



# CONFLICT AND SOCIAL TRANSFORMATION IN EASTERN DR CONGO

*Koen Vlassenroot and Timothy Raeymaekers*

The Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) is currently emerging from a decade of calamitous war. This volume wants to make a strong case that efforts to end war and promote sustainable development in the eastern parts of the DRC should be grounded in attention to phenomena that lie beneath the more often discussed international and regional dimensions of the conflict. The contributors suggest that the chronic violence cannot be understood purely with reference to the 'greed' of powerful local and international actors. Rather, the seeming intractability of the Congolese conflict can only be fully understood with reference to the ways in which conflict—together with a legacy of colonial and state policy that preceded and informed it—has created a situation in which the 'rational' pursuit of individual livelihood ends up reproducing the collectively 'irrational' phenomenon of war. By contrast with traditional perspectives that explain the Congolese conflict in terms of dynamics set in motion 'from above,' the work collected here stresses the local, 'micro-level' dilemmas of conflict and development that face the communities of eastern Congo today. In short, this volume argues that the design of interventions aiming to end conflict and promote development in the DRC must consider the nature of interests, institutions, and patterns of action that drive change 'from below.' The contributors to this volume (Koen Vlassenroot, Timothy Raeymaekers, Anna Verhoeve, Luca Jourdan and Jeroen Cuvelier) base their analyses on recent fieldwork in Beni, Kamituga, Goma, Lubero and Masisi.

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ISBN 90 382 0635 6 – 237 pag. – € 15.00

## DISTRIBUTION FOR BELGIUM

**Academia Press  
Scientific Publishers**  
*Part of J. Story-Scientia  
Scientific Booksellers*

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B-9000 Ghent  
Belgium

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### DELIVER TO >

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Academia Press  
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