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Lise A. Namikas. *Battleground Africa: Cold War in the Congo, 1960-1965.* Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2012. 288 pp. $60.00 (cloth), ISBN 978-0-8047-8486-3.

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The addition or integration of Africa in international relations is not a new or modern innovation. Various regions of Africa maintained close connections with Europe and Asia even in ancient times. However, if at first these were relations between equals, a process developed in the course of history in which Africa came more and more to be under European rule.[1] There were many reasons for Europe's growing interest in Africa, to the point of almost complete control of the continent: control over the route to India, including the sea routes, profitable slave trade, exploitation of natural resources for European industries, and on the other side of the coin, markets for European products. Still another reason was that control over parts of Africa, especially toward the end of the nineteenth century, translated into the accumulation of national prestige in the overall frame of the imperialist struggle among European countries. From a military viewpoint, there were the Straits of Bab-al-Mandeb and the Cape of Good Hope, two geostrategically important areas that were vital to the passage to Asia from Europe.

In World War II, North Africa served as a point of deployment for the Allied assault on Europe, and at the start of the Cold War it was a region of importance in the defense of western Europe. Technological developments, such as nuclear submarines, intercontinental ballistic missiles, and strategic bombers, lessened Africa's importance as a site for forward deployment bases. On the other hand, nuclear weapons and space technologies raised the continent's importance, because of the important quarries found on its territory, such as uranium, cobalt, manganese, chrome, and others, and the fact that various African countries became important oil suppliers. Its importance as a sub-system of international relations, therefore, rose in direct relation to competition among the powers; and its political, economic, and social fate continued to be closely tied to global events.

Africa south of the Sahara merged into the Cold War at the close of the 1950s. Simply put, Africa was the last continent penetrated by the struggle between the two world powers. The main reason for this was the fact that the decolonization process reached Africa only in the beginning of the 1950s, this process having started in Asia almost immediately with the conclusion of World War II. The new states that arose in Africa struggled with internal instability, which included severe economic problems. Therefore, these countries were in immediate need of capital and technological knowledge. As such, they became targets for the world powers, which in their ideological struggle tried to increase the circles of their influence. It should be recalled that in this period, too, China began attempts to expand its influence beyond the immediate area of East Asia. Thus, Africa became another battlefield in the Cold War.

Lise Namikas's book deals with one of the complex episodes of the Cold War in general and Africa in particular–the Congo crisis. Her book covers the period from the Congo's receiving independence in 1960 to Jozef Mobuto's military rebellion in 1965.[2] The stormy history of the Congo in this period constitutes a kind of microcosm for examining international relationships during the Cold War, and therefore Namikas argues that "it is not an exaggeration [to say] that the Congo crisis is one of the most overlooked crises of the Cold War" (p. 9).

Namikas's book examines the gamut of events in the period prior to the Congo's receiving independence, focusing on those that occurred between 1960 and 1965 and emphasizing the interests and involvement of the two superpowers. The book's importance lies in the historical discussions that Namikas weaves in over and above the superpower relations, thereby providing a broader historical canvas. The complexity of the discussion that Namikas supplies, based on a wide variety of archival and other primary sources, very well suits the complexity of the crisis itself in the Congo. Civil wars between a num-

ber of different power factions within the Congo, especially the secessionist trends of the Katanga district; UN campaigns to keep the peace; covert operations and the conducting of a proxy war by the powers–all were elements of the anticolonial confrontation in this period.

Namikas is not the first to examine events in the Congo in this half decade.[3] Hers is, though, the first study to examine the crisis comprehensively, basing itself in depth on a variety of American, Soviet, and European archives and UN documents. Previous studies that dealt with the Congo crisis, even if based on new archival material, such as the books by Madeleine Kalb and Sergey Mazov, placed emphasis in the final analysis only on one side of those involved in the struggle.[4] The work under review presents a fuller picture of the crisis. This broad observation and examination aids us in examining the steps taken by one power against the other and those of the first in reaction to the actions of the second. Historiographically, then, Namikas's study can be associated with the post-revisionist school, which does not seek to blame this or that party for the outbreak of the Cold War and subsequent events. This school of historical thought began to take shape after the Cold War, when documents from the Soviet Union and other East European countries became available to researchers. In general, the conclusions of this school suggest that no one side can be blamed, that the Cold War stemmed from a process of mutual suspicion. In the context of the involvement of the powers in the Congo, Namikas states that the documents used in the current study testify to the fact that "neither adversary ever adequately understood the other's goals or the degree to which they would defend their position in the Congo" (p. 11).

The first two chapters of the book present the historical frameworks for the events in the Congo. Namikas combines two frameworks that impacted the crisis: internal and external events. Internal events include the securing of independence from Belgium, the civil war, and power struggles within the Congolese system. External events are the involvement of the United Nations and the superpowers. This parallel discussion enables following more easily the chain of intense events that was the lot of the Congo. The initial chapters deal with events of the 1950s, with the beginning of Patrice Lumumba and Joseph Kasavubu's efforts to attain independence for the Congo. Despite the lack of stability stemming from the country's intertribal complexity, the Congo obtained its independence on June 30, 1960. Lumumba was appointed prime minister, and Kasavubu president. On July 5, less than one week later, the Congo witnessed a rebellion by army forces, in the course of which Belgian civilians were attacked. In reaction, Belgium sent armed forces to put down the uprising, but it did so without obtaining the consent of the Congolese government. A week after the outbreak of the rebellion, Moise Tshombe announced the independence of the mineral-rich Katanga district. Tshombe based his army on mercenaries and gained the support of European mine owners. Because he feared that Belgium would return to take control of Katanga, Lumumba turned to the UN for help in suppressing Katanga's secessionist tendencies and also to restore order to the Congo. The UN set up a peacekeeping force, UNOC (UN Operation in the Congo), and Secretary-General Dag Hammarskjöld called for the withdrawal of Belgian forces. The Belgians withdrew in August, and the UN peacekeepers took their place. Hammarskjöld, though, refused to order the UN to occupy Katanga.

In effect, four political entities struggling for control of the Congo toward the end of 1960 can be identified. One was headed by the prime minister, Lumumba; a second by the president, Kasavubu; and the third was led by the chief of staff, Mobutu. The fourth entity was Katanga, which was struggling to build a basis for independence from the Congo itself. This political fissure led to civil war, with UNOC supporting Kasavubu's forces. It was at this stage that the superpowers became involved. The Soviet Union aided Lumumba, while the United States supported Mobutu. The United Nations tried desperately in this period to achieve a political solution that would restore stability, but without success. In January 1961, Lumumba was assassinated, and in early 1962, his forces were beaten. These events, though they assisted in the establishment of a national unity government, did not bring about a cessation of the civil war.

Namikas's book is, first of all, a comprehensive study of the Cold War in Africa, with an in-depth discussion of one of the clearest test cases of this period. The involvement of the superpowers was perhaps marginal, certainly in comparison with past cases, such as Korea, but the United States and the Soviet Union still followed each other's steps. This process had begun in the 1950s, at a time when African countries began to be decolonized and to obtain independence. Each of the superpowers hoped to see the continent come under the area of its ideological, political, and economic influence. In developing this discussion, the book can be placed in a number of other historiographical frameworks that strengthen the importance of the study. Deriving directly from the discussion of the Cold War, the work may be seen, too, as adding to the research of American and Soviet, as well as Chinese, foreign policy toward Africa. Another framework that