art.[42] Under former President Leopold Senghor (1960-1980), the arts were greatly supported by the Senegalese government in the years after independence, and Senghor was an important advocate

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[41] During this same year the Centre Pompidou hosted "Magiciens de la Terre," which some have also credited with bringing more attention to artists outside of Europe and the U.S., but which has also been greatly criticized since (and which I do not discuss in detail because it is not a biennial). Curated by Jean-Hubert Martin, it aimed to bring the artwork from those at the "margins" to Paris, presenting fifty works by European and American artists, and fifty works by non-European or American artists. For some examples, Rachel Weiss points to *Third Text*'s special edition dedicated to "Magiciens," vol. 3, no. 6 (1989).

[42] The 1990 edition of the Dakar biennial focused on literature, and only began as a visual arts festival in 1992.

of African arts in general (Ebong 1991, Harney 2002). Despite government cuts to the arts after Senghor's death, Senegal remained an important center of pan-African culture. Beginning in 1996, Dak'Art embraced its role as an African institution, and focused solely on African artists and artists of the African diaspora. For Yacouba Konaté, Artistic Director of the 2006 edition of Dak'Art, the biennial not only allows for artists' works to be seen without travelling to Paris or New York, it also represents the continent on a global stage where it was previously absent, that of culture and spectacle (Konaté 2010: 119). Today Dak'Art is the most influential biennial on the African continent, and an important node on the contemporary art world map.

Though not as large and influential as Dak'Art, *Rencontres Africaines de la Photographie* in Bamako, Mali, is a photography-focused biennial especially important in the context of the Picha biennial.[43] Founded in 1994, the Bamako biennial, also called *Rencontres de Bamako*, has proven to be a launching point into the international art world for several African photographers, like Sammy Baloji, Omar Victor Diop and Samuel Fosso. As mentioned earlier, Simon Njami was the chief curator of the Bamako biennial from 2001 to 2007, and both Gulda El Magambo and Sammy Baloji were included in the 2007 edition. The Bamako biennial presents photography and video across the city, in museums, galleries, cultural centers, and in public. In the large family tree of international biennials, *Rencontres de Bamako* seems to be *Rencontres Picha*'s closest relative, and not solely because of the similar title.

In terms of geographical distance the Luanda Triennial is closest to *Rencontres Picha*, and has also been curated by Simon Njami. The Luanda Triennial in Angola's capital was established in 2006, just four years after the end of Angola's civil war (which had officially

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[43] Compared to previously mentioned biennials *Rencontres de Bamako* has not been written about much in the scholarly literature. Two master's theses have been written about it, however: "Les Rencontres Africaines de la Photographie 2005" by Jeanne Mercier from École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales and "Colonial History, Curatorial Practice and Cross-Cultural Conflict at the Bamako Biennial of African Photography (1994-2007)" by Marie Lortie at Carleton University.

begun in 1975). Though Angola may not be completely politically stable, its oil industry is booming, and both government and private industry gained from international demand for oil. The city of Luanda has also grown in importance, with gleaming new office buildings and construction across the city. According to Kate Cowcher's analysis of the glossy magazine *Universo*, published by Angolan oil giant Sonangol, it is within the oil industry's interests to promote Angolan culture and especially the image of urban sophistication, which is especially helped by highlighting Luanda's contemporary art galleries (never mind that Luanda's rents had risen so high that some Angolan artists preferred to live in more affordable Lisbon) (Cowcher 2014). The genesis of the Luanda Triennial is not clear, but it sprung from either the government or the Sindika Dokolo Foundation (named for businessman Sindika Dokolo, who is married to Isabel dos Santos, the daughter of the Angolan President Jose Eduardo dos Santos). Like the Bamako Biennial, it has also proven a springboard into the international art world.

After the 2006 Luanda Triennial, the Venice biennale hosted the first Africa Pavilion in 2007. This Pavilion, funded in large part by Sonangol, showcased works drawn entirely from the Sindika Dokolo Foundation, and was curated by Simon Njami and Fernando Alvim (the head of the Sindika Dokolo Foundation), and titled "Check List Luanda Pop" (Cowcher 2014). Unsurprisingly, many artists featured in the Luanda Triennial were also on view in Venice (*ibid*). With the Africa Pavilion in Venice, "Africa" could stake a claim on the most desired territory of international contemporary art. In this case, however, "Africa" was mostly Angolan, and more noticeably, whereas other pavilions were dedicated to individual countries, the entire continent of Africa was given one pavilion.[44] Cowcher points to Delinda Collier and Adriano Mixinge's comments on the Luanda Triennial, casting it as both "nationalist" and celebratory of Angola and

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[44] This was just one of many criticisms of the pavilion. See Downey 2007, Eshun 2007, Eyene 2007, Okeke-Agulu 2007, and Katchka 2008.

"global," asserting Luanda's place in the sleek "non-space" of the contemporary global art world (Cowcher 2010:151). In this way, the Luanda Triennial can be seen as part of Angola and the Angolan oil industry's branding, aligning Luanda more with the oil-rich countries of the Persian Gulf than with its neighbors in sub-Saharan Africa.

With the proliferation of biennials, some have complained that these exhibitions have become repetitive – the same artists and curators, but in different cities.[45] In the case of *Rencontres Picha* we have seen this tendency toward repetition in the comparison with Bamako and Luanda. That said, such cynicism is misplaced, especially regarding contemporary arts of Africa. There is an underlying dynamism in the art world generally, searching for new and different ideas. Even with photographs that were presented in other biennials, how such photographs interact with the Lubumbashi cityscape changes their meanings. Finally, the worry that all biennials are becoming too similar is a worry only for those who travel from biennial to biennial. As Simon Sheikh points out, more people visit the biennial in Porto Alegre than visit Documenta in Kassel; Porto Alegre is a much more populous city (Sheikh 2009: 71). For the everyday pedestrian in Lubumbashi, having photographs placed in public spaces was likely a new experience, and the photographers were new, unheard-of artists.

Exciting, historic events are often credited with "putting [a city] on the map." The opening of Frank Gehry's Guggenheim in Bilbao, Spain, put that city on the map; Donald Judd's move to Marfa, Texas from New York City put that city on the map, and art foundations and galleries followed. From a Euro-American viewpoint, Lubumbashi has not been on the map; from an African viewpoint Lubumbashi is barely on the map. Lubumbashi is Congo's "second city," the second-largest city in the country, but trailing Kinshasa's population by at least eight million people, and almost 1000 miles from the capital. Mudekereza writes that Lubumbashi is

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[45] For a description and rebuttal of such critics, see "In Defense of Biennials" by Massimiliano Gioni (2013).

"a city that produces artists, but artists for elsewhere" (Mudekereza 2011: 72), sending its artistic talent along with its natural resources away to Kinshasa or Europe. Now, artists do not necessarily have to leave Lubumbashi to gain attention, thanks to the biennial and especially the larger artistic community that has grown around the Centre Picha.

The Picha biennial and the center that grew from it have brought the art world's attention to Lubumbashi. Though not all biennials focus on the local histories of their host cities as Picha did, the very nature of a biennial – to be grounded in a specific urban space – makes it impossible to avoid local histories' influences. Most seem unable to ignore the past, even when claiming to be of the present or looking to the future. Indeed, what many critics now term "biennial art" is described as socially engaged, political, and in conversation with a state's colonial past (Esche 2011: 12). Their very existence depends on a relationship with the past; as Caroline A. Jones rightly points out, "it is only in repetition that a biennial can be a biennial" (Jones 2010: 72). Venice pavilions aside, most biennials use preexisting architecture as exhibition space, so that a visitor or curator cannot help but contemplate the past surrounding the contemporary art on display.

On a map of the art world with its bright nodes in New York, London, Paris and Beijing, a small light has been lit in this corner of the DRC. Lubumbashi and Picha in particular have begun to show up in overviews of international contemporary art. In 2010, for example, the Center for Fine Arts in Brussels hosted *Visionary Africa*, a festival to celebrate the fifty years of independence of not only the DRC but also of sixteen other African countries. The Center for Fine Arts and the Royal Museum for Central Africa hosted *GEO-graphics: a map of art and practices in Africa, past and present*, for which David Adjaye served as artistic director. Anne-Marie Bouttiaux and Koyo Kouoh served as curators, putting traditional (referred to in the

catalogue as "ethnographic") works of art on display alongside contemporary works from the same geographic areas. For the contemporary aspect of the show, Kouoh focused on eight specific artistic centers: Doul'art in Douala, Cameroon, Picha in Lubumbashi, Centre for Contemporary Art in Lagos, Nigeria, Rotonde des Arts in Abidjan, Cote d'Ivoire, Darb 1718 from Cairo, Egypt, Apartement 22, Morocco and Centre of Contemporary Art East-Africa in Nairobi, Kenya. On this "map of art and practices in Africa," overseen by one of the most well-known architects in the world, Picha was prominently placed alongside older art centers from much larger cities on the continent.

From February through April of 2012 in New York City, the New Museum hosted the second iteration of its triennial, titled "The Ungovernables." The exhibition celebrated young artists from around the world, many of whom had never shown their work in the United States. As part of this triennial, the New Museum put together an "Art Spaces Directory," a website and book of over 400 independent art spaces in 96 countries. Since the triennial was dedicated to young artists starting out from countries around the world, the organizers wanted to feature the art centers that are crucial to the development of such young artists. The directory is divided up into three sections: Asia, the Americas, and Europe, Africa, and the Middle East. In section three, between transit.cz in Prague and IMO in Copenhagen, Picha has its own page, and is the only arts center from Central Africa to be featured in the directory (Joo and Swan 2012: 273).

Biennials also help to put various cities on the map of world culture, as holders and creators of cultural capital within the larger network of the museums and the art market. Biennials are frequently set up in opposition to museums, as the two differ from the art market in a supposed distance from commerce. One is temporary, the other permanent. One only presents current art, the other houses art from across centuries. Biennials, art fairs, and museums are

intimately intertwined. Presenting in a biennial raises the profile of an artist, whose work becomes more valuable. Collectors pride themselves on owning valuable works of art, which they then might donate to museums. Furthermore, work deemed monetarily valuable is more likely to also become culturally significant and collected by museums. The art of biennials today will be the art in museums tomorrow, and the art bought at fairs today will be donated to museums in coming generations. In this case it is also telling that the first biennial was held in Venice, a city that in 1895 already felt itself becoming more museum than metropolis (Jones 2010: 73), and which functioned as an art market until the 1960s, when artist-activists protested that the market was demeaning to the art.

Biennials in Africa have been used to bring an entire continent into the larger conversation on global contemporary art. Yacouba Konaté explains that in choosing the *biennial* as its arts festival, the Dakar Biennial inserts itself into the larger discourse on representation and into the "society of the spectacle." For Konaté, "The Dakar Biennial represents Africa not only by speaking its name, but also in asserting its presence where it is absent: in the markets of culture and spectacle" (Konaté 2009: 92). Tim Griffin points to the Johannesburg and Gwangju biennials as examples of this purposeful engagement with the global art economy. The first Johannesburg Biennial, held in 1995 (one year after the end of Apartheid), was seen as bringing South Africa into the global economy; the second, "Trade Routes," curated by Okwui Enwezor (the curator of the 2015 Venice Biennale), explicitly addressed globalization. In South Korea, the first Gwangju Biennial held in 1995 was titled "Beyond the Borders" and was organized around the theme of dissolution of identity, including nationality (Griffin 2013:9).

Compared with these biennials, *Rencontres Picha* is remarkably local. When I pointed out to Mudekereza that the word "biennial" connotes tourism, destination-making and the wiles

of the art world, he reasserted that his main interest is the city and people of Lubumbashi. Lubumbashi may be "le capital du cuivre," but copper is not oil, and the city is neither the political nor cultural capital of the DRC. Upon my return to the United States, I mentioned to a colleague that I had been in Lubumbashi. Her first response – "Oh, were you there for the biennial?"

Conclusion

The 2010 Lubumbashi biennial not only put Lubumbashi on the map of the global art world, it was itself an act of mapping. The 2010 *Rencontres Picha,* by using an entire city, engaged the participant in ways best understood through an interpretive frame shaped by simultaneous application of theories of memory and theories of mapping. Moving through the city, visitors encountered photographs in dialogue with the buildings around them and the observer's own memories. Using theories of corporeality and de Certeau's tactics, I proposed that the biennial "insinuated" itself into the built environment of the city, making a new map of its own. Walking the routes of the biennial, visitors were themselves mapping out Lubumbashi, creating their own personal maps, built upon the local routes determined by commerce, history, and personal memories.

In order to fully appreciate the subtleties of memory and meaning possible, this paper provided an overview of the spatial and political history of Lubumbashi. The city's colonial, segregated past is outlined by its city streets: the center was planned by Belgian officials, and the outer neighborhoods are still growing, organized and constructed by new arrivals to the city from the Congolese countryside. Large, decorated buildings represent power past and present, be it political, religious, or industrial. Placing photographs in front of these buildings and along the streets leading toward them, *Rencontres Picha* created moments of artistic encounter throughout the city, dependent on an individual's reaction to the photograph in the specific environment. With these concepts in place, we can interpret some of the curatorial decisions directing the biennial, taking advantage of the locations spread throughout the city.

In addition to corporeal memory mapping and engagement with the city's history, this paper also showed how the biennial put the city "on the map" of the international artistic

community. Throughout the 1990s, biennials became some of the most exciting venues for experiencing contemporary art, and especially for learning about artists from countries outside of Europe and the United States. Curators, artists, dealers and collectors began travelling from Venice to Cairo to Havana to Dakar in order to see new art in new locations. By hosting a biennial, Picha brought Lubumbashi into the greater contemporary art world and into dialogue with the many biennials around the world.

One of the most exciting things about biennials is their scale combined with their dependence on time: they are giant temporary exhibitions, so they have the excitement of catching as much as possible before it ends, and they repeat, so there is always something to look forward to. Though the Lubumbashi biennial is part of a global circuit it is still rooted in place, in Katanga province of the DRC. As such, it cannot ignore local political instability even as it must depend on foreign and private funds. When I visited Picha in the summer of 2013 I knew that a 2012 biennial had not occurred, and that hopes for a delayed 2013 biennial were meager. Living in Lubumbashi, I had an 8pm curfew in the city center due to threats from rebels fighting for Katangese secession. Driving through the city at 8pm after a dinner, the city streets were deserted and I could not even recognize the main square without throngs of people, cars, and stands. Despite this, a 2013 iteration of the biennial did occur, curated again by Simon Njami and with artists from around the world. With each passing year the artistic community of Lubumbashi grows stronger and claims its spot on the global art world's map – and while writing this paper, a friend emailed me, asking: Did I know that Kinshasa just had its own first biennial?

MAPS AND ILLUSTRATIONS

Figure 1: Map of central Lubumbashi

Green Route: Neutral Zone
Blue Route: Axis of Power
Orange Route: Axis of Culture and Memory

Map created by the author using Google Maps and information from the *Rencontres Picha* catalogue (Njami 2010). (Google Maps. "Lubumbashi, Democratic Republic of Congo." 2015. https://www.google.com/maps/@-11.668322,27.473084,14z/data=!3m1!4b1!4m2!6m1!1szGGRp1D-9DYY.kKGNqZcqFLZs.)

Figure 2: Map of southern Africa with Lubumbashi indicated (*Ibid.*).

Figure 3: The iconic chimney and "terril" of Lubumbashi. ("A general view of the Gécamines copper mine in DR Congo's southern mining town of Lubumbashi," *Congo Planet* [August 2005]. *Congo Planet*. http://www.congoplanet.com/2014/07/04/news/2100/congo-improves-natural-resources-accounting.jsp.)
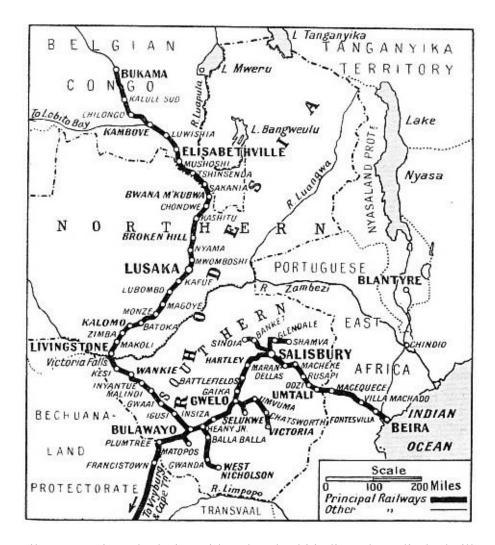
Figure 4: "Railways serving Rhodesia" with Lubumbashi indicated as Elisabethville. Notably, the early tracks led south and east, toward British colonies, rather than west through the Belgian Congo and to the Atlantic.

"Progress in Rhodesia: An Important System in the Heart of Africa." *Railway Wonders of the World*. Parts 27 and 28, August 1935. http://www.railwaywondersoftheworld.com/rhodesia-railways.html.

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Figure 5: Synagogue

Clement, Piet. « Synagogue Lubumbashi 2010. » From Flickr photo album *Now and then: Lubumbashi & Likasi*. https://www.flickr.com/photos/pietclement/5009865496/in/set-72157624881039981 .

Figure 6: Greek Orthodox Church

Clement, Piet. "Greek orthodox church, Lubumbashi." From Flickr photo album *Lubumbashi 2010*. https://www.flickr.com/photos/pietclement/5009866816/in/set-72157624881007435.

Figure 7: Governor's mansion

École privée belge de Lubumbashi. « Le gouvernorat. » From
http://epblubumbashi.blogspot.com/p/lubumbashi.html.

Figure 8: Bon Marché building

Clement, Piet. « Vodacom building, formerly Bon Marché warehouse. » From Flickr photo
album *Now and then: Lubumbashi & Likasi*.
https://www.flickr.com/photos/pietclement/5009268783/in/set-72157624881039981

Figure 9: Alliance Française building

Alliance française de Lubumbashi. « Alliance française de Lubumbashi. » From Facebook album.
https://www.facebook.com/167753046616952/photos/a.167759823282941.41096.16775304661
6952/167759919949598/

Figure 10: Cathedral

"Lubumbashi cathedral." by Nick Hobgood from Cap-Haitien, Haiti - Katanga - provincial parliament building. Licensed under CC BY 2.0 via Wikimedia Commons -
http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Lubumbashi_Cathedral.jpg

Figure 11: Batiment 30 juin

Figure 12: Twenty franc note from Republic of Katanga

http://www.papermoneymarket.com/English/Lists/Katanga.html

Figure 13: Photograph from Adama Bamba's "Bouctou" series installed in front of Methodist church

Senga, Georges. "Vue de l'installation de l'image de la série 'Bouctou', d'Adama Bamba, placée devant l'église méthodiste. Parcours: Pouvoir» (Njami 2010:136).

Figure 14: Photograph from Jellel Gasteli's series "Objects In Mirror Are Closer Than They Appear" in front of the Lubumbashi slag heap (terril).

Senga, Georges. "Vue de l'installation de l'image de la série 'Objects In Mirror Are Closer Than They Appear', de Jellel Gasteli, placée devant le terrain Salama. Parcours: Zone Neutre» (Njami 2010:138).

Figure 15: Photograph from Pierrot Men's series "Sans Titre" in front of the Gécamines slag heap.

Senga, Georges. "Vue de l'installation de l'image de la série 'Sans Titre', de Pierrot Men, placée devant le Gécamines. Parcours: Zone Neutre » (Njami 2010:139).

Figure 17: Photograph from Zineb Sedira's series "Shipwreck" in front of the Batiment 30 juin.

Senga, Georges. "Vue de l'installation de l'image de la série 'Shipwreck', de Zineb Sedira, placée devant le bâtiment 30 Juin, actuel parlement provincial. Parcours : Culture » (Njami 2010 :140).

Figure 18: Photograph from Zineb Sedira's series "Shipwreck" in front of the national museum.

Senga, Georges. "Vue de l'installation de l'image de la série 'Shipwreck', de Zineb Sedira, placée devant le Musée National de Lubumbashi. Parcours: Culture » (Njami 2010:142).

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