

The Zambian Copperbelt in Historical Perspective

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This paper provides a historical overview of key themes in the history of mining in the Northern Rhodesian/Zambian Copperbelt during the colonial and post-colonial periods. It explores the political and social impact of a profitable mining enclave linked to international capital, in a relatively underdeveloped colony and nation-state. It explores attempts to channel mining revenue for various developmental and political projects and to control and discipline the activities of mining capital. It also assesses the impact of such enclave mining development on political relations between the enclave region and the wider territory/nation. Although the paper focuses on Northern Rhodesia/Zambia, it offers implicit comparison with the Haut Katanga mining region in ways that suggest a potential comparative research agenda between the two territories.